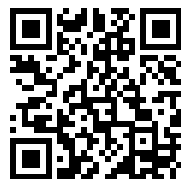


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# LETTERS

OF

# JOHN CALVIN

COMPILED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS AND  
EDITED WITH HISTORICAL NOTES

BY

DR. JULES BONNET.

VOL. I.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN AND FRENCH LANGUAGES BY

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## PREFACE.

IT was but a few days before his death, and in the course of one of the latest conversations handed down to us by Theodore Beza, that Calvin, pointing with failing hand to his most precious furniture, his manuscripts, and the archives of the correspondence that, during a quarter of a century, he had kept up with the most illustrious personages of Europe, requested that these memorials might be carefully preserved, and that a selection from his letters, made by some of his friends, should be presented to the Reformed Churches, in token of the interest and affection of their founder.<sup>1</sup>

This request of the dying Reformer, although treasured in the heart and memory of him who had succeeded to his plans and carried on his work, received but an imperfect fulfilment in the sixteenth century. The times were adverse, and the accomplishment of the duty was difficult. The plague, which had broken out for the third time at Geneva, and carried off thousands of victims; the great disasters, public and private; the shock of the painful events that had been occurring in

<sup>1</sup> "Migraturus ad Deum Johannes Calvinus, quum de commodis Ecclesiæ ne tunc quidem cogitare desineret, sua mihi *περιήλεια*, id est Schedarum ingentem acervum commendavit ut si quid in iis invenissem quo juvari possent Ecclesiæ, id quoque in lucem ederetur."—Th. de Bèze to the Elector Palatine, 1st February 1575. This letter is printed as a Preface to Calvin's Latin Correspondence.

France from the breaking out of the Civil War to the Massacre of St. Bartholomew ; even the scruples of friendship, heightened by the perils that threatened the city of the Reformation itself, all seemed to conspire against the execution of Calvin's wish. "Without speaking," says Beza, "of the assistance that was indispensable for the examination of so extensive a correspondence, or of the time required for so laborious an undertaking, the calamities that befell our city, the plague that raged for many years, the convulsions of a neighbouring country, have more than once interrupted the progress of the work. The selection of the letters also involved great difficulties, at a time when men were predisposed to judge harshly and unfairly. There are many things that may be said or written in the familiar intercourse of sincere and ingenuous friendship, such as Calvin's, which can hardly be given to the public without inconvenience. We were obliged in our work to have respect to persons, times, and places."<sup>1</sup> These scruples of an earnest and respectful disciple, anxious to avoid all collision with his contemporaries and at the same time to render justice to a great name, would be out of place now ; but they were legitimate in an age of revolutions, when words were swords, and when the war of opinion, often sanguinary, outlasting its originators, was perpetuated in their writings.

Still it must be owned, that notwithstanding all these difficulties, the friends of Calvin did not shrink from the performance of their duty. Deeply impressed with the importance of the mission intrusted to them, they applied themselves to their task with religious fidelity. By their care, the originals or the copies of a vast number of letters addressed to France,

<sup>1</sup> " *Multa quippe familiariter inter amicos dici scribique consueverunt, præsertim ab ingenui spiritus hominibus, qualis fuit Calvinus si quisquam nostris temporibus alius, quæ minime expediat emanare. Et habenda quoque nobis fuit non modo personarum, verum etiam temporum et locorum ratio.*"—Letter already cited.

England, Germany, and Switzerland, were collected at Geneva, and added to the precious deposit already confided to them. The archives of the city of Calvin received this treasure and preserved it faithfully through the storm that fell upon the churches of France, destroying or dispersing in foreign lands so many pages of their annals. By a remarkable dispensation, Geneva, the holy city of French Protestantism, the seminary of her ministers, of her doctors, and of her martyrs, after having conferred upon her, by the hand of Calvin, her creed and her form of worship, was also to preserve for her the titles of her origin and of her history. These titles are gloriously inscribed in the noble collection of autograph letters of the Reformer, for which we are indebted to the pious care of some refugees of the sixteenth century, whose names are almost lost in the lustre of those of Calvin and Beza, but whose services cannot be forgotten without ingratitude. Let us at least recall with a fitting tribute of grateful respect, the names of Jean de Budé, Laurent de Normandie, and especially of Charles de Jonvillers.

It is to the latter mainly that we must ascribe the honour of the formation of the magnificent epistolary collection that now adorns the Library of Geneva. Born of a noble family in the neighbourhood of Chartres, and carried across the Alps by the irresistible necessity of confessing the faith which he had embraced with all the ardour of youth, Charles de Jonvillers found in the affection of Calvin, a compensation for the voluntary sacrifice of fortune and country. Admitted, with his young patrician countrymen—the élite of the Reformed party—to the intimacy of the Reformer, he devoted himself with filial reverence and unbounded attachment to the great man whose faith and energy, moulding a rebellious people, had transformed an obscure Alpine city into a metropolis of the human mind. He became his secretary, after the celebrated

lawyer, François Baudouin, and the minister Nicholas des Galars, and henceforward assisted him in his laborious correspondence, followed him to the Auditoire and the Academy, and took down during Calvin's Lectures those luminous Commentaries, which were afterwards dedicated to the most illustrious personages of the age, and which modern theology has never surpassed.

Such was the man to whom the friendship of Calvin and the confidence of Beza assigned the great and laborious task of preparing for publication the Letters of the Reformer. He brought to it the zeal of a disciple and the filial reverence of a son who forgets himself in the execution of a sacred will; undertaking distant journeys to ensure its fulfilment, seeking everywhere for those precious documents in which were preserved the thoughts of the venerated master he had lost; and transcribing a vast number of letters with his own hand; supported in these costly and difficult researches by the consciousness of a duty accepted in humility and performed with faithfulness.<sup>1</sup> This labour, early commenced and pursued for twenty years under the vigilant superintendence of Beza, was the origin of the collection of Calvin's Latin Correspondence published in 1575; a faithful but incomplete tribute to the memory of the Reformer by his disciples—an unfinished monument—which might indeed suffice the generation that was contemporary with the Reformation, but which is insufficient to satisfy the curiosity of our own.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Ad eam rem unius præcipue Caroli Jonvillæi istarum rerum custodis fidem, diligentiam, operam denique nobis appositissimam fuisse profitemur."—Advertisement of Bèze to the reader.

<sup>2</sup> It is the collection intitled:—*Calvini Epistolæ et Responsa quibus interjectæ sunt insignium in Ecclesia Dei virorum aliquot etiam Epistolæ*, first published at Geneva, in 1575, reprinted in the following year at Lausanne, and inserted with some additions in the collection of Calvin's Works, *Calvini Opera*, tom. ix., edit. d'Amsterdam, 1671. This latter edition, one of the sources of the work which we now present to the public, comprises about 420 letters or memoirs, of which 284 are letters of the Reformer.

Nearly three centuries had passed away without adding anything to the work of Charles de Jonvillers and Beza. The Letters published by their care have been the common source from which the apologists and the adversaries of the Reformation have alike drawn; while the numerous unpublished documents preserved in the Library of Geneva, or collected in the Libraries of Zurich, Gotha, and Paris, have been forgotten. It was reserved for the present age to rescue these from unmerited oblivion, and thus to open up for history a mine of information hitherto unexplored.

And here justice compels us to acknowledge, with gratitude, the obligations of this unpublished correspondence to the recent labours and investigations of several distinguished Protestant authors. We refer especially to the "Life of Calvin," by Dr. Paul Henry of Berlin,—a pious monument raised in honour of the Reformer by a descendant of the refugees, and enriched with a number of Letters from the libraries of France and Switzerland;<sup>1</sup> to the learned researches of Professor Bretschneider, the editor of the Gotha Letters;<sup>2</sup> the important work of Ruchat,<sup>3</sup> re-edited by the talented continuator of the great historian Jean de Müller, Professor Vulliemin of Lausanne, with an extensive Appendix, containing precious fragments of Calvin's French Correspondence, reproduced in the "Chronicle" of M. Crottet.<sup>4</sup> And now, having made these acknowledgments, we may legitimately claim for ourselves the privilege of offering to the public for the first time, a general and authentic collection of Calvin's Correspondence, the greater part of which has,

<sup>1</sup> *Das Leben Calvins*, 3 vols. in 8vo. Hambourg, 1835-1842.

<sup>2</sup> *Johannis Calvinii, Bezae, aliorumque litterarum quaedam nondum editarum*, 1 vol. in 8vo. Leipsic, 1835. Published on the occasion of the Reformation Jubilee at Geneva.

<sup>3</sup> *Histoire de la Réformation en Suisse*, 7 vols. in 8vo. Lausanne, 1838.

<sup>4</sup> *Petite Chronique Protestante de France, XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècle*; 1 vol. in 8vo. Paris, 1846.



up to the present time, been buried in the dust of libraries, and altogether unpublished.

This collection is the result of five years of study and research among the archives of Switzerland, France, Germany, and England. Charged by the French Government, at the suggestion of M. Mignet, under the liberal administration of two eminent ministers, MM. de Salvandy and de Falloux, with a scientific mission that enabled us to gather the first materials of a correspondence, the richest depositories of which were in foreign countries, and sustained in our labours by the cordial sympathy of those most distinguished in the world of science and literature, we have spared nothing that might ensure the completeness of a collection which throws so much light on the history of the great religious revolution of the sixteenth century.

The correspondence of Calvin begins in his youth and is only closed on his deathbed, (May 1528 to May 1564.) It thus embraces, with few intervals, all the phases of his life; from the obscure scholar of Bourges and Paris escaping from the stake by flying into exile, to the triumphant Reformer, who was able in dying, to contemplate his work as accomplished. Nothing can exceed the interest of this correspondence, in which an epoch and a life of the most absorbing interest are reflected in a series of documents equally varied and genuine; and in which the familiar effusions of friendship are mingled with the more serious questions of theology, and with the heroic breathings of faith. From his bed of suffering and of continued labours, Calvin followed with an observant eye the great drama of the Reformation, marking its triumphs and its reverses in every State of Europe. Invested in virtue of his surpassing genius, with an almost universal apostolate, he wielded an influence as varied and as plastic as his activity. He exhorts with the same authority the humble ministers of the

Gospel and the powerful monarchs of England, Sweden, and Poland. He holds communion with Luther and Melancthon, animates Knox, encourages Coligny, Condé, Jeanne d'Albret, and the Duchess of Ferrara; while in his familiar letters to Farel, Viret, and Theodore Beza, he pours out the overflowings of a heart filled with the deepest and most acute sensibility. The same man, worn by watchings and sickness, but rising by the energy of the soul above the weakness of the body, overturns the party of the Libertines, lays the foundations of the greatness of Geneva, establishes foreign churches, strengthens the martyrs, dictates to the Protestant princes the wisest and most perspicuous counsels; negotiates, argues, teaches, prays, and with his latest breath, gives utterance to words of power, which posterity receives as the political and religious testament of the man.

These indications are sufficient to show the interest that attaches to the correspondence of the Reformer. It is the common inheritance of the countries emancipated by the Reformation and still animated by its spirit; as well as of all the Churches, however diverse in origin and varying in their confessions of faith, which manifest to the world the spiritual unity of the Church of Christ. England's portion in this precious legacy is neither the least, nor the least interesting. Observant of the great work of religious Reformation which, since the time of Wicliff had been going on in that country, and which was destined to have the singular privilege of placing the civil and political liberties of the nation in the glorious keeping of the Gospel, Calvin condemned with great severity the spiritual tyranny of Henry the Eighth, and the endeavours of that prince to substitute a sanguinary imperial popedom for that of Rome. During the reign of his successor, he exercises a marked influence in the councils of the crown, and traces with vigorous hand, for the Duke of Somerset, a plan of religious reformation in which the conservative spirit is happily blended

with the liberal and progressive tendency. He addresses the young King-Edward VI., so prematurely withdrawn from the love of his subjects, in a strain of exhortation dictated by paternal solicitude and respectful affection:—"It is a great thing Sire, to be a king, and especially of such a country; and yet I doubt not that you regard it as above all comparison greater to be a Christian. It is indeed, an inestimable privilege that God has granted to you Sire, that you should be a Christian King, and that you should serve Him as His lieutenant to uphold the kingdom of Jesus Christ in England."<sup>1</sup>—The death of this young King, so well fitted to carry out the designs of Providence for his people, and the restoration of Popery under Mary, heavily afflicted Calvin. He rejoices in the accession of Elizabeth, freely exhorts her ministers, and his advice, dictated by a wisdom and prescience to which time has set its seal, furnishes the most remarkable proof of the faith and the genius of the Reformer.

Having pointed out the historical value of this Correspondence, it may not be out of place to refer to its literary merit. Trained in the twofold school of profane and sacred Antiquity, of the Church and of the world, Calvin's Latin is that of a contemporary of Cicero or of Seneca, whose graceful and concise style he reproduces without effort. He writes in French as one of the creators of that language, which is indebted to him for some of its finest characteristics. Writing before Montaigne, he may be regarded as the precursor and the model of that

<sup>1</sup> We give here entire the striking passage, of which a fac-simile will be found at the commencement of this volume.—"Or au pseaulme présent il est parlé de la noblesse et dignité de l'Eglise, laquelle doit tellement ravir à soy et grans et petits que tous les biens et honneurs de la terre ne les retiennent, ny empeschent qu'ils ne prétendent à ce but d'estre enrolléz au peuple de Dieu. C'est grand chose d'estre Roy, mesme d'un tel país; toutefois je ne doute pas que vous n'estimiez sans comparaison mieux d'estre Chrestien. C'est doncq un privilège inestimable que Dieu vous a faict, Sire, que vous soiez Roy Chrétien, voire que vous luy serviez de lieutenant pour ordonner et maintenir le Royaulme de Jésus Christ en Angleterre."

great school of the seventeenth century which could only fight him with weapons from his own armoury, and which could not surpass him either in loftiness of thought or in stately majesty of style. The French letters of Calvin, worthy of the author of the immortal preface to the "Christian Institutes," contain many admirable passages hitherto unknown, and are models of eloquence: they will be found in this Collection interspersed with the Latin Correspondence from which they were detached in the original Paris edition, and will present, in chronological order, a series of moral and religious studies—a genuine portrait of the Reformer drawn by his own hand, in the original documents which we now, for the first time, present to the historian.

The seasonableness of such a publication cannot be denied. The great debate ever pending between the Papacy and the Reformation is renewed in our days with fresh vigour in almost all the countries of Europe. Attack provokes defence; and in the strife of opinion, the rights of justice and of truth are too frequently disregarded. While some rare spirits, enlightened by the study of history, or the attentive observation of the effect of the dogmas of either religion on the moral conduct of its votaries, rise superior to the mists of prejudice and form a judgment which is moulding that of posterity,<sup>1</sup> the adepts of a school unhappily celebrated as the admirers of excesses which the sincere disciples of Christianity or of philosophy have alike reprovèd, have nought but malediction and insult for the glorious Revolution stamped by the names of Luther and of Calvin. Never perhaps, were detraction and outrage let

<sup>1</sup> It is only necessary to quote the names of the two illustrious French historians, M. Guizot and M. Mignet, who in their writings have rendered a respectful homage to the religious and moral influence of the Reformation. A distinguished writer, M. Charles de Rémusat, has lately published, under the title of "De la Réforme et du Protestantisme," an eloquent paper, which might well inaugurate a new era of justice and impartiality in historical writing.

loose with such fury against these great deliverers of conscience ; never have their intentions been so audaciously misrepresented, their actions so grossly caricatured.<sup>1</sup> To the falsehoods of a party that shrinks not from slander, let us oppose the impartial evidence of history ; let us learn from these great men themselves what they desired, what they did, what they suffered ; and let us seek from them alone the secret of the Revolution which they achieved.

The Correspondence of Calvin will, we believe, throw a fresh light upon those grave questions which Modern Science, worthy of the name, now proposes to herself with a desire for impartial justice which does her honour. It is by this sentiment that we may venture to say we have been animated, in the course of the long researches which have enabled us to offer this collection to the public. Guided solely by the love of truth, and shrinking from no revelation that was guaranteed by authentic documents, we have rejected no sources of information, nor omitted any evidence. Our ambition has been to make Calvin live again in his letters—to shew him as he was, with his austere and inflexible convictions, which yet were far from intolerant in the intercourse of friendship and the freedom of the domestic circle—with that stern self-sacrifice of his life to duty which alone explains its power and excuses its errors—with the failings which were the heritage of his times and those which were peculiar to himself. History, interrogated in original documents, is not a panegyric ; it throws no veil over the shortcomings of its heroes, but it remembers that they are men, and draws lessons alike from their infirmities and from their greatness.

We cannot close this Preface without offering the tribute of our sincere gratitude to those friends in England and on the

<sup>1</sup> We need only name "L'Histoire de Calvin," by M. Audin, in itself entirely devoid of truthfulness, and the fruitful source of calumnious and lying pamphlets against the memory of the Reformer.

Continent whose kind encouragement has favoured the publication. And we would address our first acknowledgments to the Librarians of the Continental Libraries, who eagerly placed at our disposal the whole MS. collections committed to their charge. We have pleasure in paying the same tribute to one of the most distinguished citizens of Geneva, Colonel Henri Tronchin, who so liberally opened to us the precious documents that have been transmitted to him through a series of illustrious ancestors ; and we regard it as a peculiar privilege to record our obligations, while at Geneva, to the encouraging kindness of two men eminent in her sacred literature, M. le Pasteur Gausson, and to the learned historian of the Reformation, M. le Docteur Merle d'Aubigné, whose patronage, which was given as a matter of course to the publication of Calvin's Correspondence, has been the means of attracting to us valuable sympathies in the United States, in England, and in that noble country of Scotland, where the name of Calvin, gloriously associated with that of Knox, receives an honourable tribute in the labours of a Society devoted to the translation of his writings. It is with heartfelt satisfaction that we inscribe on the first page of the collection, and recall in one grateful thought, the names of the three generous patrons of the undertaking, Mr. Douglas of Cavers, Mr. Henderson of Park, and Mr. James Lennox of New York.

Our personal thanks we may surely be permitted to offer to the translator of the work. Nothing could exceed the difficulty of rendering Calvin's letters in English and of harmonizing the antique style of the originals with the structure of a modern language. We believe that this difficulty has been happily overcome by the Translator, who has devoted himself with persevering ardour, and with a sort of filial piety, to a work requiring so great an amount of patience and of learning. If, through the transparent mirror of a scrupulously faithful

translation, the reader is enabled to follow the grave religious beauty of the originals,—if he is brought, as it were, into communion with the soul of Calvin himself, in the fine and varied effusions of his correspondence, he will be indebted for this privilege to the labour of Mr. Constable, revised by the Rev. Dr. Cunningham, Principal of the New College, Edinburgh, with a degree of watchful care and enlightened solicitude that cannot be too highly appreciated.

And thus the wish expressed by Calvin on his deathbed, and forgotten during three centuries, is now realized for Britain as well as for France. His memory loses nothing from these tardy revelations, and the only testimony worthy of him is that of truth. This is the testimony that appears in every page of his correspondence. In so far as we have been his faithful interpreters we are happy if, according to the measure of our poor ability, we have been permitted, not to glorify a man, but to glorify God Himself, in the life of one of His chosen instruments for the accomplishment of one of the noblest acts in the providential drama of history.

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The English edition of Calvin's collected Correspondence will form four volumes similar to the present, and will contain at least 600 letters, the greater part of which are now published for the first time. An appendix at the end of the work will give, in chronological order, and with a summary of their contents, a list of those letters which it has been thought unnecessary to include in this edition, but which those who may desire to do so, will have an opportunity of consulting in the complete edition of the originals, in course of publication in Paris, the first two volumes of which, containing the French letters of the Reformer, may be had from the publishers of the present work.

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# CALVIN'S LETTERS.

## I.—TO NICOLAS DUCHEMIN.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin at the University of Orleans—his early friendships—he is recalled to Noyon by the illness of his father.

NOYON, 14th May 1528.

As I do not think that you have hitherto been correctly informed of the motives and peculiar circumstances which have brought my punctuality in question, you must at least be willing to admit, that until now you have known me to be a person rather overmuch attentive, not to say troublesome, in the frequency of my correspondence. Nor has my fidelity been so sorely endangered as to leave me altogether inexcusable. For after calm consideration, I came to this conclusion in my own mind, that all the esteem you had conceived for me, during a

<sup>1</sup> This letter is the earliest in the series of Calvin's correspondence. Born at Noyon the 10th of July 1509, educated in the *belles lettres* at Paris,—in 1527 he went to study law at the University of Orleans, which he left soon afterwards, in order to avail himself of the lectures of the celebrated Alciat at Bourges. In the first mentioned of these towns, he had for fellow-students and friends, several young men who were distinguished not less by their piety than by information and accomplishment. Nicolas Duchemin was of this number, to whom, at a later period, (1536,) he dedicated a letter, entitled "De fugiendis impiorum illicitis sacris et puritate Christianæ Religionis." That letter was translated into English, (London, 1548, in 8vo.) The original is inserted in the Latin Edition of Calvin's Works, (Amsterdam, 1671,) in the eighth volume. Also in the "Recueil des Opuscules," Edition of 1566.

long acquaintance and daily intercourse, could not vanish in a single moment; and that a certain kindly courtesy, as well as shrewdness, is so much your nature, that nothing is wont unadvisedly to prejudice you. This consideration makes me feel confident that I may be restored to favour, if any has been lost. Receive now, I pray you, in few words, the cause of this delay. The promise made at my departure, that I would return in a short time, while it was my wish to fulfil it, kept me all the longer in a state of suspense. For when I was seriously intending to return to you, my father's illness<sup>1</sup> occasioned the delay. But afterward, when the physicians gave some hope of his restoration to good health, I then thought of nought else than the anxious desire to rejoin you, to which I had previously been very strongly inclined, but which was much increased after an interval of some days. Meanwhile, my onwaiting in this duty has been prolonged, until at length there remains no hope of recovery, and the approach of death is certain.<sup>2</sup> Whatsoever happens, I shall see you again.

Remember me to Francis Daniel; to Philip,<sup>3</sup> and your entire household. Have you given in your name yet among the professors of literature? See that your modesty does not enforce indolence upon you.—Adieu, dear Duchemin, my friend dearer to me than my life.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Berne. Vol. 450.*]

<sup>1</sup> Gerard Chauvin, or Cauvin, father of the Reformer, a man of strict morals, of good understanding and judgment, which we have on the testimony of Théod. de Bèze, *Calvini Vita*. Originally of Pont l'Evêque, he had been promoted, by his ability, to the office of notary apostolic, secretary to the bishopric, and *promoteur* of the Chapter at Noyon. Le Vasseur, "*Annales de l'Eglise Cathédrale de Noyon*," chap. x. p. 1151.

<sup>2</sup> It seems uncertain whether Gerard Chauvin died this year. The letters of Calvin, so far as yet appears, contain no other allusion to that event, which must have exercised a desirable influence on his life, in drawing him away from the study of law to that of theology, in which direction all his own tendencies drew him. See Théod. de Bèze, *Vita Calvini*.

<sup>3</sup> Philippe Laurent, librarian of the library at Orleans.

II.—TO FRANCIS DANIEL.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin in Paris—Nicolas Cop—the two friends visit a monastery.

PARIS, 27th June 1529.

Tired with the journey, the day after our drive hither we could not stir a foot out of doors. For the next four days, while I still felt unable to move about, the whole of that time wore away in friendly salutations. On the Lord's day, I repaired to the monastery with Cop,<sup>2</sup> who had consented to accompany me, that, according to your advice, I might fix a day with the nuns on which your sister should take the vows. I was told, in reply to my inquiry, that, along with some others of her own rank, she had obtained from the sisterhood, in conformity with approved usage, (*ex solemni more*), the power of taking upon herself the vows. The daughter of a certain banker of Orleans, who is master of arts to your brother, is of the number. While Cop was in the meanwhile engaged in conversation with the abbess, I sounded the inclination of your sister, whether she would take that yoke patiently,—whether she was not rather wearied and drilled into submission than submitting her neck willingly to the harness. I urged her again and again freely to entrust me with whatever she might have upon her mind. Never have I seen any one more prompt or readier in reply, so that it could not come soon enough to satisfy her wishes. You would almost think she was playing with her doll as oft as she heard speak of the vow. I did not wish to withdraw her from her purpose, because I had not come with

<sup>1</sup> Francis Daniel, advocate of Orleans, the fellow-student and friend of Calvin at the university of that town. ("Quant à Orléans, dit Th. de Bèze, il y avoit bien déjà quelques personnages, aians connoissance de la vérité, comme entr' autres François Daniel, advocat, et Nicolas Duchemin, tenant escoliers en pension."—*Hist. Eccl. i. 9.*) From several letters of the reformer it appears, (1559-1560,) that while fully acknowledging the necessity of a reformation of the Church, Francis Daniel remained inwardly attached to Rome. His two sons, Francis and Peter Daniel, distinguished themselves in the study of law and literature.

<sup>2</sup> Nicolas Cop, the physician, professor in the College of Sainte Barbe, and friend of Calvin. In 1533 he became rector of the University of Paris.

that object. But, in few words, I admonished her not to rely too much on her own resolutions, that she ought not to make rash promises as to herself, but rather that she would rest upon the strength of God for all needed help,—in whom we live and have our being.

While we were thus engaged in conversation, the abbess gave me an opportunity of speaking with her, and when I proposed that she would fix a day, she left the choice to myself, but on condition that Pylades<sup>1</sup> should be present, who will be at Orleans within eight days. So, as the day could not be fixed more certainly, we left it to Pylades to decide. Do you, therefore, settle with him as shall seem convenient, since I can be of no further service to you here.

Concerning my own affairs;—as yet I have not fixed upon a lodging, although there were many to be had if I had wished to hire, and also offered by friends, had I been willing to take advantage of the use of them. The father of our friend Coiffart offered his own house to me, with that kindness that you would have said there was nothing he desired rather than that I should take up my abode with his son. Coiffart himself, also, with many entreaties, and those not any way cold or distant, insisted often that he might have me for companion and comrade; nothing would I have rather embraced with outstretched arms than this inclination on the part of my friend, whose acquaintance how pleasing and profitable it is to me, yourself can testify, and which I would immediately have accepted had I not intended this year to attend Danès,<sup>2</sup> whose school is situated at a great distance from Coiffart's house. All friends who are here desire to be remembered to you, especially Coiffart and Viermey, with whom I am about to ride out on horseback. Greet your mother, your wife, and your sister Francisca. Adieu. I have begun a letter to the canon, which I shall finish on my return. If any inconvenience is occasioned by the delay I will make up for it.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Berne. Vol. 450.*]

<sup>1</sup> Pseudonyme, adopted by some unknown friend of Calvin.

<sup>2</sup> P. Danesius. P. Danès, the scholar of Lascaris and of Budé, the learned Professor of Greek at the University of Paris.

## III.—TO FRANCIS DANIEL.

Thanks to Francis Daniel—salutations of Melchior Wolmar—  
various messages.

MEAUX, 6th September 1529.

I owe you thanks for having omitted no diligence in the care of our affairs, which I will not allow to pass unrequited when occasion shall offer. For I think it will so happen that at least I may be able to return a favour of the like kind, nor even then shall my name be expunged from your day-book; what is more, there is scarcely a single page that does not state me as your debtor. But if you think me worth the money, I make myself over to you in payment, with the usual legal proviso, that whatever is mine may also go along with the purchase. You must understand, moreover, that was the loophole opened to our barefaced solicitation, while you gave ready and seasonable aid, so that we can scarcely be in future anything but shameless suitors, unmindful whether we are solvent or no, for you do not confer benefits that you may make gain of them, but bestow your favours freely. In the meantime, however, I will take care that the inner chamber be well supplied with wine, if I see that it will be to our advantage, that you may not suppose anything to be rashly undertaken. Perhaps, in an indirect way, I appear to ask money, but do not you interpret me unkindly or twit me indirectly, unless, as you are wont, it is good humouredly in jest. You have done manfully in behaving with so much firmness towards that indolent Mæcenas; since he cannot now-a-days suit his manners to us, let him be your claw-back, and, puffed up and pompous, leave him to nurse his ambition. I envy Fusius the astrologer. Your road-book I return, which, with Lampridius, we may call the itinerary, and in the Greek *ὁδοπορικὴν*. I do not add thanks, because words cannot do justice to its merit. Will you remember me to Melchior<sup>1</sup> if he is yet with you, to Sucquet and Pigney, also

<sup>1</sup> Melchior Wolmar, who was Calvin's master at the University of Bourges, and the preceptor of Theodore Beza; called by the Duke of Wurtemberg to the



to our friend Curterius ? Will you say to Sucquet, that I have occasion to use the Homer's *Odyssey* which I had lent him ? and when you have got it, keep possession, unless indeed Ronsart who used to bring you my letters, to whom I had entrusted the business, has been beforehand.—Adieu, dear friend, my nonesuch.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Berne. Vol. 450.*]

#### IV.—TO FRANCIS DANIEL.

Domestic intelligence—departure to Italy of the brother of Francis Daniel.

FROM THE ACROPOLIS,<sup>1</sup> 15th January 1530.

It was not in my power to reply sooner to your brother Robert's letter, because it was only delivered to me about the middle of November, and shortly after I had to undertake a journey of a fortnight. The illness of the messenger, who had been laid up for about twelve days with a dangerous complaint at Lyons, hindered the letter from reaching me sooner. Meanwhile the fair-time had gone by ; which season having past, I had no opportunity of despatching a letter. With reference to your brother, the matter stands thus:—I have endeavoured, in every manner of way, to induce him to remain with us. When I ascertained that he had rashly and without any sufficient reason given up this, or resolved against it, I thought I ought to persuade him to betake himself homewards ; and as he had sometimes said that any attempt of this sort would be in vain, I thought it better, for the time, to give way, until that warmth had in some degree subsided. As seemed to me, he had come somewhat to himself, when all of a sudden, while such a step never entered my thoughts, he decamped into Italy. I was expecting him and his companion at dinner, because that time had been appointed for touching on the subject. They did not make their appearance. When during the whole day

Professorship of Law in the University of Tübingen ; he died in retirement at Eisenach in 1561. Calvin dedicated to him, August 1, 1546, his Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, Paris.

they were not forthcoming, I began to suspect I know not what. On sending to the inn, word was brought back that he had already gone away. Peter,<sup>1</sup> whom you have known, who had accompanied them a mile or rather more, returned home about four o'clock. Wherefore, if anything has happened contrary to your wish and that of your relatives, you must not blame me, who have done my utmost that he might not withdraw to a greater distance from you, contrary to your wishes. Adieu; remember me to all. May the Lord preserve you all, especially your family.

Will you take charge of the delivery of the letter to my sister Mary Du Marais?

[*Lat. copy—Library of Berne. Vol. 450.*]

#### V.—TO FRANCIS DANIEL.

Calvin's first work—Commentary on Seneca's Treatise, "De Clementia."

PARIS, 23d May 1532.

Well, at length the die is cast. My Commentaries on the Books of Seneca, "De Clementia,"<sup>2</sup> have been printed, but at my own expense, and have drawn from me more money than you can well suppose. At present, I am using every endeavour to collect some of it back. I have stirred up some of the professors of this city to make use of them in lecturing. In the University of Bourges I have induced a friend to do this from the pulpit by a public lecture. You can also help me not a little, if you will not take it amiss; you will do so on the score of our old friendship; especially as, without any damage to your reputation, you may do me this service, which will also tend perhaps to the public good. Should you determine to

<sup>1</sup> In the Latin, Petrus ad Vincula.

<sup>2</sup> This is the book entitled, *L. Annæi Senecæ Libri ii., de Clementia, ad Neronem Cæsarem, Commentariis Illustrati*. Paris, 1532, in 4to. Calvin had dedicated this work to his old fellow-student, Claude de Hangest, of the illustrious family of Mommor, now become Abbot of St. Eloy at Noyon. The Epistle Dedicatory is dated from Paris the 4th April 1532.

oblige me by this benefit, I will send you a hundred copies, or as many as you please. Meanwhile, accept this copy for yourself, while you are not to suppose that by your acceptance of it, I hold you engaged to do what I ask. It is my wish that all may be free and unconstrained between us. Adieu, and let me soon hear from you. I wrote lately to Pigney, but he has not answered. To Brosse I wrote long ago, but to this time have no reply. He who will give Le Roy his copy will dutifully salute him.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Berne. Vol. 450.*]

## VI.—TO FRANCIS DANIEL.

Calvin despatches copies of the Treatise "De Clementia" to several persons—looks for lodgings in Paris.

PARIS, [1532.]

Both of your letters have reached me almost on the same subject, and nearly in the same words. I have attended to your commission about the Bibles, in procuring which there was more need of taking some trouble than of money. When I pack up my things I will put them along with my baggage. The affair is of that kind which I suppose may be deferred until that time. As for the rest, you must help me in your turn.

The Books of Seneca on Clemency are at last printed: they are at my own cost and labour. The money which has been expended must now be collected on all hands. Besides, I must look to it, that my credit stands secure. Do write as soon as you can, and let me know with what favour or coldness they have been received, and try also to induce Landrin to lecture. I send one copy for yourself; will you take charge of the other five, to be forwarded to Bourges for Le Roy, Pigney, Sucquet, Brosse, Baratier? If Sucquet can accept of it for the purpose of lecturing, his help will be of no small service to me. Adieu.

I have nothing to write to Duchemin, seeing that often as I have asked he returns no answer, nor shall I set out upon my journey until he write. What will it matter, if for some days I

shiver in the cold while in search of a lodging for the body ! Concerning Coiffart what else can I say, except that he is a selfish fellow ?—Again, adieu.

Remember me to your mother and your aunt.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Berne. Vol. 450.*]

## VII.—TO DR. MARTIN BUCER.<sup>1</sup>

Recommendation of a French refugee in Strasbourg, who had been falsely accused of holding the doctrines of the Anabaptists.

NORON, 4th September 1532.

The grace and peace of the Lord be with you by the mercy of God and the victory of Christ.

Leisure to write would not have weighed as an argument to persuade me, any more than good advice, unless it had seemed right to deplore in a few words the unhappy lot of this excellent brother, which some friends of undoubted faith and credit have represented to me by letter. For whether you bear with me in my grief and sympathy, or whether I further him in his suit, I could not refrain from writing. The disposition and manners of the man I had known while he lived with us in France. He so conducted himself as to be beloved among the men of our profession, if any one was. Esteemed as such among

<sup>1</sup> This letter is addressed to Dr. Bucer, Bishop of Strasbourg. Martin Bucer, a very distinguished minister and theologian, was born at Schelestadt in 1491, and was initiated by Luther himself in the doctrines of the reformed, which he introduced at Strasbourg, in concert with Mathias Zell and Hedion. Of a moderate and conciliating turn, he interposed continually between the reformers of Germany and of Switzerland, and made sundry efforts to induce them to adopt a common symbol. "His learned writings and commentaries, his disputations and conferences on unforeseen occasions, his goings out and comings in for the sake of the Church's peace, will always make known his remarkable erudition, great piety and zeal, joined to an excellent disposition."—Th. Bezæ *Icones*, Genève, 1580. Compelled with several friends to leave Strasbourg in 1549, on the advance of the imperial army, he sought an asylum in England, and obtained a chair in the University of Cambridge. He died there in 1551, and was interred with extraordinary pomp. His body was disinterred under the reign of Mary, and publicly burnt at the stake. In the reign of Elizabeth his memory was honourably restored.

men who were endowed with some degree of authority, and so as to be neither a shame nor a disgrace to them. At length, when he could no longer bow the neck to that voluntary bondage which even yet we bear, he departed to take up his residence with you, having no prospect of return. But, as the matter stands, it fell out, contrary to his expectation, like the shifting scene of a play, and he could find no settled abode whither he might betake himself. Thither, also, as I hear, he had hastened on account of his straitened means and household matters, that he might have the benefit of the assistance of friends whom himself had formerly assisted, until better times should come. Now, observe how far more powerful is calumny than truth. Some inconsiderate person, I know not who, among your people, whom I certainly do not presume to suspect of malevolence, had so prepossessed the ears of every one with his invectives, that they were shut to all explanation. There was, therefore, not a single person from whom he could extract a penny. Probably it was not intended by the person, whoever he was, who kindled the sparks of this tragedy, to destroy the character of a harmless individual. Nevertheless, however that may be, I can neither excuse him nor apologize to him, and do not hesitate to assert that he has been in error, to the great hardship and calamity of this individual. They cast upon him these reproaches, as is said, because he had fallen under suspicion of Anabaptism. Strange, indeed, unless the person was outrageously suspicious who spun out this conjecture from so slender evidence. In conversation I drew him intentionally to speak of this sacrament. He agreed in express terms so entirely with myself, that never have I met with any one who professed the truth upon this point more frankly. Meanwhile he suffers notwithstanding, nor does there appear any probability that these sinister rumours, which have already obtained a certain degree of credit, will soon be suppressed. I intreat of you, Master Bucer, if my prayers—if my tears, are of any avail, that you would compassionate and help him in his wretchedness. The poor are left in a special manner to your care—you are the helper of the orphan. Suffer him not to be reduced to such necessity as to be driven to extremity. You can help him, if

you choose, in some one way or other, but rather do so yourself, according to your own discretion. I could not, however, hold my hand from going even beyond the bounds of ordinary restraint in supporting the cause of this individual. These for the present.—Most learned sir, farewell. Thine from my heart,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Protestant Seminary of Strasbourg.*]

### VIII.—TO FRANCIS DANIEL.<sup>1</sup>

Various communications—a new work put forth.

[PARIS, 1533.]

I send you these collectanea of late events, on this condition, that, according to the best of your faith and duty, they may circulate among the friends, whom also you will respectfully salute for me, except Framberg, whom I have resolved to tame by my silence, seeing that I have not been able to coax him by gentleness, nor to get anything out of him by scolding. Besides, what is worse than all, when his brother came hither, he did not even send me a single greeting by him. I wish you would take charge of Michael's law-suit, if by any means it can be brought to bear; but there is need of despatch. For whom, if you do all that is in your power, I shall have to thank you the same as if you had done the favour to myself. You will do the office of interpreter to the sisters, that you may not enjoy your laugh alone. I send you another Epitome of our Gymnasium, to which I had resolved to add as an appendix what had been broken off from those former Commentaries, if time had allowed.

Adieu, my brother and most trusty friend, your brother,

CALVIN.

I need not say that these are troublous times; they speak for themselves. Beware of incautiously communicating the Epitome.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Berne. Vol. 141, p. 43.*]

<sup>1</sup> Addressed—To Monsieur my brother and good friend, Monsieur Daniel, Advocate at Orleans.

IX.—TO FRANCIS DANIEL<sup>1</sup>

The Reformation in Paris—rage of the Sorbonne—satirical Comedy directed against the Queen of Navarre—intervention of Francis I.—deliberation of the Four Faculties—revocation of the censure pronounced against the book entitled “The Mirror of the Sinful Soul.”

PARIS, [October] 1533.

Although I have beside me a forest of materials which furnish most satisfactory evidence of what is written, yet I will restrain my pen, that you may have rather the leading features than a long narrative; to which were I to give way, it would grow almost into a goodly volume. On the first of October, at which time of the year the boys who pass out of the grammar class into that of the dialectics, are wont, for the sake of practice, to act a play, they performed one in the Navarre Gymnasium, which was unusually pungent with the sprinkling of gall and vinegar. The persons brought upon the stage are—a Queen,<sup>2</sup> who, in womanly fashion, was taken up with spinning, and wholly occupied with the distaff and the needle: then the

<sup>1</sup> Letter without date of the month. Written, doubtless, in October 1533. On the testimony of Th. Beza, we know that Calvin dwelt at this period in the College of Forteret at Paris. *Histoire Ecclésiastique*, edit. de 1580, tom. i. p. 14; the same author, in *Vita Calvini*. Already he preached the reformed doctrine with much skill and success. Implicated in the month of November following, along with his friend Nicolas Cop, the Rector of the University of Paris, he had to leave the capital, in order to escape the pursuit of which he was the object, and secretly repaired to Angoulême.

<sup>2</sup> Margaret of Valois, sister of Francis I., Queen of Navarre, one of the most distinguished women of her age, both by the generosity of her character and the graces of her understanding. Inclined by the bent of her mind towards reform, by the devout breathings of her soul, of which we find the expression in her poetry and in her letters, she made use of her influence with her brother, the French monarch, to abate the persecution directed against the disciples of the Evangel, and her generous conduct more than once aroused the fury of the Sorbonne against her. Calvin, exiled from France, had recourse on more than one occasion to the influence of this Princess, and addressed very free exhortations to her. See, in this collection, the letter of Calvin to the Queen of Navarre, of the 28th April, 1545.

fury Megæra<sup>1</sup> appeared, bringing lighted torches near to her, that she might throw away the rock and the needle. For a little while she opposed and struggled; but when she had yielded, she received the gospel into her hand, and straightway forgets all she had formerly grown into the habit of, and almost even herself. Last of all, she becomes tyrannical, and persecutes the innocent and unfortunate by every method of cruelty. Many other devices were introduced in the same style, most unworthily indeed against that excellent woman, whom, neither indirectly nor obscurely, they tauntingly revile with their reproaches. For a few days the affair was suppressed. Afterwards, however, as Truth is the daughter of Time, the whole matter being reported to the Queen, it seemed to her that it would set a very bad example and encouragement to their wantonness, who are always gaping after something new, if this impertinence were allowed to pass unpunished. The prefect of police, with a hundred officers, proceeded to the Gymnasium, and by his orders, surrounded the building, that no one might slip out. He then entered with some few of his men, but did not succeed in finding the author of the drama. They say, that he had little expected such a proceeding, and had made no provision in the event of it; but that, being by accident in a friend's room, he heard the noise before they could get sight of him, and so hid himself away until an opportunity of escape presented. The prefect in command of the police captured the boyish performers; the master of the Gymnasium, meanwhile, resisted this proceeding; in the midst of their wranglings, stones were thrown by some of the boys. The prefect, nevertheless, keeps hold of his prisoners, and forced them to explain what parts they had acted in the scene before supper. When the author of the mischief could not be apprehended, the next thing was

<sup>1</sup> Megæra. This Megère was an allusion to Gerard Roussel, preacher to the Queen of Navarre, one of the most zealous missionaries of the Reformation at Paris. (*Megæra—Mag. Gerardus.*) This information we have from the celebrated John Sturm, in a letter to Bucer, which shews that the introduction of Megæra was a play upon the name: "Nuper in Gymnasio Navarrico novus quidam . . . *αὐτίκως* Reginam introduxit, quæ se in disciplinam diaboli traderet, una cum sacrificio quem Megeram appellant, alludens ad nomen Magistri Gerardi."—Letter of Nov. 1533, printed in Strobel, *Histoire du Gymnase de Strasbourg*, p. 109.



to inquire after those who, when they could have hindered, had permitted the performance, and had so long concealed the whole affair. One who is distinguished above the rest in authority and name, (for he is the great master Lauret,<sup>1</sup>) sought that he might be imprisoned more respectably in the house of one of the Commissaries, (as they call them.) Another of them, Morinus, the second after him, was ordered to keep at home. Meanwhile, the inquiry goes forward. What has been discovered I know not: he is now summoned to appear on a citation of three short days, as they now phrase it. So much for the Comedies. Certain factious theologues have perpetrated another exploit equally malignant, and perhaps almost as audacious. When they searched the shops of the booksellers, among the books which they brought away, they seized the book which is called *Le Miroir de l'Âme Pécheresse*,<sup>2</sup> the reading of which they wish to prohibit. When the Queen was informed of it, she called on the King her brother, and told him she had written the book. By letters addressed to the masters of the Paris Academy he required them to certify to himself whether they had examined the book, and whether they had classed it among those of unsound religion; that if they considered it such that they would give him the reason of their opinion. Referring to the whole procedure, Nicolas Cop, the physician, at present the rector, stated the affair to the four colleges of arts, of medicine, of philosophy, of theology, and of the canon law. Among the masters of arts whom he first addressed, he inveighed in a long and bitter oration against the doctors, because of their rash and arrogant behaviour towards her majesty the queen. He advised them not to interfere in any way in a matter of so much danger, if they did not wish to incur the displeasure of the king, nor to array themselves

<sup>1</sup> This Lauret is designated, in the letter of Sturm above cited, as a man of great erudition and of much influence, "*homo potens et rex sapientum.*"

<sup>2</sup> *The Mirror of a Sinful Soul*: a mystical poem, wherein the Queen of Navarre acknowledges no other Mediator than Jesus Christ, and no other righteousness than his expiatory death. This book, which first appeared in print at Alençon in 1531, reprinted in 1533 at Paris, forms part of the poetical collection published under the title, "*Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses, très illustre Reyne de Navarre.*" Lyon. 1547. 2 vols. in 8vo.

against the queen, that mother of all the virtues and of all good learning. Lastly, that they ought not to take the blame of this offence upon themselves, lest they should encourage the presumption of those who were always ready to enter upon anything under cover of the pretext that it was the deed of the academy to which they had committed them, without the academy being at all aware of it. It was the opinion of them all that the act ought to be disavowed. The theologians, canonists, and physicians, were of the same mind. The rector reported the decree of his order ; next, the dean of the faculty of medicine ; third, the doctor of canon law ; fourth, the faculty of theology. Le Clerc, the parish priest of St. Andrew, had the last word, on whom the whole mischief was laid, others retiring from him out of sight. First of all he praised, in lofty expression, the uprightness of the king, the undaunted firmness with which hitherto he has conducted himself as a protector of the faith. That there were some busy-bodies who endeavoured to pervert this excellent person, who also were in league together for the destruction of the sacred faculty ; that he, however, entertained the confident expectation that they would not succeed in their wishes, and that, in opposition to such firmness as he knew the king to possess. That as regarded the matter in hand, he was indeed appointed by the decree of the academy to that office ; that nothing, however, was less intended by him than to attempt anything against the queen, a woman so adorned by godly conversation as well as by pure religion, in proof of which he adduced the reverence with which she had observed the funeral rites in memory of her deceased mother ;<sup>1</sup> that he held as forbidden books, both those obscene productions,—*Pantagruel* and the *Forest of Loves*, and others of the same mint ; that, in the meantime, he had put aside the book in question as liable to suspicion, because it was published without the approval of the faculty, in fraud and contravention of the arrêt, whereby it was prohibited to put forth anything

<sup>1</sup> Louise of Savoy, regent of France during the captivity of Francis I. at Madrid. She died in 1531. After having favoured for a time the doctrines of the Reformers, this cunning and cruel princess gave the signal for the most ruthless persecution of the preachers of the Gospel.

concerning the faith without the advice and approbation of the faculty ; that, in a word, this was his defence, that what was called in question had been done under warrant and commission of the faculty ; that all were partakers in the offence, if there was any, although they might point blank deny it. And all this was spoken in French, that all might understand whether he spake the truth ; they all cried out, however, that he pleaded this pretended ignorance by way of excuse. There were present also the Bishop of Senlis, L'Etoile, and one of the prefects of the palace. When Le Clerc had made an end of speaking Parvi<sup>1</sup> said, that he had read the book,—that he had found nothing requiring expurgation unless he had forgot his theology. Finally, he required that they would give out a decree by which they might satisfy the king. Cop, the rector, announced that the academy did not acknowledge that censure as it stood ; that they did not approve nor homologate the censure by which the book in question was classed among the prohibited or suspected books ; that those who had done so must look to it, on what ground they were to defend the proceeding ; that letters would be prepared in due time, whereby the academy might excuse itself to the king, and also return thanks for that he had so kindly addressed them in a fatherly way. The royal diploma was produced, by which permission is granted to the Bishop of Paris to appoint what preachers he pleases to the different parishes, where formerly they were chosen at the will of the parishioners ; the chief influence being enjoyed by those who were most obstreperous and possessed by a senseless furor, which they consider zeal, such as never fired Elias, with which, however, he was zealous over the house of God.—Farewell.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Berne. Vol. 141.*]

<sup>1</sup> William Parvi, Bishop of Senlis and confessor of the king. He had translated into French the *Livre d'Heures* of Margaret of Valois, suppressing at the same time from the book a great number of pieces addressed to the Virgin and to the saints.

X.—TO FRANCIS DANIEL.<sup>1</sup>

Retirement of Calvin to Angoulême.

DOXOPOLIS, [1534.]

Without having anything particular to write I can at any time play the gossip with you, and so fill up a letter. Yet why should I intrude upon you with my complainings? The chief matter which, in my opinion, is of sufficient interest to be communicated to you at present is that I am getting on well, and taking into account the constitutional weakness and infirmity which you are well aware of, am also making some progress in study. Certainly, also, the kindness of my patron may well quicken the inactivity of the most indolent individual, for it is such that I clearly understand that it is given for the sake of letters. So that I must all the more endeavour and earnestly strive that I be not utterly overwhelmed under the pressure of so much generous kindness, which somehow constrains me to exertion. Although, indeed, were I to strain every nerve to the utmost I could never make any adequate, or even inadequate return, so great is the amount of obligation which I would have to encounter. This inducement, therefore, must keep me continually mindful to cultivate those common pursuits of study for the sake of which so great a value is put upon me. If permitted to enjoy in repose such as this—the interval, whether I am to consider it of my exile or of my retirement, I shall conclude that I have been very favourably dealt by. But the Lord, *by whose Providence all is foreseen, will look to these things.* I have learned from experience that we cannot see

<sup>1</sup> Without date. After an attentive examination of this letter we believe it to refer to the first months of the year 1534, while Calvin resided with his friend Louis du Tillet at Angoulême. It is known that the young reformer, while he was obliged to retire from Paris, after the discourse of his friend Nicolas Cop, (November 1533,) found an asylum in the house of Du Tillet, and spent several months at Angoulême in solitude and retirement. It is from that town, designated under the Greek name of *Doxopolis*, that he wrote to his friend Francis Daniel, in praise of the kindness of his host (Louis du Tillet) and of the peaceful retreat which Providence had prepared for him.

very far before us. When I promised myself an easy tranquil life, then what I least expected was at hand; and, on the contrary, when it appeared to me that my situation might not be an agreeable one, a quiet nest was built for me, beyond my expectation, and this is the doing of the Lord, to whom, when we commit ourselves, Himself will have a care for us. But I have already almost filled my page, partly with writing, partly with blotting.—Adieu, greet whom you will.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Berne. Vol. 450.*]

### XI.—TO CHRISTOPHER LIBERTET.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin in Basle—revision of the Bible of Robert Olivetan—treatise on the Immortality of the Soul.

BASLE, 11th September, [1534.<sup>2</sup>]

When our friend Olivetan<sup>3</sup> had intimated, by the letters which he wrote about the time of his departure, that he had put off his intended publication of the New Testament to another time, it appeared to me that I might make the revision which had been promised at my leisure, and reserve it to another time. Meanwhile other studies engaged my attention, and I thought no more of the matter, or rather sank down into my wonted languor. As yet, I have scarcely got my hand to work upon it, and besides, the volume which I sent will be necessary in the

<sup>1</sup> Christopher Libertet or Fabri, of Vienne in Dauphiny, a worthy minister of the Church of Neuchatel. At an early period he entered into friendly relations with Calvin, was in 1536 pastor of the congregation at Thonon, took part the same year in the disputation at Lausanne, and was recalled in 1546 by the Church of Neuchatel, which he served until the time of his death, in 1563, with equal wisdom and faithfulness.

<sup>2</sup> Without date. This letter, written before the publication of the Bible of Robert Olivetan, refers evidently to the year 1534. Under the necessity of leaving France in order to escape persecution, Calvin had retired to Basle, where, in the year following, he composed his book, "De l'Institution Chrétienne."

<sup>3</sup> Peter Robert Olivetan, related to Calvin, and translator of the Bible into the French language. Banished from Geneva in 1533, he had retired to Neuchatel, where he published successively (1534-1535) his translation of the New and of the Old Testament. This work, undertaken at the request of the Vaudois of Piedmont, had been revised by Calvin.

collation, and yet, though it was brought three months ago, it has not yet been put together. This has not occurred through any indifference on my part, but partly by the slowness of the binder, whom, nevertheless, we have not ceased to call upon daily, partly also because when it was brought to me at first we required a supply of paper to the extent of six sheets, which could not be had immediately. Henceforward, however, I shall set apart an hour every day to be bestowed on this work. And should I throw together any remarks, I will not deposit them with any other person than yourself, unless Olivetan on his return shall anticipate you. Further, word has been brought me by some one, I know not who, at your request, that you did not entirely approve of some things in my treatise on the Immortality of Souls.<sup>1</sup> So far from being offended because of your opinion, I am greatly delighted with this straightforward plainness. Nor does my perversity reach to such a degree as to allow myself in a freedom of opinion, which I would wish to take away from others. That I may not, however, vex or annoy you unnecessarily, by fighting the same battle over and over again, I wish you to understand that the book has been recast by me. Some things have been added, others left out, but altogether in a different form and method. Although some few things have been omitted I have inserted others, and some things I have altered. As for that essay which I had given Olivetan to read, it contained my first thoughts, rather thrown together in the shape of memoranda or common places, than digested after any definite and certain method, although there was some appearance of order. That new book (for so it must be called) I would have sent you, had it been read over again by me. But since it was written out by Gaspar, I have not looked into it. Farewell; may the Lord have you in His keeping, and enrich you always with His own gifts.—Yours,

MARTIANUS LUCANIUS.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is the treatise which is entitled, "*Psychopannychia, qua refellitur eorum error qui animas post mortem usque ad ultimum judicium dormire putant.*"—Paris, 1534, 8vo. This treatise, translated into French by Calvin himself, has been inserted, with a preface of the author, "*a un sien amy,*" in the "*Recueil des Opuscules,*" p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> A pseudonyme which Calvin sometimes made use of in his Latin correspondence.

Some how or other it has so happened that in the hurry of writing I omitted what by no means I had intended. It was to exhort you and the other brethren in a few words, but most heartily, to the cultivation of peace, for the preservation of which you ought all of you to strive the more earnestly as Satan watches intently for its overthrow. You can scarce believe how much I was shocked at hearing of that new uproar about the lepers, set agoing by him of whom I would never have suspected such a thing. But at length he vomited out the poison with which he was sweltering from long dissimulation, and having fixed the sting, like a viper fled away. Be not wanting, on your part, I entreat you, so far as lies in you, which, indeed, I was confident would be the case of your own accord, but I was willing at the same time to interpose my prayer for peace.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of the Company of Neuchatel.*]

## XII.—TO FRANCIS DANIEL.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin in Geneva—translation into French of the “Institutes of Christianity”—disputation of Lausanne—establishment of the doctrines of the Reformation in the Pays de Vaud.

LAUSANNE, 13th October 1536.

That you may not, according to old use and wont, lay a long and clamorous accusation against my indolence, seeing that whole three months have passed away during which you have received not a single letter from me, accept now a brief statement as to the state of matters upon the whole. For some days

<sup>1</sup> This is the first letter of the Reformer after his settlement at Geneva. Having left his retreat of Basle in the beginning of the year 1536, he had made a rapid tour in the north of Italy, and revisited France, which he had left in the month of July on his return to Switzerland. Not being able, without danger, to traverse Champagne and Lorraine, he went back to Basle by the way of Geneva, (August 1536,) when he was detained in that town by the entreaties of Farel. Afterwards he accepted the office of Professor of Theology, and attended the disputation of Lausanne on the 1st of October, which was followed by the establishment of the Reformation in the Pays de Vaud, conquered by the Seigneurie of Berne from the Duke of Savoy.

I was detained at Geneva by the brethren, until they extracted from me a promise to return; then after that, I brought back my relative Artois<sup>1</sup> to Basle, and gave offence to several churches in the course of my journey, by whom I was requested to stay with them for a little while. In the meantime, the August fair was over, which was the most favourable opportunity for the conveyance of letters. Furthermore, as soon as I got back to Geneva, a violent cold attacked me, which afterward settled upon the upper gum, so that there was scarce any relief even after nine days, and after having been twice bled, with a double dose of pills and several fomentations. Nor is it yet completely shaken off. During that lost opportunity, although there was abundant leisure for writing, and the way or channel of correspondence was not entirely closed, yet I was kept continually occupied upon the French version of my little book;<sup>2</sup> and the almost certain expectation began then to arise, that the letters might reach you enriched by that acquisition, rather than that they should come empty-handed. But before my intention could be fulfilled, the day fixed for the disputation at Lausanne had already arrived,<sup>3</sup> at which my presence was required; and at the same time I saw the November fair approaching, which I considered to be a more convenient time for writing, and therefore it seemed to me better to wait for that opportunity. So much to stop your expostulations.

The talk of the disputation above mentioned has, I understand, been spread so far and wide, that I do not doubt some whiff of it has reached your city. The disputation was appointed by a decree of the Council of Berne, accompanied by a solemn Edict,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Calvin had left Noyon accompanied by his brother Antony and his sister Mary, who went to settle at Basle. Bèze, *Calvini Vita*.

<sup>2</sup> The book here referred to is no other than the *Institution Chrétienne*, first published in Latin, (Basle, 1536, in 8vo.) Calvin thought of giving a translation of that work. The first known edition of the *Institution Chrétienne* in French bears date 1540.

<sup>3</sup> The disputation of Lausanne, in which Farel, Viret, and Calvin took part, began the 2d October, and lasted seven days. The narrative of what took place may be found in Ruchat, *Histoire de la Réformation en Suisse*, edit. 1836, vol. iv. pp. 161-163.

<sup>4</sup> Edict of July 16, 1536. Ruchat, *Histoire de la Réformation*, vol. iv.; *Pièces Justificatives*, No. II.



whereby the Senate declared, that it was free to every one, and *that* without the dread of being called in question, to state whatever might concern the matter of disagreement upon the point of religion. They considered that this was the most likely method, by which publicly to expose the unskilfulness of those who try to oppose the Gospel, and that thus they might render of no avail the triumph arising out of this new authority which they have accepted at the hand of the Duke of Savoy. Already in many places, the idols and altars of Popery have begun to disappear, and I hope it will not be long before all remaining superstition shall be effectually cleared away. The Lord grant that idolatry may be entirely uprooted out of the hearts of all. I do not describe to you the precise form in which the disputation presents itself, because it is not easy to do so in a brief explanation, and also because I trust it will some time or other be published. To-morrow, if the Lord will, I set out for Berne, about which affair you shall hear from me by other letters; and I am afraid it will be necessary for me to hasten forward as far as Basle: which inconvenience, however, I shall endeavour if it be possible to avoid; more especially taking into account the state of my health, and the very unseasonable time of the year. If those idle bellies with you, who chirp together so sweetly in the shade, were only as well disposed as they are talkative, they would instantly flock hither to take on themselves a share of the labour, to which we must be inadequate, since there are so few of us. You can hardly believe the small number of ministers compared with the very many churches which need pastors. How I wish, seeing the extreme necessity of the Church, that, however few they may be in number, there were at least some right-hearted men among you who may be induced to lend a helping hand. May the Lord preserve you.—  
Yours,  
MARTIANUS LUCANIUS.

Remember me, I entreat you, particularly to your mother and sister, your wife also, if you think proper, your kinsmen, and all the rest.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Berne.* Vols. 141 and 142.]

XIII.—TO MEGANDER.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin and Caroli encounter each other—prayers for the dead—the  
Genevese clergy accused of Arianism—need of a synod.

GENEVA, [February 1537.<sup>2</sup>]

Grace to you and peace from the Lord.

It must be already well known to you how much mischief Caroli<sup>3</sup> has of late stirred up; he has devised a method, forsooth, by which it is possible to aid the dead by prayer, not that their sins may be remitted, but that they may be raised up as expeditiously as possible;—certainly a piece of very necessary information, especially at the present time, when we are pressed by so many difficulties. The ambitious man wished to recommend himself to the public, in whose esteem he does not rank very high, by some novelty, as if that had been any thing new which has long ago been propounded by different authors. Nevertheless he impudently claims the praise of the discovery, from whence it is evident, with what purpose he has been induced to put forth this dogma. But even were we to yield to his eager desire of popularity, that false applause which he

<sup>1</sup> Gaspar Grossmann, (Megander,) from Zurich, minister of the Church of Berne. In 1537 he presided in the Synod of Lausanne, where the errors of Caroli were condemned, and in the following year became pastor of the church at Zurich.

<sup>2</sup> Letter without date, written evidently a little before the meeting of the Synod of Lausanne, which took place about the middle of the month of May 1537.—Ruchat, *Histoire de la Réformation en Suisse*, tom. v. p. 24-40.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Caroli, of Rosay in Brie, doctor of the Sorbonne, known by his disputes with Farel and with Calvin. His unsettled disposition, as well as interested motives, led him towards the work of the Reformers; he sought the friendship of Le Fevre of Etaples, at Paris, and, in 1534, went to Geneva, where the license of his manners drew upon him the censures of Farel and also of Viret, against both of whom he vowed thenceforward an irreconcilable hatred. Called afterwards as minister to Neuchatel and to Lausanne, he attacked the doctrines of the Reformers, maintained the necessity of prayers for the dead, and saw his doctrine condemned in the Synod of Lausanne. (May 1537.) Banished by the Senato of Berne, he retired to France, went back to the Church of Rome, and died miserably in that city, after an agitated and wandering career.

demands, of what consequence would that be, when it shall have been clearly proved that the device was not only over curious and trifling, but also silly, as I pledge myself that I will show? But setting aside all consideration of the truth as well as falsehood of the dogma, it is not possible to excuse his extreme malice and dishonesty in the spreading of it abroad. While he had Viret present, there was not a word about that matter. He paid us a visit,—immediately thereon a rumour follows. The matter speaks for itself, that he had remarked upon the absence of his colleague with the view of disturbing the peace of the Church. To this must be added, that upon your own motion it was agreed, by the judgment of all the brethren, that nothing should be brought before the people in an unusual manner, or without having been previously considered, unless many were advised with before hand. You are aware how just and reasonable that is, and how well adapted for promoting the unity of doctrine. By this decree we were well assured that our Churches would be most seasonably guarded against being cut up by dissension. But this troublesome fellow, as if he did not care to what extent he might disturb the Church of Christ by his rashness, at the same time thus sets at defiance the law and judgment of the whole Church. Even if he had not hitherto led a dissolute and altogether irrational life, he ought, by this time, to have considered that a different kind of behaviour must now be adopted by him. But even now how does he proceed? Never have I heard any thing more outrageous; so that it was evident he was doing his best to carry on the war against us. So great was his mental excitement, such the fierceness of exclamation, so bitter were his expressions. Viret was the first to come back; but when that had no effect, at the request of the brethren, I myself also interposed. In the presence of your deputation he positively refused, in the most supercilious manner, to give any explanation of his proceeding; then he complained that my anxious care in bringing the matter under your notice was nothing less than a base conspiracy to ruin him, when most assuredly it is quite certain, that I never entertained any enmity towards him, and that Farel and

Viret had never found fault with him except on account of his immoral conduct. But Viret refuted all his quirks and calumnies with so much cleverness, that being manifestly detected, he might be considered as convicted upon this point. That he might, therefore, appear to have got the better of us in something or other, he accused the whole meeting of Arianism. I rose up immediately and brought forward the confession in our Catechism, which is repeated in our public letter to your college. Even this did not quiet him, but he declared that we would be suspected in that matter, until we subscribed the creed of Athanasius. I replied, that it was not my practice to approve any thing as the words of God, unless upon due consideration. Here observe the rabid fury of the little ass. Thereupon he cried out, that it was an expression unbecoming a Christian man. The deputies said that there was need of a General Assembly where these matters might be discussed, which they also undertook that themselves would see to. Neither can I in any adequate degree express in words, nor can you conceive, the imminent peril to the Church if that measure be any longer delayed; therefore I do not think we ought to wait until the deputies make good their promise, but rather that these measures must be referred to you and to your colleagues. In that view of the question, the public letter has been addressed to your college. But, in truth, my very worthy brother, you can do most in this affair yourself, and ought, in virtue of the power which belongs to your place, above every other person, to strive for it to the uttermost. You appear to me to be specially required, seriously to turn your attention to this business. You can hardly believe how sorely the foundations which have hitherto been laid have been affected by this one blow, while, in the meantime, the unskilful are told, that we are not agreed among ourselves upon the doctrine of religion, nor can there be a doubt that more serious consequences will ensue presently, unless we apply the suitable remedy. Already certain of our people are called impostors, who not only concealed that they pray for the dead, but have confidently affirmed that they do not. Further, the peasants object, that we ought to be agreed among ourselves before we endeavour to bring others

to be of our mind. Think with yourself what may be expected to arise from such preliminaries as these. Moreover, this stigma with which that wicked calumniator has branded us must not be allowed to stick, so as that the seamless robe of the Gospel may utterly be rent asunder by the reproaches of the ungodly. It ought, therefore, to be carefully looked to, that all the ministers speaking the French language, who are under the government of your republic, may be enforced to attend the council, where all controversies of this sort are to be decided. We must lose no time, however, and also strive, if by any means that can be obtained, that it may meet before Easter. There are, besides, some other matters which it may prove of no inconsiderable advantage to have settled before that time, as, indeed, we hear some muttering about, I cannot tell what, of an incruusted body of Christ, with which absurd folly it is requisite that we grapple in due time. Do you, therefore, according to your piety and prudence, see to it that you be not wanting in a matter of so great moment, and arrange at once for the meeting before Easter. We have compared your directory for the ceremonies,—translated by Maurus<sup>1</sup> at our request, with ours, and find no difference except that it is more concise. I brought it with me lately to Lausanne, as there was some prospect that I might also visit Berne. It seemed to me, however, to be better to wait for the day of assembly, when we can go over it at our leisure. Pray do not hesitate to write, both concerning that and the calling of the synod, at which our ministers will willingly attend.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

<sup>1</sup> Is this Maurus Musseus, a French gentleman, who was converted to the Gospel, the friend of Bucer and of Ecolampadius? We are here left to loose conjecture in the absence of positive testimony.

XIV.—TO VIRET.<sup>1</sup>

Preaching of the Gospel at Besançon—ecclesiastical intelligence—discouragement of Farel—necessity for the return of Viret to Geneva.

GENEVA, 23d April 1537.

As I had no particular matter which occasioned my writing to you at present, so I had not intended to write if Farel had not thought otherwise. I have, therefore, taken up the pen rather in compliance with his request, than because I considered it to be necessary. For I have no doubt whatever of his having embraced everything in his letter which was likely to suggest itself to my recollection. When a certain person of our acquaintance had brought us word, that he had lately been informed by letter that the brother who was detained in prison at Besançon had been let out with the general consent of the people, and set entirely at liberty, when not long ago he would have been retained a prisoner in that dungeon, from whence no one was ever brought forth, unless to undergo the sentence of death, and besides, that the bishop, having packed up his furniture in a great rage, had retired into the neighbouring castle, the opportunity seemed to us to be most particularly well suited for our getting a footing in that quarter. We have, therefore, requested

<sup>1</sup> Such is the address : To my very dear brother, Viret, Minister of the Church of Lausanne.—The minister, Peter Viret, one of the three great Reformers of French Switzerland. Born at Orbe in 1511, he completed his education at the University of Paris, and from the time of his return to his own country, devoted himself to the preaching of the reformed doctrine, which he spread at Orbe, at Payerne, and at Granson. Gifted naturally with persuasive genius and eloquence, he was sent by Farel to Geneva in 1534, and there held a public disputation against the Dominican Furbiti. He contributed powerfully to the establishment of the Reformation in that city. Named two years after (1537) Pastor of the Church of Lausanne, he served that charge until 1538, the period of his destitution by the Senate of Berne, and of his retirement to Geneva with the more illustrious members of the Vaudois clergy. Compelled by his weak state of health to leave Switzerland, he removed in 1561 to the South of France, wrought in the work of the ministry in the churches of Nîmes, of Lyons, of Orange, and died in 1571, either at Orthes or Pau. The numerous writings of Viret mentioned by Senebier, *Hist. Litt. de Genève*, tom. i. pp. 156-159, prove him to have been an original writer, though rather diffuse, and ingenious and eloquent as a moralist.

a certain native of Langres, who was then close at hand, a man richly endowed in the best kind of learning and of mild deportment, that he would undertake the management of that province. But as he could not be induced to do so by any entreaties, we have thought of him of Tournay, if anyhow he could be dragged away from Aigle, which we suppose might not be altogether impracticable, if Froment<sup>1</sup> would so far acquiesce as to take upon him that charge of his. He may very well give them to understand, that he has been called by his friends in France for a few days to Geneva, in which interval he will be able to ascertain whether there is any chink or inlet by which to gain an entrance; and should he have any success at all, then all is well—the point is gained; but if he shall see that the corn is not yet ripe, he will retire without delay.

Do urge forward matters as much as possible, that we may be ready beforehand on the day of assembly, and do so arrange in the meantime that all our friends attend on the day of meeting thoroughly well prepared. For we shall never be able to stand our ground against so much wickedness, unless we hold closely together in the most perfect agreement with each other. Wherefore, both in setting forth the confession and in all our deliberation, it will be desirable to have one voice for all—to be unanimous.

Michel, notwithstanding the remonstrance of the whole Presbytery, being self-elected Bishop of Aubonne, has gone away from hence, noways delayed or hindered by the very many solemn entreaties of the brethren, by which they endeavoured to withdraw him from so bold an undertaking. If such a precedent were once allowed, what will our ministry be but plain robbery? I therefore say nothing about the man, because at first sight you will easily scent out what he would be

<sup>1</sup> Antony Froment, originally from Dauphiny, one of the earlier missionaries of the Reformation at Geneva. He was nominated pastor of the Parish of Saint Gervais in 1537; at a later period he resigned the ministry, was attached as secretary to Bonnavard in the work of drawing up the Chronicles of that town and city, and died, leaving behind some curious memoirs on the history of the religious revolution of which he had been one of the instruments at Geneva. Senebier, *Hist. Litt. de Genève*, tom. i. pp. 93 and 150; MSS. in the Library of Geneva, No. 140.

at. I consider your being restored to us to be indispensable, unless we are willing to lose Farel, who is more exhausted with the great anxiety than I ever thought would be the case with one of such an iron constitution. I wished you to be aware of this, that at your leisure you might think of a successor. I am afraid, also, lest that church may be entirely dispersed by schism rending it in pieces, if we leave any gap or vacancy in it.

May the Lord continually enrich you with the daily increase of His Spirit, my most friendly brother. Mr. de Hautmont<sup>1</sup> intends returning to France. If, therefore, you can procure a trustworthy and suitable conveyance, will you send back the cloak and such of the books as had been brought thither. Saunier<sup>2</sup> himself and his relative salute you.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 106.]

### XV.—TO SIMON GRYNEE.<sup>3</sup>

The nature of the controversy between Calvin and Caroli clearly laid open  
—Synod of Lausanne—Caroli is condemned, and the teaching of Calvin  
and Farel solemnly approved.

BERNE, [May 1537.]

Although the tricks and wiles of Satan are altogether marvellous and not easy to believe, those, I mean, by which he closely assails us in our work, of which we have had some

<sup>1</sup> Louis du Tillet, senior curate of Claix in Poitou, and fellow-student of Calvin, then in retirement at Geneva, under the name of Mr. de Hautmont. In the year following he returned to France. See, in this Collection, three Letters of Calvin to Louis du Tillet, (1538.)

<sup>2</sup> Antoine Saunier, regent of the College of Geneva.

<sup>3</sup> Simon Grynée, a learned theologian and professor of the *belles lettres*, the friend of Erasmus and of Melancthon, rector of the Academy of Basle. His intercourse with Calvin dates from the epoch of the first visit of the Reformer to that town, (1535, 1536.) They became more intimate when Calvin, banished from Geneva, returned anew to seek an asylum at Basle, and was hospitably entertained in the house of Grynée, to whom he dedicated, in testimony of his remembrance, his Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, (18th October 1539.) Two years afterwards, Simon Grynée died of the plague. His nephew, James Grynée, discharged



bypast experience, the malicious craftiness wherewith he has of late assaulted us by his apt tool Caroli,<sup>1</sup> has never in the least beguiled us. For we had not only foreseen all this sort of warfare long ago; we were even prepared with our utmost energy to maintain the conflict. When first we heard, therefore, that the Arian heresy was imputed to us, and then a little afterwards the Sabellian, none of these things very much disturbed us, seeing that our ears had long since been well seasoned against such calumnies; and we entertained the assured hope that they would eventually pass away in a wreath of smoke. In the meantime we could only oppose all this by availing ourselves of that defence, which lay ready to our hand, by which we could give abundant satisfaction to all pious and right-minded men. Indeed, some short time previous we had drawn up and set forth a catechism,<sup>2</sup> also published in French, where we testify that we embraced the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, under one essence of the Godhead: making, nevertheless, such a distinction between each from the other, that no room might be left for any crooked suspicion of ambiguity. We taught, certainly, that Christ is the true and natural Son of God, who had possessed the like essential deity with the Father from all eternity, who in the fulness of time had assumed our flesh, foreordained for our redemption.

When we saw that the wild beast was persevering in his rabid course, we sought a hearing in the assembly of ministers from throughout the whole canton of Berne, in whose presence we might publicly defend our innocence. Those brethren

the office of Dean of the Church of Basle, and was the correspondent and friend of Théodor de Bèze.

The calumnious accusations directed by Caroli against the doctrine of Farel and of Calvin having spread at Basle, the latter considered it his duty, in a letter to Grynée, to expose the whole history of the controversy with Caroli, in order to oppose the entire calumny. See the two letters of Grynée to Calvin.—*Simonis Grynæi Epistolæ*. Edit. de Štreuber. Basle, 1847, pp. 50-53.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 3, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> In 1536. No copy of this first edition of the Catechism of Calvin is known, nor of the second, which was published two years later at Basle, (1538.) The earliest known edition is that of (1541) at Strasbourg.

speaking the French language met first of all at Lausanne,<sup>1</sup> whither also two deputies from the Senate of Berne,<sup>2</sup> as well as two ministers, were sent.<sup>3</sup> Whatsoever falsehoods they were able to trump up that worthy personage gathered up into one bundle. Indeed he had come well furnished in the way of accusation, prepared and ready with his bag, after the fashion of a lawyer. We emptied his bag, however, to such a degree, by our refutation, as not to leave even the shadow of a suspicion upon the mind of any one present. At last we came to the reading aloud of our Confession of Faith, in which he pointed out some ten errors which he considered as such; almost every one else was of opinion that there was nought expressed in it that was not godly and devout. We were thereupon absolved forthwith by the judgment of the synod, while, on the other hand, he was adjudged unworthy to discharge the functions of the ministry. His persevering impudence shewed clearly that he was no way abashed or downcast by such a result. Again he brought forth that silly bag of emptiness crammed more full than ever; and when we had unbagged the whole of its contents, by which he was doing his best to throw some suspicion on the past, the formulary of our Confession was at length produced, which, although it was not chargeable with any other crime whatever, he held notwithstanding to be guilty of one capital offence, because Christ was there affirmed to be that Jehovah, who of Himself alone was always self-existent, which charge I was quite ready to meet. Certainly, if the distinction between the Father and the Word be attentively considered, we shall say that the one is from the other. If, however, the essential quality of the Word be considered, in so far as He is one God with the Father, whatever can be said concerning God may

<sup>1</sup> That meeting had ended on the 13th May.—See Ruchat, *Hist. de la Réf.*, tom. v. p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> These two deputies were Rudolph de Graffenried, Banderet, and Nicolas Zerkinden, Secretary of State.

<sup>3</sup> One of these ministers was Gaspar Grossmann, (Megander.) See Letter XIII. p. 23. He had been charged by the seigneury of Berne to draw up the oath which was to be taken by the ministers, and the order of procedure to be followed in the Synod.

also be applied to Him, the second person in the glorious Trinity. Now, what is the meaning of the name Jehovah? What did that answer imply which was spoken to Moses? I AM THAT I AM. Paul makes Christ the author of this saying. We do not take the trouble to persuade you and all the godly to approve the truth of that judgment; but we have been unwilling that the concealed malignity of this hopeless calumniator should pass unnoticed, lest rumours of any kind might reach you so as to make an impression at variance with the true state of the case. Nothing, indeed, could have been set forth more plainly than the statement in our Confession, that Christ is that eternal Word begotten of the Father before all time. Therefore, of a truth, unless we please to imagine a twofold Deity, it behoves that we speak concerning His essence no otherwise than as concerning the essence of the one God. There is no one to be found who is not satisfied with this form of expression except himself. The brethren, as was worthy of the faithful ministers of Christ, arrived at the formal conclusion, that it appeared to them that we had been most unfairly and unreasonably brought under any suspicion at all; and that they had not observed anything to be disapproved in our Confession. While these proceedings were going forward, a letter was brought from Myconius addressed publicly to the meeting. On the back of that, another from Capito to Farel, addressed in general terms, from both of which it was evident that an appalling rumour had been spread far and wide about our controversy. To sum up the whole, this affair has been maliciously, as well as artfully, cooked up by certain individuals, in order to stir up an evil report, and to encourage a bad opinion of us throughout all countries. And although this man of straw has not been able hitherto to succeed in his most vain attempt, yet this, however, is certain, that he has greatly annoyed us. As indeed we cannot esteem it to be a matter of no great consequence that our adversaries should hear, that we are jangling in debate with one another, and not even agreed upon that most important doctrine of our religion, far more, that the churches should suspect us of such a thing. We have been the more astounded

by this intelligence, because it never entered into our imagination that we had any need to be alarmed on that account. We hope, however, it will yet come to pass, through the goodness of the Lord, that these noisome exhalations from the pit may soon be blown away and fall back upon those who devise any mischief to the cause of Christ and of His Church. Already, indeed, the arm of the Lord has begun to reveal itself, and to put forth his power in extinguishing these beginnings of evil, such as they are. The calumniator himself<sup>1</sup> has been driven into banishment by a decree of the Senate; we have been openly and at once acquitted, not merely from crime, but also from even the suspicion of guilt. Though, indeed, for a season, the fellow may try to set out his wares to the best advantage under the sign of Athanasius, as if he were suffering in defence of the faith, there does not, however, appear to be any great danger that the world will esteem as an Athanasius a person who is sacrilegious, a whoremonger, a homicide steeped in the blood of many saints. While we proclaim him to be such an one, we avouch nothing but what we are ready to establish by solid proof. These facts, I wished in brief compass to signify to you, that we may not in absence (as sometimes happens) be pressed beyond measure by the overweening ignorance and the malicious accusations of the ungodly. I send you also a copy of the Confession, which you may communicate to your colleagues.<sup>2</sup> For I consider this to be a matter of great moment, that we may not be frightened from our propriety by obscure reports which no one can lay hold upon. I have at the same time to beseech of you that you will take charge of sending, not only the Confession, but also this letter, to each of the brethren, or rather that you do stretch a point to allay their anxiety, by a letter from yourself. Adieu; may the Lord

<sup>1</sup> On the authority of Ruchat, it appears that Caroli did not wait for the decision of the Lords of Berne, and that he withdrew himself into voluntary exile from the condemnation with which he was threatened. The act of his desertion was given to Farel and to Calvin, the 29th of June 1537. (MSS. de Grossmann. Archives de Berne.) We shall meet him again in the following letters of the Reformer.

<sup>2</sup> See that Confession, (Calv. Epist. et Responsa,) p. 227.

Jesus fill you with His Spirit, so that with one mind and heart you may be enabled to extend the glory of His name.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Latin Correspondence—Amsterdam Edit.*, tom. ix. p. 226.]

## XVI.—TO THE MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH OF BASLE.

Persecution in France—request addressed to the Seigney of Basle in favour of the faithful of the Church at Nismes.

GENEVA, 13th November 1537.

The urgent business on account of which we have thought it right to send this person by express to you may be stated in few words. A new outbreak of the cruel rage of the ungodly has burst forth at Nismes, as the place is now called, no mean city, a town of Languedoc, against the unhappy brethren who reside there, scattered up and down, and that at a time when we might have suspected nothing of the kind. Not very long ago we had obtained letters from the town councils of Strasbourg and Basle, by which the safety and personal security of all those, who were then imprisoned throughout France on account of religion, was commended to the care of Count William.<sup>1</sup> That eminent person, as was reported, had obtained of the king that they should all be set at liberty. We rested

<sup>1</sup> William du Bellay, Seigneur of Langey, one of the cleverest diplomatists under the reign of Francis the First. Born in 1491, he died the 9th January 1543. William du Bellay and his brother John, the Bishop of Paris, had shown themselves favourable to the first ideas of Reformation, and had consulted with the King for the purpose of calling Melanchthon into France, there to put in train the work of religious pacification.—Bèze, *Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 10; Florimond de Remond, *Histoire de la Naissance et du Progrès de l'Hérésie*, liv. vii. p. 817. The last mentioned author has given the letters which passed on this occasion between Melanchthon and Francis I. The French Protestants formed great expectations from Du Bellay. In these terms Bucer wrote to the physician Ulrich Chelius, 17th Aug. 1534: "Dominus excitet multos isti heroi similes, et spes erit forte ut emergat aliquanto regnum Christi."—Sturm, on his part, wrote to Bucer, 17th Nov. 1535: "Si Langæus isthuc veniat obsecro, habe eum in numero eorum qui quidvis pati volunt pro Christo."—*MSS. de Strasbourg.*

secure in this expectation, until word was brought to us, that the fire of persecution was again raging in that quarter. Two persons have been burnt, concerning the manner of whose death you will hear from the eye-witness himself, for he can relate to you in Latin what he has narrated in detail to us. Many have been thrown into prison, who are in jeopardy of their lives, unless timely opposition is made to the fury of those who, already drunk with the blood of these two victims, are not otherwise at all likely to set any bounds to their persecuting spirit. The two who suffered have shown a remarkable spirit of constancy to the very last, although their patient endurance of suffering was tried with the most exquisite cruelty. Of a truth, we may question whether the same strength of mind will be found in the others. Relief, therefore, ought to be brought to them in their present exigency, if anyhow it can be supplied, lest those may break down who are weaker in the faith. Besides, the utmost care must be taken that the blood of the godly, which is so precious in the sight of God, may not be lightly esteemed by us.

We hear that a treaty was lately agreed upon by your Rulers with our King, in which some mention was made of religion, to the effect that henceforth those who agree with yourselves in their sentiments of religion, should not be punished with the wonted severity. If that is true, we must not allow so favourable an opportunity of helping the brethren, to escape unimproved, unto whose assistance Christ is not only calling us with a loud voice, but complains that He is deserted and forsaken by us when they are deserted.

Wherefore, most excellent and pious brethren, devote yourselves entirely to this cause, according to the Christian sincerity of your heart; because we are confident you will do this of your own accord, we do not press you more urgently upon the matter. Take measures, therefore, with your council, that the subject may be brought under their consideration effectually and in earnest, and with as much brevity as possible, so that these furious men may not be able to counterwork you. You know how watchful is their enmity. Most learned and beloved

brethren, may the Lord Jesus daily enrich you more and more with the increase of his Spirit.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. Copy—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

## XVII.—TO LOUIS DU TILLET.<sup>1</sup>

Departure of Louis du Tillet from Geneva—regret of Calvin—controversy between the two friends regarding the character of the Church of Jesus Christ.

FROM VILLEFRANCHE,<sup>2</sup> 31st January [1538.]

MONSIEUR,—Eight days before I received the letters which you left at your departure to be forwarded to me, John had arrived,<sup>3</sup> so that some weeks before I had any news of you the rumour of your departure had taken wing hither. Although such a state of uncertainty was very great occasion of annoyance to

<sup>1</sup> Louis du Tillet, curé of Claix in Poitou, canon and archdeacon of Angoulême. He was the brother of John du Tillet, the celebrated registrar of the Parliament of Paris, and of that other Du Tillet, who became Bishop of Sainte-Brieuc and of Meaux. Having devoted himself to an ecclesiastical career, his first leanings inclined him towards the Reformed. With Calvin he became acquainted at the University of Paris, formed a friendship with him, shared his perils, and received him in 1534 at Angoulême in his own house. United thenceforth to the young Reformer by a like faith, he resigned his curacy of Claix to follow him, under the name of Hautmont, to Strasbourg, to Basle, and into Italy. In August 1536 he was at Geneva, when Calvin was there retained by the earnest entreaties of Farel. But the struggles to which the Reformer was thenceforward condemned, were little suited to the mild and contemplative disposition of Louis du Tillet. A prey to indecision, he secretly left Geneva and went to Strasbourg, where his anxieties were only put an end to by his return to the Roman Catholic faith. He wrote to Calvin to inform him of this change, and to submit to him his scruples regarding the lawfulness of the ministry in the Reformed Churches. Calvin replied; and that controversy, free, sincere, but tempered by respect, marked the later relations between these two men, at first united and too soon separated by the religious revolution of the sixteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> Ville Affranchie (Genève.)

<sup>3</sup> John du Tillet, brother of Louis, raised at a later period to the honours of the Episcopate. Accomplished in the knowledge of the ancient languages and in sacred archæology, he was charged with various scientific missions by Francis I., and in the course of his travels had visited Geneva.

me, nevertheless, I held my judgment in suspense as much as was possible; what troubled and tormented me most was the fear I entertained of having offended you by my imprudence, as I know and acknowledge that I have not observed towards you the due consideration which I ought. It is indeed true, that I derived such advantage from your society and conversation, that absence could not be joyous to me; but inasmuch as I saw you were in a somewhat languid state, I bore my loss patiently, considering your comfort as a sufficient recompense. Finally, since the arrival of your letters from two different quarters, by them I have partly understood your intention. While I consider, however, that my compar<sup>y</sup> could not be very agreeable in such rudeness and incivility as I used towards you, notwithstanding, I feel confident that that circumstance has neither estranged nor alienated you from us, for which we may certainly rather thank your prudence, which I have had to sustain me in regard to that, than because I conducted myself as became me.

I cannot conceal from you that I have been very much astonished on hearing of your intention, and even the reasons which are put forth along with the declaration of it in your letters. What occasions me the greatest surprise is, that I considered you so settled and resolved in that affair, that it would no way be possible to dislodge you from your purpose, and although you could not have had in the course you have been following very solid reasons, yet this so sudden change has appeared very strange to me, seeing the constancy and firmness which you manifested. May God grant, nevertheless, that your change of opinion may be as benignly construed by others as I endeavour to take it.

As for the reasons which have swayed you in arriving at that determination I cannot perceive them to be very peremptory. I know well that my conscience before God is sufficiently assured of the contrary, and I hope that it will be so until the day when we must appear to give in our account. Besides, I am much misunderstood if I have not manifestly proved the justice of my cause in such a way that every one ought to be content, were it not that the one party pardon



themselves too easily, while the others would readily give entrance to Jesus Christ, but only by ways wherein He will in nowise walk. I have never doubted that the eminent persons<sup>1</sup> you mention might in some degree have helped, without intending it, to land you in such a conclusion, while in touching on this point in letters written to me, they concealed it. Certainly their great learning and piety may well lend authority to their consultations. But I am well assured that in this matter, besides substantial grounds, I shall have more colour of reason than they, if I assume a mask to make myself look like them. Both the one and the other constrain me by their conduct to desire in them greater firmness and constancy. However high our reputation may be, it is never well to be so very liberal in bestowing another's property; and if we must beware of being bountiful at the expense of men, what caution ought to be exercised in dispensing the truth of God, which He does not commit to our trust that we may lessen it in anything? I pray the Lord that Himself would give us so much understanding as that we may clearly comprehend that He will not be served by halves, and as our foolishness would divide His portion, but entirely according to His own will.

If you do acknowledge for churches of God those who hold us in execration, I cannot help it. But we should be in a sad plight if it indeed were so. For certainly you cannot give them this title, unless you hold us to be schismatics, in which case you will have to consider how your opinion will agree with the deliverance of our Master, "whatsoever ye shall bind on earth," &c. If you consider that there always remains some remnant of the blessing of God, as St. Paul affirms of the Israelites, you may well understand that I agree with you, seeing that I have sometimes declared to you that such was my opinion even as regards the Greek churches. But it does not follow as a consequence from that, that in the assembly we are bound to acknowledge the church; and if we do there acknowledge her, she will be our church, not that of Jesus Christ, who marks His own by other tokens, when He says, my sheep hear my voice; and St. Paul, when he calls her the

<sup>1</sup> Bucer and Capito, the Reformers of Strasbourg.

“pillar of truth.” You will answer me that she will be found nowhere, seeing that everywhere there is ignorance. Yet the ignorance of the children of God is of such a nature, that it does not hinder them from following His will.

Were it a question of comparison of such meetings with the synagogues of the Jews, I should fear to injure the latter in not preferring them to the other, or at least placing them in the background, for their idolatry is not so great, nor their abomination so horrible. What one can see of good, it is common to both, except indeed that it appears to be a great advantage that the name of Jesus Christ is avowed in the one and not in the other. But its influence is not the less abolished. Or if we would find a more suitable comparison, it is such a state as existed among the people of Israel under Jeroboam, or rather under Ahab, at a time when the spirit of the people had been corrupted by long usage. I do not mention these things without good cause, for I perceive how many begin to flatter themselves under the title of The Church, strongly condemning whatsoever is not like their own, for which they will have to render account. Let them consider by what right they do so, for I know well that our assurance is too certain to yield merely to frivolous objections. As regards yourself I do not think that you can look upon us otherwise than as if you held intercommunion with us, but it is a step towards separation from the Church of God when any one joins that which is opposed to Him.

Moreover, I think that I perceive such a fear of God to be in you that I must see great arguments to move me from the persuasion which I have entertained. Be assured, then, that the first slight reports will not have such power over me as to overturn the experience I have had of you for many long years. But although I may tolerate that infirmity, offering you no more opposition than if you were one of ourselves, I can by no means approve your conduct; and would choose rather that I should be taken out of the world by a bitter death, than approve your deed, which I know to be damnable in itself, and besides that, fraught with ruin, or at least marvellous offence towards many, as well as because I see the readiness with which

we justify ourselves, in order to encourage others to follow our example. However, concerning those matters of which at present you are resolved, I will make no long dispute. I would rather entreat the Lord that it may be His pleasure to deliver you from all scruples, so that His way may be quite plain and open in that direction, waiting an opportunity when such shall offer itself.

As for the departure of Lois Dartois, I never had a suspicion that it proceeded from you, inasmuch as I have been lately informed to the contrary. But it has been a poor stratagem on his part to conceal things from me in which he could not deceive God; for it is no light thing to tempt God, which those do who voluntarily bring themselves again under bondage. The miserable excuses with which we are wont to cover even our moral nakedness before men,<sup>1</sup> will never be able to endure the heat of God's judgment.

You have long ago graciously permitted me to consider all things in common between us. Would that it pleased God I could make you a due acknowledgment. My companions charge me to commend them to you, who are of the same mind with me, although I have striven to the utmost, without shewing your letters, to prevent their taking offence. I could give no other counsel to John than that which my conscience warranted, unless I would turn traitor to the truth of God, and to his personal salvation. You will not take it amiss. I entreat you to have special remembrance of us in your prayers, to which although the knowledge you have of our weakness ought sufficiently to stir you up, nevertheless, the difficulties which press upon us ought yet more to arouse you, as they are now greater than ever.<sup>2</sup> After humbly commending myself to your kind remembrance, I pray the Lord to keep you in His holy protec-

<sup>1</sup> In the French original: *Les sacs mouillés* dont nous avons coutume de nous couvrir devant les hommes.

<sup>2</sup> The opposition which the establishment of the ecclesiastical discipline drawn up by Farel and Calvin met with at Geneva, became every day more intense and lively. The newly-elected Syndics made common cause with the malcontents, and already gave signs of the forthcoming crisis which was to lead the way to the triumph of the party of the Libertins and the banishment of the Ministers.—Spon, *Histoire de Genève*, edit. 1730, tom. i. p. 276.

tion, and so to direct you that you may not go astray in that slippery path whereon you are, until Himself shall have manifested to you His complete deliverance.

You will pardon me if this present is very confusedly written, shortness of time is in part the cause, and partly our troubles, besides that the argument was not very easy to handle.

Your very humble servant and brother,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.<sup>1</sup>

[Fr. Copy—Imperial Library, Paris MSS. fr. Fonds Baluze, 8069-5.]

### XVIII.—TO HENRY BULLINGER.<sup>2</sup>

State of the Church at Geneva—wish for the union of the Reformed Churches—mention of Luther.

GENEVA, 21st February 1538.

Grace to you and peace, from God the Father and from Christ the Lord, most respected and learned brother.

<sup>1</sup> Charles d'Espeville. Pseudonyme adopted by Calvin during his residence at Angoulême, and his journey in Italy, (1534-1536.)

<sup>2</sup> Henry Bullinger, born July 18, 1504, at Bremgarten, minister of that parish in 1529, was a friend of the reformer Zuingli and his successor at Zurich, after the fatal battle of Cappel, 1531. He discharged the ministry of that church with wisdom and prudence for more than forty years, kept up a regular correspondence with the Reformers abroad, was on friendly terms with Melancthon, Cranmer, Calvin, Théodor de Bèze. In 1566 he drew up the Swiss Confession of Faith, and in the way of advice, exercised a decisive influence over the progress of the Reformation in the different countries of Europe. He died at Zurich, September 17, 1575. His decease was deplored by the churches of Switzerland as that of a father, and Théodor de Bèze consecrated some verses to his memory.

“Doctrina si interire, si pietas mori,  
Occidere si candor potest;  
Doctrina, pietas, candor, hoc tumulo jacent  
Henrice, tecum condita.” . . . .

(*Icones Virorum Illustrium.*)

Bullinger left some precious works; among others a Chronicle which he wrote in German, Commentaries and Theological Treatises, some of them on important and remarkable questions, and a vast Correspondence, preserved more especially at Zurich and at Geneva.

Were I to begin to describe to you at length the full narrative of our most wretched condition, a long history must be unfolded by me. For I call ours the trouble which for a long time has pressed, and which now severely presses upon that Church over which the Lord has been pleased to set us. But because there is not enough of leisure at present for explaining everything, and these good men can relate somewhat themselves, I will not trouble you with a larger epistle. Although, indeed, they have not perhaps discerned the very source of the evil, nor perceived whither the attempts of the wicked tended, yet they have forecasten pretty clearly the aspect of affairs, how it was likely to turn out. How I wish that we could have a single day for free communication together, for from such a meeting we could not depart without much advantage. I have some things which can neither be treated safely in a letter, nor determined, until they have been weighed and thoroughly discussed on both sides. This, however, I will venture to throw out in passing, that it does appear to me, that we shall have no lasting Church unless that ancient apostolic discipline be completely restored, which in many respects is much needed among us. We have not yet been able to obtain, that the faithful and holy exercise of ecclesiastical excommunication be rescued from the oblivion into which it has fallen ; and that the city, which in proportion to its extent is very populous, may be distributed into parishes, as is rendered necessary by the complicated administration of the Church. The generality of men are more ready to acknowledge us as preachers than as pastors. There are many other things besides, which, although we desire intensely to see amended, we can find out no means of doing so, unless that can be accomplished by faith, by diligence, and by perseverance on the part of all. Oh, if a pure and sincere accommodation could be agreed upon at length among us ! What, then, would hinder the assembling of some public Synod, where individuals might propose whatever they may conceive to be most for the benefit of the churches ? A way might be found out of going to work by common deliberation, and if need be, that the cities and princes also should assist in this undertaking

by mutual exhortation and counsel, and also confirm by their authority; but in so great perplexity, the Lord is rather to be inquired of, that Himself may open up a way.

Pellican has informed us that you have received a kind and friendly reply from Luther, from which Grynée affirms that he entertains much hope of seeing peace established.<sup>1</sup> But of what kind we have not been able to divine, seeing that that church, which, from its near neighbourhood, might most easily communicate with us in all things, has not thought us worthy to receive any intelligence whatever. When occasion offers, you must not grudge to let us at least understand the sum of it. Farel greets you. Will you salute for me with no common esteem my highly respected brethren in the Lord, your colleagues, Pellican, Leo, Theodore, Bibliander, and besides, Phyrsius. May the Lord keep you all in safety for the promoting of His kingdom.—Yours wholly, CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Archives of Zurich.* Vol. i. Gest. vi. p. 287.]

<sup>1</sup> Bucer and Capito were at this time engaged in very active negotiations to bring about a union between the Reformed Churches of Switzerland and those of Germany. Luther did not oppose himself to this accommodation, and had written, Dec. 1, 1537, to the reformed districts of Switzerland, a letter full of the spirit of tolerance and conciliation, in which we remark the following passage:—"They can easily advise with Bucer also and Capito on all these matters, provided we can lay aside all that is offensive, and in like-minded agreement give room for the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit, that we may go forward in pious and brotherly concord. Assuredly, in so far as we are concerned, and especially as regards myself, casting aside whatever may be occasion of offence, I shall embrace you in faith, good will, and with love."—*Hospinian Historia Sacramentaria*, tom. ii. p. 276. In another letter to Capito of the same year, 6th Dec. 1537, he thus expresses himself:—"I write these things that you may know that our heart is upright and sincere in the hope of agreement; may the Lord himself complete the work. Amen."—D. M. Luther's *Briefe*, edit. De Wette, tom. v. p. 70.

In a letter to Bullinger, written 4th March 1538, at length he renders an evidently deep-felt homage to the memory of Zuingli and Œcolampadius. "I can freely declare that, after having seen and heard Zuingli at Marbourg, I have considered and esteemed him as a most excellent man, as also Œcolampadius; so that their calamity has well-nigh disheartened me," &c. These sentiments of true generosity seemed almost to open up an era of reconciliation and of peace between the Churches.

XIX.—TO HENRY BULLINGER.<sup>1</sup>

Synod of Zurich—attempt at reconciliation between the banished ministers and the town of Geneva.

BERNE, 20th May 1538.

If I have hitherto deferred writing, it has been because everything was so very much in suspense, that it was not possible to write anything for certain. And now, as the narrative of all that has happened [at Geneva] could not be given by us without complaining, we only desire to acquaint you, that the treatment which we have experienced, though in opposition to all our wishes, has nevertheless been in accordance with our expectation. Besides the very irksome delay of a fortnight, it was also a source of very much annoyance, that none of those things which passed at Zurich, and had been openly concluded there, were noticed by Konzen.<sup>2</sup> And in order not to appear to uphold a bad cause, he declaimed with much violence against us, as if it were evident that we wished to draw back and not to keep the promise we had given to the brethren. It only remained, therefore, that the Senate itself should take the lead in regard to everything, who in passing the decree took no

<sup>1</sup> Important events had fallen out at Geneva. Expelled from that town (23d April 1538) for having refused to administer the communion on Easter day, Calvin and Farel had gone to Berne.—(Spon, *Hist. de Genève*, tom. i. p. 276.) The deputies of the reformed Swiss cantons were met at Zurich to treat about the union with the Lutheran Church. The two ministers appeared before that assembly and gave account of their conduct at Geneva. Without intimating any opinion on the matter at issue, "The Lords deputies resolved to write in friendly terms to the Genevese, to induce them to support their pastors in the work of re-establishing and putting their churches on a better footing. They also charged the Bernese to support that letter by a deputation."—(Ruchat, *Histoire de la Réformation en Suisse*, tom. v. p. 84.) But this double intervention proved ineffectual. The banishment of the ministers was confirmed, May 26th, by the assembly.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Konzen, minister of Berne, deputy to the Synod of Zurich. In that assembly he manifested the most hostile sentiments toward Farel and Calvin, whose conduct at Geneva he disapproved.

very particular account of those things which had been conceded to us at Zurich by the general consent of all. For we are content rather to encounter any alternative than not to try every method by which the requirements of religion may be satisfied, or by which we may discharge the duty we owe to the Church. Now, therefore, we start upon our journey,<sup>1</sup> which may it please the Lord to prosper, for as we look to Him in our proceedings, so we commit the success to His wise disposal. I am compelled to interrupt my letter, scarcely now begun, because the brethren hasten to depart. Adieu, most kindly brother, and with very respectful regard.—Greet for me most lovingly your colleagues.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Archives of Zurich. Gest. vi. 166, p. 1.*]

## XX.—TO PETER VIRET.

Arrival of Farel and Calvin at Basle.

BASLE, [*towards the end of May 1538.*]

We have at length reached Basle, but well soaked with the rain and completely spent and worn out. Nor was our journey free from perils, for in truth one of us was almost carried away by the swollen currents; but we have experienced more tender usage from the impetuous river than from our fellow-men, for since, contrary to all right and reason, they had decided that we should travel on foot, that also has been complied with through the mercy of the Lord in preserving us. There is nothing fixed or agreed on as yet, because Grynée has committed the charge of the Academy to Oporin.<sup>2</sup> We departed from Berne without taking leave of the Senate, although it had

<sup>1</sup> In order to testify the conciliatory spirit which animated them, Calvin and Farel accompanied, within a short distance from Geneva, the deputation which had been charged to entreat their return. But their solicitations having been rejected, they determined to proceed to Basle, where they arrived after a most fatiguing and even perilous journey. See following letter.

<sup>2</sup> John Oporin, Director of the Academy of Basle, one of the most celebrated printers of that town.



been agreed in common among ourselves to do so. We perceived some here were inclined that we should be retained ; and they confidently alleged that we would be unpardonable if we should decline so just a call. That we might not do anything rashly, the Lord at length has opened an outlet to us. For when we asked a hearing of the Senate, we were put off to the next day,—on the receiving of which answer to our request, it seemed to us that we had done all that was required of us in duty, and that we were discharged from further application in that quarter.

Your affairs, dear Courault,<sup>1</sup> we have entrusted to good men, according to our ability, but only in a general way, that you may not be brought under obligation before we have tried to do our best elsewhere. You know how much we wish to serve you. When we have got some settled abode we will write to you more at large and by the first opportunity. Farewell, most excellent and dear friends and brethren.—Your brethren,  
FAREL AND CALVIN.

This brother to whom we have delivered the horses to be brought back, has made up his mind to stay with you if he can procure any suitable employment: therefore see what can be done to put him in the way of being serviceable to the Church of Christ. We think well of his sincerity and probity, and that he is not unskilled in useful learning. If he shall appear worthy of your regard, for our sake also we desire to commend him to your good offices.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.*—*Library of Geneva*. Vol. 106.]

<sup>1</sup> The conclusion of this letter is addressed to the minister Courault, the colleague of Calvin, expelled along with him from Geneva. He lived in retirement with Christopher Fabri at Thonon, whence he was called as minister by the Church of Orbe.

XXI.—TO LOUIS DU TILLET.<sup>1</sup>

Journey of Calvin to Strasbourg—project of a new assembly at Zurich—policy of the Bernese—in his retirement Calvin breathes freely—news from France.

STRASBOURG, 10th July 1538.

I hope, Sir, you will not take in ill part that John<sup>2</sup> is gone away thitherward to you without my letter, for it grieved me to write to you, having so many things to communicate, without having time to make at least a partial communication. On the other hand, it was not easy for me to impart such information to you by halves, without at once entering fully into the details. The complete declaration was by no means impossible, but I was afraid that it would scarce be pleasing to you, wherefore I greatly preferred entirely to forbear writing, casting the duty upon John, who, as I think, will have faithfully acquitted himself of the charge, except that he will not have been able clearly to discover to you the source and origin of the evil, which is not known to many. I have been so greatly importuned by the two of this town<sup>3</sup> that to satisfy them I have made the journey hither.

Touching ourselves, it has been resolved that it is fit and proper even now to call an assembly, where Zurich, Berne,

<sup>1</sup> The first letter of Calvin to Du Tillet (Letter xvii. p. 36) did not remain unanswered:—"If my retreat in this country has caused you great annoyance, as I have understood by your letter of the last of January, I myself have not thought the less of it, considering the interruption of our accustomed converse and familiarity . . . could not produce in you so much disquietude. But what could I have done, if, having been there two years or thereby, my conscience could never be at peace on this account, that without a clear call I had retired from a charge which I ought not to have relinquished without the command of God, whereby I have been put into a state of languor, such as you have seen, and by reason of the great unceasing depression of mind which has taken possession of my spirit, I have for this some time past been useless for every thing."—*Paris MSS.* This letter, written from Paris, (10th March,) did not reach Calvin at all; it was during a sojourn to Strasbourg that the Reformer, driven from Geneva, (23d April 1538,) had retired to Basle, and imparted to his old friend the events which condemned him to a new exile.

<sup>2</sup> See Note, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Bucer and Capito, already mentioned.

Basle, this town of Strasbourg, Bienne,<sup>1</sup> and one from the aforesaid place,<sup>2</sup> shall be present, where, after diligent inquiry made by them, it may be formally declared that we have duly and faithfully administered our charge, to the end that such a testimony may stand as a lawful judgment, to shut the spiteful mouths of the malignant, as well as to the confusion of those who have taken upon them to engage in such an enterprise. By the same method they hope that the schisms which may take place, and have already begun, will disappear. When I do well consider the case, the difficulty seems to me to overpass all human help; wherefore, I have nought else to recommend than to commit the issue to the great Physician, who alone can provide and take order in applying the proper remedy.

The Bernese endeavour, or, I should rather say, persist,<sup>3</sup> as much as they are able, to make believe that all goes well, but there is no one else who does not think quite the contrary. By his just judgment God sends blessing after such a fashion upon the head and family of those who thus wickedly mock at the disorder of His Church; and it is sent for their correction, in order that they may be differently minded in an affair of so great importance. I shall retire to Basle, waiting to understand what the Lord would have me to do. It is not the fault of those of this town that I am not their guest; but they have charge enough without me, and I can live for a while supporting myself on what you left with me, and a portion of my books; yet the Lord himself will direct us. Above all, however, on looking back and considering the perplexities which environed me from the time when I first went thither, there is nothing I dread more than returning to the charge from which I have been set free. For while, when first I entered upon it I could discern the calling of God which held me fast bound, with which I consoled myself, now, on the contrary, I am in fear lest I tempt

<sup>1</sup> That town, then independent, and already reformed, was united by a treaty of alliance to the Protestant cantons of Switzerland.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Geneva.

<sup>3</sup> The Bernese were the declared opponents of the ecclesiastical discipline which Farel and Calvin had wished to establish at Geneva, and which appeared to them to trench upon the right of the civil power. The seignery of Berne were not disposed to favour the two banished ministers.

Him if I resume so great a burden, which has been already felt to be insupportable. There are other reasons, which can only be explained in conversation, with which, however, those with whom I have to do will never rest contented. Nevertheless, I know assuredly that our Lord will guide me in that so very doubtful a deliberation, the more so because I shall look rather to what He will point out to me than to my own judgment, which beyond measure drawing me contrariwise, I feel ought to be suspected.

There is a stir at present about an affair of vast consequence, and *not without the knowledge of the king and the emperor*,<sup>1</sup> which I can well suppose that Monsieur Firmin<sup>2</sup> will tell you something about, and therefore I say no more about it. One may very much doubt whether they are not merely trying the ford without any thoroughgoing intention; but within two months we shall know for certain whether there is any thing in it. After my humble commendation to your good graces, I pray our Lord so to guide you in His way, that you may be holy and unspotted at the day of His appearing.

Your humble servant and assured friend,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[Fr. Copy—Imperial Library of Paris. Baluze, 8069-5.]

## XXII.—TO WILLIAM FAREL.<sup>3</sup>

Farel called as minister to the Church of Neuchatel—sad condition of the Church at Geneva—uncertainty of Calvin—Bucer's urgency to draw him to Strasbourg.

BASLE, 4th August 1538.

The grace of the Lord be with you. The person who had brought back the horse, promised that he would return after

<sup>1</sup> Allusion to the truce concluded, 18th June 1538, between Francis I. and the Emperor Charles V., and to the approaching conclusion of a general peace, on which great expectation was founded for the settlement and reformation of the Church.

<sup>2</sup> Antony Firmin, minister of the church of St. Thomas at Strasbourg.—See *Sculteti Annales*, I. 170, 172.

<sup>3</sup> To my most excellent friend and brother, William Farel, faithful minister of the church at Neuchatel.

William Farel, the most illustrious missionary of the Reformation in French  
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three days. When, after the lapse of five days, I had ceased to expect him, I began to look about for a messenger. For I knew that as soon as my silence began to appear to you to be longer than it ought, you would impute it to carelessness as well as indolence. But while these were my thoughts, lo, the messenger presented himself upon the spot, who informed me of your departure two days before he came away. With regard to your letter, that elaborate lament over your own clownish simplicity with which you furnished me for Grynée, I have carefully complied with. When dinner-time arrived, I told Grynée that I observed from your letter the rain somewhat had slackened your wonted speed: whereupon, by your riding at so slow a pace, Simon remembered that you were a rustic. Thereafter also I read to him your letter, and added of my own accord, what appeared to me to be required in the way of serious apology. In regard to him, so little need was there of clearing yourself, that he would have complied good-humouredly with your infectious anxiety, if the business in which he is now completely immersed had not stood in the way. How our successors<sup>1</sup> are likely to get on, I can

Switzerland, was born at Gap, in Dauphiny, (1509?) He studied at the University of Paris, under the direction of the learned Le Fevre of Etaples, whose friendship he speedily obtained, and shared with him the same faith. Of an ardent spirit, and gifted with an impetuous eloquence, he preached the doctrines of the Reformation successively at Paris, at Meaux, in Dauphiny. In 1524 he left France, when he retired to Strasbourg, and brought over to the new doctrine (as the true doctrine of the Gospel was termed at that time) the Duchy of Montbeliard, Bienne, Morat, Neuchatel, Aigle, Geneve. Driven at first from the latter town in 1532, he re-appeared there, and was thereupon banished. On the 27th August 1535, he obtained the famous declaration which restored the Reformation. In less than two years afterwards he was banished from Geneva along with his colleague Calvin, whom he followed to Basle, and became, in the month of July 1538, pastor of the church of Neuchatel, which he served until his death (13th Sept. 1565) with indefatigable activity.

Having been called as minister by the Church of Neuchatel, Farel had left Basle precipitately, without taking leave of Calvin, then on his journey to Strasbourg. On returning to Basle, Calvin wrote the following letter to his old colleague, which is one of the earliest in the long correspondence which they kept up with each other.

<sup>1</sup> The new ministers elected at Geneva to replace Calvin, Farel, and Courault, were Antony Marcourt, pastor of the Church of Nyon, and Doctor Morand. Their nomination, approved only by a part of the Church, gave occasion to serious disorder. See Gaberel, *Histoire de l'Eglise de Genève*, 1853, vol. i. *passim*.

conjecture from the first beginnings. While already they entirely break off every appearance of peace by their want of temper, they suppose that the best course for themselves to pursue was to tear in pieces our estimation, publicly and privately, so as to render us as odious as possible. But if we know that they cannot calumniate us, excepting in so far as God permits, we know also the end God has in view in granting such permission. Let us humble ourselves, therefore, unless we wish to strive with God when He would humble us. Meanwhile, let us wait upon God. For the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim will speedily wither. I could wish that you had not so much anxiety on my account. Since your departure, I have begun to consider more attentively what it may be right to be prepared for in case of emergency. It cannot be told how this apprehension torments me, lest those who measure us by their own standard, because conscience accuses themselves, may think that we have fixed designedly upon our present abode as convenient for the purpose of retaliating injuries, and so may set themselves to contrive some new contests, and take no rest until they have stirred up some fresh disturbances against us. When I am out of the way, suspicion will not be so apt to arise. For no one will be so utterly malignant as to suppose that we intend anything farther. But if you do not at once come hither, we must put off until the meeting become hopeless, which the Strasburghers always insist on our requiring; or if we obtain it the result will teach us what we ought to do. This above all, in the name of the Lord, I entreat of you, that you do determine nothing about me without first of all giving me a previous warning. You will perceive, from Bucer's letter, what are his present sentiments. He has communicated certain other matters to Grynée in writing, which I have not yet had an opportunity of reading. I strongly suspect, however, that they tend to the point of my hastening thither, which I shall not comply with, unless a greater necessity convinces me. In so far as I can discover, the person you wot of has endeavoured most ambitiously, by means of his relations, to pave the way for himself to the office of the ministry. Expressions sometimes are thrown out which afford greater

room for conjecture than for any meaning which they contain. But as he hoped that ere long I would take my departure, he advised me to undertake what by and by I might resign to him. He did not know what might be brought to pass with you, and I took care closely to conceal that from him. "Are you not ashamed," said he, "in so great an assemblage to remain silent? Would there be no church here vacant for you?" I replied, that we had an auditory also in our house at home which suited us very well. He, forsooth, would have nought but what was public. Having dined once with us, he wished to be received at table by Grynée through my introduction. Excuse was of no avail, but he must urge the proposal with unseasonable importunity, until Grynée restrained his forwardness by checking him aloud. I have satisfied the owner of the horse; the rest of your commissions are duly attended to. Grynée salutes you in the most friendly manner, and entreats you to pardon him, on account of his business engagements, that he does not write at present. Oporin also, Stagnæus, Du Taily, for the other two have gone from this. May the Lord preserve and protect you, may your soul prosper in the strength of His own Spirit.—You will not envy me the reading of Capito's epistle, which I send you unsealed. Will you, if you please, return both the letters of Bucer, or carefully preserve them, as hereafter we shall have occasion for them? Salute not merely with your complaisance, but from my heart, all our brethren, especially such of them as you well know are here meant. If you desire that I should write, arrange that I may have messengers from yourself.—Yours, CALVIN.

Read after this Bucer's letter, where he advises that we carefully avoid colleaguings together, since it may be suspected that the one urges on the other, to what both are too much inclined to. He even wishes that I may yield to that extent, in order that this irritable disposition may not be disturbed by frequent rumours.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

## XXIII.—TO FAREL.

New efforts of the ministers of Strasbourg to attract Calvin thither—the plague at Basle—detail of the death of a nephew of Farel.

BASLE, 20th August [1538.]

The grace of the Lord be with you.

After frequent perusal of your letter at length I perceived my own obtuseness, who could be so much bewildered about the rank of Count John, as if, indeed, there could have been any one more competent to deal with the matter than your neighbour. Now my wonder ceases; for there has been a Helen in the strife? but well hath the Lord cared for the interests of the Church in not permitting him to fall a victim to her seductions. Explain to me, I entreat you, the other things about which I am at a loss, particularly what was reported in French separately concerning the two ministers, both the elder and the younger. I know not what to think regarding Peter,<sup>1</sup> but the whole weight and import of what was said, depends on the person of the speaker. The Strasburghers are taking active measures just now concerning me, that I may agree to go to them. They plead very earnestly with Grynée; nor indeed do they conceal from me their strong desire that I would acquiesce. Bucer's last letter I send you herewith, by which, as usual, he persists in advising me to do so. Firmin<sup>2</sup> urges, by many arguments, that it is desirable. Some of the reasons I put aside as savouring of his peculiarities; but others are specious, such as that it would prove of some advantage when our adversaries should see that I had an opportunity of lecturing in that church, which they are compelled, willingly or unwillingly, to respect. Then, if a diet can be had, that my opinion would have more weight, and would carry with it a sort of prestige when it was known that such a Church had bestowed on me the ministry. I have excused

<sup>1</sup> Without doubt, Peter Caroli.—See Note 3, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 2, p. 49.



myself anew however, since they could not include you. Grynée, although with more reserve, that he might not appear to suggest any thing in this arrangement from a desire to be rid of the charge of entertaining me, shewed that the bent of his opinion inclined to the advice they had given. If they wished to bind me for a longer period, the determination would not be so difficult; but you perceive what they require. I shall wait for your opinion. To prevent them having immediate recourse to you, I leave them to suppose that I am detained here by weighty reasons. They will allow you, indeed, quietly to go forward in the work of the Lord, but will not suffer both of us to labour together.

I wish that here I could have ended my letter, that you might be spared the hearing of what will be displeasing to you. But I shall not hesitate to inform you of what the Lord has done, who are yourself both learning and teaching others willingly to submit to His providence. Last Sabbath-day your nephew was seized with the plague.<sup>1</sup> His companion and the goldsmith who bore testimony to the Gospel at Lyons brought me word immediately. As I had taken some pills to relieve the complaint in my head I could not go to him myself. Every thing, however, which was required for the preservation of his life was both faithfully and carefully attended to. A woman, acquainted with both languages, was engaged to sit up with him, and in some degree accustomed to the care of persons suffering under such maladies. Not being able to undergo the fatigue of constant attendance herself, she got her son-in-law to assist her. Grynée visited him frequently; I did so too as soon as my health allowed it. When our friend Du Taily saw that I did not fear the danger, he insisted on sharing it with me: we were with him for a long while yesterday, and as the signs of approaching death were now evident, I imparted spiritual rather than bodily comfort. He wandered a little in his mind, yet had so much consciousness of his state as to call me back to his chamber

<sup>1</sup> The pestilence, seven times in the course of this century, made great havoc in the city of Basle. The plague of 1565 carried off a third part of the population of the town and suburbs.—See Jean de Muller, *Hist. de la Confédération Suisse*, tom. xi. *passim*, and the *Diary of the Physician Platerus*, MS. Library of Basle.

that he might entreat me earnestly to pray for him ; for he had heard me discoursing of the benefit of prayer. This morning, about five o'clock in the morning, he departed to the Lord. Of his companion, who was afflicted with the same malady, we cannot yet write anything certain. Yesterday, there appeared to me to be some hope. I fear, however, that last night may have injured him ; for although he occupied a separate bedchamber, and had his own attendant, he heard what had happened to his companion. I shall see him, as I hope, again to-day. That excellent man, the goldsmith, because he had intercourse with the infected, has been dismissed by his master. I have sent him, with my recommendation, to Strasbourg, that he may get a situation there. Concerning the wearing apparel and other moveables of your nephew thus you have it : The son-in-law of the old woman affirms that all his clothes, which, however, are not many, were left to him, but with no appearance of truth, since he could not have done so unless in the intervals of delirium under which he laboured during the whole night. He has a sword and a shirt with Wolf. I know for certain that he had no money when he fell ill. It was required, therefore, to expend somewhat for his support while living and what was necessary for his burial. I fear, however, lest any little sum of money which I conjecture to remain may be made away with. This I write to you somewhat minutely, since I consider it right to inform you that you may know all. His landlord, Wolf, who has this morning told me all these things, thinks that the story about the legacy of clothes is a pure fable. He is a decent fellow, and one who conducts himself uprightly. Adieu, excellent and most esteemed brother.—Hastily yours,

CALVIN.

Our friends salute you and Michael Mullet, who has stolen hither for three days during the holidays of his school, to take counsel along with us. On his return he will intimate that he does not remain there beyond the time agreed on. After having heard your last letter, Grynée requested to be informed as soon as I should have obtained the first opportunity of a mes-

senger, but I was unwilling to interrupt him at this time of the day.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

#### XXIV.—TO FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin at Strasbourg—negotiations between Bucer and the magistrates of Geneva—first preaching of Calvin in the French Church—Anabaptists of Metz.

STRASBOURG, [*September 1538.*]

My departure from Basle was so hurried and disorderly, that I brought away with me, stuffed aside in the innumerable travelling-pouches of the brain, the letter which I promised would be left for you; nor indeed was there at the time, anything that required my writing sooner. Three days after my arrival a messenger presented himself, and there was already somewhat worth communicating. But as I was afraid to run the risk of sending my letter by that channel, I chose rather to put it off until now. Bucer<sup>2</sup> does not deny that N. has sent an answer such as might be expected from him. Indeed, the only reason he gives why he would not read it to me, is because he was unwilling to raise my indignation to no purpose. You may hence infer how much spiteful bitterness there was in it, which, according to his wonted prudence, he plainly intimated could not be passed over by me without committing a worse scandal. S., in the meanwhile, applauds his complacent courtesy. For he entertains the possible hope that both he (*i.e.*; N.) and the senators who have hitherto been opposed to us can be reconciled, if only first of all we declare our good-will by letter. Which, as it is

<sup>1</sup> Letter without date, but written, as the first words indicate, shortly after the departure of Calvin from Basle, and his arrival at Strasbourg, (September 1538.) Earnestly solicited by Bucer and Capito to associate himself in their labours, he had accepted the charge of Professor of Theology and the ministry of the French Church in that town.

<sup>2</sup> Bucer had entered into correspondence with some of the magistrates of Geneva to bring about a reconciliation between them and the banished ministers.

vastly ridiculous, Bucer reckons out of the question. But suppose that might be hoped for, at what point could we begin? Shall we, as though we were the authors of the scandal, study to conciliate them? and that we may not blink that consideration, shall we consider, also, what method should be observed for the reparation of the offence? I am not of opinion that past negligences are so far about to be amended, nor do I perceive any provision about to be made for the future. We may indeed acknowledge before God and His people, that it is in some measure owing to our unskilfulness, indolence, negligence, and error, that the Church committed to our care has fallen into such a sad state of collapse;<sup>1</sup> but it is also our duty to assert our innocence and our purity against those who, by their fraud, malignity, knavery, and wickedness, have assuredly brought about this ruin. Willingly, therefore, do we acknowledge before God and all the pious, that our unskilfulness, as well as carelessness, deserved to be chastised by an example of this kind. But I will never admit that that unhappy Church fell into such utter disorder through our fault, seeing that we are conscious in ourselves, that it is far otherwise in the sight of God. Nor is there an individual among them who can fix upon us the smallest particle of blame. Now, in reference to the future, who cannot see that by the proposed method we shall be exposed to scorn and mockery? For there is none of them who would not immediately cry out that we would shrink from no disgrace, however great, provided only that we might be restored to our position. But the Lord, as I hope, will open up a better way. Nor indeed has Bucer himself given over writing, whose authority they cannot despise; but he will appear to be set at nought, unless at length they now yield somewhat to him. This, moreover, is his best hope, that if he shall not obtain a meeting or conference before next spring, even then at least he may discover a remedy. And in the meanwhile, perhaps the Lord will so order and dispose in providence that all may be more fully ripened. I preached on the Lord's day, which, as it was

<sup>1</sup> The Church at Geneva was at this period given up to the most lamentable divisions and in a state of deplorable disorder.

commended among the people by the acceptance of all the brethren, had many who were either hearers or at least spectators. The brethren have a mind, should there appear to exist among them any face of a Church, to grant also the administration of the Lord's Supper. At Metz,<sup>1</sup> when already everything was opposed to pure religion, when the Senate was sworn to its destruction, and when the priesthood had joined them with all their fury, there has arisen the plague of the Anabaptists, as it were, to create fresh scandal: two were cast headlong into the Moselle, a third was punished by banishment, with the brand of ignominy. So far as I could ascertain by conjecture, that barber who was the companion of Hermann was one of them. I fear that this pestilential doctrine is widely spread among the simple sort in that city. The Lord preserve you and the rest of the brethren to Himself, and make you the means of prospering His own work. Salute all of them for me, especially Thomas and the others who were guests with me along with yourself.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

## XXV.—TO THE CHURCH OF GENEVA.<sup>2</sup>

Letter of consolation and advice addressed to the Church at Geneva, deprived of her faithful pastor—testimonies of his innocence—confidence in God—trust for the future.

FROM STRASBOURG, *this 1st of October 1538.*

To my dearly-beloved brethren in our Lord, who are the relics of the dispersion of the Church of Geneva.

<sup>1</sup> The Reformation had extended to Metz in 1523. Two martyrs, Jean le Clerc and Jean Chatelain, had sealed with their blood the introduction of the Gospel into that country.—Bèze, *Hist. Eccl.*, tom. iii. p. 431.

<sup>2</sup> Although he had become the minister of a community of exiles, and had engaged in theological works of the greatest importance at Strasbourg, the activity of Calvin was by no means confined to these objects. But in the midst of the contending claims on his time and care, his attention was ever turned towards the Church of which he had been the pastor—towards "these relics of the dispersion," whom he exhorted from the depths of his exile, and whom he consoled by his letters.

The mercy of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be continually multiplied to you by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

MY BRETHREN,—I have restrained myself from writing to you until this present, in the hope that the letter of our brother Farel, who had taken upon him that charge for both, would prove sufficient; and also by that means I would take off all occasion, in so far as was possible, for misrepresentation on the part of those who are on the outlook for it. That is, in order that they may not calumniate us by affirming that we purpose, in drawing you closer to ourselves, to retain you in some degree of partiality toward us. I have been unable, however, to refrain from writing to you to assure you of the affection with which I do ever regard you, and my remembrance of you in the Lord, as it is my bounden duty; neither shall that fear prevent me which has somewhat withheld me to the present time, forasmuch as I see right well that the colour of pretext which the malicious, from the love of detraction, might put upon it, would be found utterly frivolous and vain. God is our witness, and your own consciences before His judgment-seat, that while we had our conversation among you, our whole study has been to keep you together in happy union and concord of agreement. Those who, for the sake of making and maintaining a faction apart, had separated from us, have introduced division as well into your Church as into your town. Discerning the beginnings of that plague from the commencement, we have faithfully occupied ourselves as before God whom we serve, to apply the remedy; wherefore, an appeal to the past exempts us from all their calumnies. And if now, in thus communicating with you, we afford you some good reason to retain us in your memory, this ought not to be made a reproach to us; for our own conscience is well assured Godward, that it has been by Him that we have been called to the fellowship of this ministry among you. For which reason it cannot be in the power of men to break asunder such a tie; and as in time bygone we have been upheld, we hope still by the guidance of our Lord so to conduct ourselves, that we shall afford no occasion of

trouble, nor present any cause of division, unless it be to those who are so closely banded against Jesus Christ and all His people, that they cannot suffer any agreement with His servants. For to such manner of folk, if this blessed Saviour is a scandal and an offence, what must we be, who ought to carry His mark impressed upon our soul and on our body? But herein is our consolation, that we give them no occasion; even as our kind Master did not come to throw obstacles in men's path, but rather to be the way wherein all may walk without stumbling.

To proceed, then, my beloved brethren, for that the hand of the Lord, from all that I can understand, is continually stretched forth to visit you, and that by His righteous permission the devil strives incessantly to scatter the Church which has begun to be formed among you, there is a manifest necessity to admonish you of your duty. That is, that you consider and seriously meditate, that whatsoever perversity of will urges forward to action the men who so trouble and vex you, the assaults are not made upon you so directly by them as they are the work of Satan, who uses their malice as his instrument, for your annoyance. This is what the Apostle teaches in the word of exhortation when he says, that we do not fight against flesh and blood, that is to say, against men, but against the powers of the air, and against the prince of darkness. You are well aware how necessary it is to reconnoitre an enemy to know by what method to counterwork his stratagems. If we set ourselves to do battle with men, thinking only to wreak our vengeance upon them, and so to have satisfaction for the wrongs which they have done to us, it may well be doubted whether we could ever conquer so long as we entertained such views. Nay, it is a certain fact, that by following that method, we shall ourselves be vanquished by the devil. On the other hand, if avoiding all conflict with men, except only insomuch as we are constrained to have them opposed to us, inasmuch as *they* are the adversaries of Jesus Christ, we *do* resist the wiles of our spiritual enemy, being furnished with the armour wherewith the Lord would have His people to be girded and

strengthened ; there need then be no fear about our getting the upper hand. Wherefore, my brethren, if you seek true victory, do not oppose evil by evil of a like kind, but laying aside all evil affections, be guided solely by your zeal for the service of God, moderated by His Spirit according to the rule of His Word.

You have besides to consider, that these things have not thus fallen out without the dispensation of the Lord, who carries forward His purposes even by means of the wicked, according to the good pleasure of His own will. Now, that thought will turn you away from the pursuit of your enemies, to consider and look into yourselves, and so to consider, that you may acknowledge that you have well deserved on your part to receive such a visitation, to chastise your negligence, your contempt, or even your careless slighting of the Word of God which you had among you ; your slothfulness in following and rendering to Him a strict obedience. For you cannot excuse yourselves from having committed many faults ; and how easy soever you may think it, to justify yourselves in some degree before men, nevertheless before God, your conscience must yet feel burdened and chargeable. The servants of God have so demeaned themselves in their tribulations, that is to say, from whatever direction their trials came they have ever turned their thoughts to the hand of God and to their own sins, acknowledging the cause to be discoverable in themselves, and to afford quite sufficient reason why the Lord should so afflict them. Daniel understood well what had been the perverseness of the King of Babylon in his destruction and scattering of the people of God merely to satisfy his avarice, arrogance, and cruelty ; what also had been his iniquity in unjustly oppressing them. Yet nevertheless, seeing that the first cause lay wholly in themselves, inasmuch as the Babylonians could do nought against them unless by the Lord's permission, that he might follow and duly observe a right order, Daniel begins first with the confession of his own faults, and then those of the kings and of the people of Israel. If the prophet humbled himself in this manner, bethink yourselves what far greater occasion you have ; and if



it was necessary for him to do so in order to obtain the mercy of God, what purblind folly would it be in you to stand still and engage in the accusation of your enemies without any acknowledgment of your own faults, which far surpass, by many degrees of ascent, those of the holy Seer ?

In so far as we ourselves are concerned, if there is any occasion to argue our case against the ungodly and calumniators who would charge offence upon us, I know that not only is our conscience clear to answer before God, but we have also wherewithal to purge ourselves before the whole world. And this assurance we have testified sufficiently when we demanded to be heard in our defence ; yea, even in the face of our adversaries, in answer to every thing which they would lay against us. A man had need to be well furnished with his justifications when he presents himself at so great disadvantage, being inferior in every way to his opponents, except in the goodness of his cause. As oft as the question recurs of compearance before God, I make no doubt that He has humbled us in this way to make us acknowledge our ignorance, our imprudence, and those infirmities which, for my own part, I feel in myself, and do make no difficulty in confessing before the Church of the Lord. In doing so we must not be afraid lest thereby we might give occasion to our enemies ; for Daniel did not justify Nabuchodonosor when he attributes to the sins of the Israelites the oppression which they suffered under that tyranny, but rather he has confounded him, shewing that he was the rod of God's wrath as well as the devil and his underlings. Neither is there any danger that we might subject our cause to reproach or shame ; for if we have presented ourselves before all the Churches, shewing again and again that duly and faithfully we have discharged our duty, and if still from day to day we are ready to do so, it is no sign that we have thereby given the opportunity to bite, or to detract from us, and if we cannot hinder them from miscalling us—seeing that some of them are transported, not simply by an unruly temper, but even by ungovernable rage, we know the promise which is given, that the Lord will make our innocence appear like the bright and morning star, and will cause our righteousness to shine forth like the sun.

We may boldly lay hold on this confidence whenever there is occasion to contend against the wicked, albeit that we ourselves may be answerable in a very high degree to the justice of the Lord.

In the day of our humility and downcasting, the Lord, nevertheless, will not forsake us until He has supplied very full consolation to uphold and comfort; we have it even ever present and ready to our hand, when Himself hath said in His Scripture of Truth, that the chastisements which He sends on His friends are for their welfare and salvation, provided they accept them with submission. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, return always to this consolation, that although the wicked strive with all their might to bring ruin upon your Church, and although your faults and offences have deserved far more than you could ever endure, yet, nevertheless, our Lord will vouchsafe such an outgate to the corrections which He has sent, as that they shall be made helpful to your salvation. His wrath towards His Church, inasmuch as it is only intended to bring her back to welldoing, is only for a little moment, and then it passes away, as saith the prophet; His mercy, on the contrary, is eternal, extending to future generations; for from the fathers it descends to their children and to children's children. Look at the proceedings of your enemies, you will clearly discover that all their doings tend to confusion, and, notwithstanding, they are quite of the opinion that they have attained to the uttermost point of their enterprise. Do not, therefore, cast away your consolation, for that it hath pleased the Lord to abase you for a season, seeing that this is no more than what the Scripture forewarns you must come to pass, even that He exalts the humble and the despised, and lifteth them out of the dust, the needy he raises up from the dunghill; that to those who are in weeping and in tears He gives a crown of joy; that He gives light to those who sit in darkness, and raises up to newness of life those who have dwelt in the valley of the shadow of death. Hope, therefore, that this gracious God will open such a deliverance that you shall have good cause to magnify and also to glorify his clemency. Take comfort from this blessed hope,

and strengthen yourselves also to endure patiently the rod of his correction, until He shall be pleased to declare himself gracious, which, without a doubt, will be ere long, provided that we can willingly commit all to the guidance of His providence who knows the fit opportunity, and sees to be more for our real advantage than we can anyhow conceive.

Above all, take heed that you watch unto prayer; for if your whole expectation rests upon God, as it ought, there is good reason to infer that your heart should be daily lifted up to heaven in calling upon the Lord, and earnestly supplicating the mercy which you hope to obtain from himself. Understand, moreover, that if He delays to grant the desire of His children, and does not immediately manifest himself in the time of need for their deliverance, it is generally because He wishes to stir them up and urge them on to supplicate His favour. However confident we may be in making a vain-glorious boast of putting our trust in Him, it will be of no avail while we do not offer any proof of it, by flying to Him as our refuge, in prayer. Besides, it is a matter of tried experience, that there is never such an earnest fervency of stayed affection and ardour in our prayers as there ought to be, save when we persevere therein without ceasing.

I pray the Lord of all consolation to strengthen you and sustain you in patience, so long as it is His will to prove you in these tribulations, and to confirm you in the hope of the promises which He has made to His servants. He has said that He will not try them beyond what they can endure, but that along with the affliction He will increase strength and give a prosperous issue.

Your brother and servant in the Lord,

JOHN CALVIN.

[Fr. copy—Archives of Geneva, No. 1203.]

## XXVI.—TO FAREL.

Conferences of Basle—absence of the theologians of Zurich and of Berne—the minister Konzen—complaints against Bucer—a wish for the establishment of Ecclesiastical discipline—celebration of the Supper in the French Church of Strasbourg—the news of Germany and the Netherlands—question addressed to Melancthon—domestic affairs.

[October 1538.<sup>1</sup>]

Grace to you and peace in the Lord.

Yes, indeed, I do very much rejoice that the marriage of Grynée happened at the time when so many and such weighty matters kept you necessarily at home. For the expected confessional meeting did not after all take place,<sup>2</sup> and after two days our friends returned. Yea, forsooth, and the Zurichers had scented out what Grynée would be at; therefore, having promised that they would be present on the day appointed, they managed somehow to excuse themselves. Afterwards, when they were pressed somewhat closer on the affair of the conference, they cut off all hope of it. We have reason to lament that good and otherwise right-hearted men are not more earnestly affected by the desire of promoting the public peace. For if they no longer need to care for the establishment among themselves of a godly union, they ought at least to consider it a duty to endeavour to come to a good mutual understanding with the churches. Luther, with whom I do freely acknowledge that I am not satisfied, may have been to blame. But what will it at length come to, if thus of set purpose we contend with each other, which can exceed the other in sin?

<sup>1</sup> From Farel's hand: Received in the month of October 1538.

<sup>2</sup> The negotiations relative to the union of the Reformed Churches of Germany with those of Switzerland, were at all times eagerly promoted by Bucer. But the theologians of Zurich had but little hope of arriving at a satisfactory accord of agreement between the two parties, on account of the absolute opinion of Luther on the Supper. Having been invited to a conference held in the house of Simon Grynée, at Basle, they did not attend that meeting, where Bucer and Capito were both present, and which took place without attaining the object for which they had met.—Hospinian, *Hist. Sacrament.*, vol. ii. pp. 290-300.

Besides, they are in no trifling degree injurious to Bucer, concerning whom they cannot brook the thought of imagining any good. Lastly, while they desire to have the upper hand in every thing, they are faulty in the very form and substance of their procedure. For why do they stand in so much dread of a Convocation? If they have seen anything in Bucer which needs to be reprov'd, where could they find a more suitable occasion for admonishing him? It is needless, however, for me to write of these things to you, who deplore them as much as myself, and who are not able to correct them. The Bernese, expecting that we should soon have a conference, have thought that it would be expedient to absent themselves from the marriage, that they might not appear to take any measure separately or apart from others. Therefore they also excused themselves. As for myself, unless I had wished to rush upon death, it was impossible for me at that time to venture on a journey. The day before I must have set out, so violent an attack of dysentery had seized me, that in the course of a single day I was exhausted to such a degree, that I could with difficulty remain with comfort in one position; it was well, therefore, that you did not fatigue yourself to no purpose. The conference which you relate as having had with the mayor was by no means to be evaded, although I confess that it afforded me very little pleasure. For I see much that we have to fear in that quarter; what good we may expect, I do not perceive. He manifests the same disposition in his expressions which we have hitherto known by experience. For he either upbraids and rails at us, or, where there is not any ground of more serious accusation, in his own peculiar way he trifles with you, carping and biting under cover of some figurative expression. Then you were scarcely cautious enough when you came to speak of Konzen,<sup>1</sup> in having poured out your indignation with such exceeding liberality. How much do I fear lest this your complaint, although most just, prove the cause of much annoyance to us! The other things which nettled the spirit of the man, I venture to believe, may have been so well excused, that

<sup>1</sup> Pierre Konzen, minister of Berne, the opponent of Farel and of Calvin, whose conduct at Geneva he disapproved.

even what you said about Konzen may have passed over quietly. As for the rest, if you hearken to our friends, you will endeavour for the future when you meet with him, and in so far as he shall give you opportunity, to insinuate yourself into his familiarity: he cannot manage so craftily but that you may hear many things *which it may be of use for us to know*. Himself also will be forced to hear, in his turn, many things from you, by which his temper will either be in some small degree softened or subdued. What ought to be said, what not spoken about at all, and what method of treatment is to be applied in each emergency, it would be absurd were I to admonish you. From long and close experience, you yourself know the temper and disposition of the man. The best defence of our cause is planted in the truth, from which, should I attempt to draw you away, I could effect nothing. If we believe the Lord the defender of the innocent, since we cannot be deprived of the testimony of a good conscience as in his sight, let us be content with this sole defence. For I will never advise that we should adopt those underhand, those wily methods, which are the false refuges of a bad cause. Nevertheless, we must not let slip the opportunities which, in entering upon a course of sincere dealing with the conscience, do not require us to set aside our own reason, and we ought to reckon it a great gain to have restored such a man to many of the servants of Christ, from whom, by the false representations of the wicked, to the great loss and inconvenience of the Church, he had become estranged. Lastly, whether you can thoroughly conciliate him to yourself or them, this, however, in any event, will be beneficial, if you shew yourself friendly.

It is singular how confidently Sulzer undertakes for Konzen even yet. For he writes that there is not a doubt but that he will consent willingly to the Diet, and refer the matter to arbitration, that we may return to an entire agreement. What I disapprove of in Bucer's method of dealing with this matter is, that he declares that we have sinned through too much severity; he subjoins, it is true, But where shall you find better? where more learned? I would rather that he had been more sparing of praise, and at the same time have abstained from any charge

against us, that he might not have this only vantage-ground, on which he may flatter himself that he has got the victory.

In your next letter I look for a full detail of the matters which have been discussed in your assembly, as well as of what has been done. Most gladly would I hear that somewhat has been undertaken which might tend to consolidate the Church. With great exertion they hasten forward the setting up of our Discipline, but without seeming to do so, that the evil-disposed may not understand what they are about, and throw hindrances in their way at the very commencement. If any degree of order is established here, I see some good prospect of introducing it among you, if it is sought for on the common application of the brethren in the first assembly. But this must be well considered before the fall of the year. Indeed, I do not see any hope of success in trying to bring it about sooner. For if the assembly shall be obtained after winter, of which Sulzer's letter holds out to us the expectation, it will be occupied with other business, unless, perhaps, it passes from the consideration of Ecclesiastical Agreement to that of Order. I almost think that I have found out the cause which took Morand and Marcourt to Berne,<sup>1</sup> since they are learning by experience what they did not foresee, that in order to clear themselves of the imputation of conceit or vanity, they must lay the blame on the exceeding malignity of those who favour our views. If I am not mistaken in my opinion, they will so strain the terms of their accusation, as to embrace the entire community of Geneva. Thus, of necessity they will have to seek out a new settlement for themselves. May the Lord so order it, that they might set themselves down anywhere else than in your neighbourhood. If we had fit persons here who could drive away such pests immediately on their approach, I would rather take in hand to go thither myself, than leave you exposed to such danger as I see to impend over you, if they make an inroad. For the first time, we have administered the sacrament of the Supper in our little church<sup>2</sup> according to the custom of the place, which we purpose to repeat every month. Capito and Bucer, and all our brethren,

<sup>1</sup> Ministers of the Church of Geneva. See note 1, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> The French Church of Strasbourg.

have charged me in their name to return their friendly salutations to our friends. Bucer has undertaken a long and at this season of the year tiresome journey: he is gone to the Landgrave, and thence he will go into Saxony. He has business to treat about with the Landgrave and some of the free cities, with Luther and the Saxons, relating to the Ecclesiastical property, which they desire to restore to its legitimate purposes. I delivered to him a letter for Philip, in which I requested that he would inform me of his opinion in this matter. I appended twelve Articles, which if he can acquiesce in them with me, nothing farther can be required, either from himself or Luther, in this business. If I receive anything of a reply, I will thereupon communicate with you. I wrote so hurriedly, that I had not the opportunity of retaining a copy. Germany is alarmed by the expectation of new disturbances: if the affair of the Dukedom of Gueldres is to be decided by arms with the Duke of Cleves, there is some danger lest our friends be drawn indirectly into the contest. What the amount of our reckoning was with Oporin you will understand from his letter. It was the opinion of Grynée that the wine ought not to be taken into account, because he had bestowed it himself. When, however, I saw that Oporin of his own accord was not inclined thereto, I was unwilling to higgler about it. You have boarded seven weeks and two days with him, myself two months and about twelve days; which I think will amount to less than the heavy expense which you anticipated. Thus I divide it: I pay five gold crowns; you, four. Balthazar had given us eight crowns; there was one remaining of the common fund. You had paid six out of your own money; I, one. Thus there had been paid by you ten and a half. You have received, through my brother, five crowns; four have been expended on victuals; I yet owe you one gold crown and a half, which I will pay as soon as possible. Here, unless I would be a burden to the brethren, I must live at my own expense. I have paid that which was owing for hire to the owner of the horse, and the half of what was due to the matron with whom we had a bed. I have about twenty shillings of Basle money, more or less; for the hire of the horse cost sixteen shillings and a half.



My outlay on account of your nephew I have received except about ten shillings, which Claude was about to send me; for there was wherewithal to make up that small amount. I do not know what prevented him. I mention that, lest you may think that I had received nothing. Adieu, my very dear brother, with all our brethren, whom may the Lord preserve, along with yourself, in safety.—Yours,  
CALVIN.

What is that I hear about the ludicrous engagement of the Bombardiers? Why, they say that it has become a matter of ridicule to the whole neighbourhood! What brazen impudence! As if they were not everywhere sufficiently odious already, unless they take occasion from every folly: thus it is that God darkens the understanding of his enemies, either with frivolities or things of nought. I shall remove within two days to the dwelling of Bucer. I have kept this letter ten days waiting for a messenger.

[*Orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

## XXVII.—TO LOUIS DU TILLET.<sup>1</sup>

Reply to doubts as to the lawfulness of his call—inward assurance of his calling—declines the kind offer of Louis du Tillet—appeals to the tribunal of God from the accusation of schism charged on him by his friend.

STRASBOURG, 20th October 1538.

Prolonged and lengthened as the time has been during which our Lord has made me feel the exhortations and remonstrances

<sup>1</sup> In a new letter to Calvin (7th September 1538) Louis du Tillet had thought it his duty to signalize the events which had recently occurred at Geneva as a providential chastening, destined to recall his old friend from the way of schism. "I am disposed to think, indeed," said he, "that the things which have happened to you have been brought about and pursued by the evil disposition of persons who have more care about the aims and ends of this world than consideration of what is due to God. But what I beseech you take in good part, I believe you have rather to consider on your part whether our Lord has not meant to warn you by that to bethink yourself if there has been nothing to reprove in your administration and to humble you in His sight, and that by this means the great gifts and graces with which our Lord has furnished you may be employed to His glory, to

which are contained in your letter, I cannot but take them in good part, unless, indeed, I would give the lie to my own conscience. I learn therefrom, that in the dealings which our Lord has taken with me, I should find both material and occasion for the acknowledgment of my faults. Neither am I content to examine myself only and call them to mind, but, as was my duty, I have made no difficulty to confess them in the presence of those who would have been better pleased to justify me than to ween that there was any need to blame myself. True it is that, so far as our adversaries are concerned, I have, with good reason, always maintained mine innocence, suchlike as I could testify it before God. And, in like manner, I have never yielded to those who set themselves up rashly to sit in judgment, as for the most part overforward to determine the nature of the malady while ignorant of its root. But I have never failed to declare, whether it was in public or in private, that we must accept that calamity as a singularly remarkable chastisement of our ignorance as well as of our other vices which called for it. Whatsoever are my peculiar faults as an individual, while I can discern very many, yet I hold, nevertheless, that I do not perceive the greatest of them, even the grosser faults. Wherefore, I pray the Lord that He would make them more clearly manifest to me from day to day. Those which you point out are not to be laid to my charge. If there was any ground to dispute my call, I believe that you have got no such reasons to impugn my ministry, but the Lord has furnished me with more firm and stable ones for my confirmation. If you entertain some doubt about that, it is enough for me that it is quite clear to my own satisfaction, and not only so, but that I can approve it to those who are willing to submit their censures to the test of truth. You do well to admonish me that it is wrong to confide too much in one's own understanding, for I know my range to be such that I cannot presume ever so little upon myself without exceeding. I would, however, request of you to believe that the complaints which, on other occasions, you have heard

the salvation of His elect, and on that account always more and more increased."—MSS. of Paris. Calvin replies to that objection, and appeals from "the sentence of the wise" to the tribunal of God.

me make, were not the utterances of hypocrisy, for they testified that I was well aware of my insufficiency for the charge I hold.

You dwell very much upon the point, that it might be painful to us to make retractions under the fear of the imputation of trifling, when we have formed a rash and inconsiderate determination. For my own part, as I know well enough that by good right I ought to fear lest that foolish ambition should so far hoodwink me as to deflect the straightforwardness of my judgment, so, on the other hand, I hope that our Lord will not leave me so far to myself as to fall into such a degree of pride, that for the sake of preserving mine own honour scatheless I would wilfully oppose myself to His truth. I have discussed this question with some eminent persons whom you know. I cannot, even now, see the case in any other light than that which I have declared. I know not whether the witness who was present has brought you any random report of what took place, as he has a shrewd turn at upsetting and embroiling whatsoever he puts his hand to.

Concerning that objection of condemning others, I feel constrained to make one observation, which possibly shall not be pleasing to you. I would that you should take a part of these observations to yourself. For in calling *the darkness light* throughout the whole of your letter, you do condemn those who walk far more straightforwardly in regard to that matter than any of yourselves.<sup>1</sup> I shall not enter upon a disputation, for neither is that your intention; but I would like to know what equity there is in a person who passes judgment in his closet, condemning all those who maintain their doctrine daily openly before all the world, and who thinks, notwithstanding, that it is presumption in those others to dare to

<sup>1</sup> The passage in Du Tillet's letter, to which Calvin here alludes, is as follows:—  
 "One thing to be most carefully avoided is an overweening confidence in our own judgment, and a too great readiness either to accept new opinions or to condemn old ones, especially where matters of religion or piety are concerned; for a mistake on such ground is more fatal than on any other; . . . and God punishes the temerity of such as thus act, bringing them into a thousand perplexities."—MSS. of Paris.

condemn the manifest enemies of God and of his majesty. What you have said in reference to that question I take as proceeding from a good intention, but must attribute it to a very different spirit from that of God. Touching my retirement, I confess to you that I have found somewhat strange the first word which you have spoken to me regarding it, as to seeking the means of returning to a place where I would be as it were in a sort of hell.<sup>1</sup> The earth is the Lord's, you will say, but I beg you will allow me to follow the rule of my conscience, which I know to be surer than yours. As to my resuming the charge, I could indeed have wished to be believed and taken at my word; and had I only had to do with those whom you might consider too inconsiderately and obstinately determined on setting men to work, I should have been in no hurry to do so; but when the most moderate of them all threaten that the Lord would find me out as he did Jonah; and when they come to such words as these, "Suppose to yourself the Church to be lost through your fault alone. What better course of repentance lies open to you than to dedicate yourself wholly to the Lord? You who are endowed with such gifts, with what conscience can you decline the ministry which is offered to you? &c. . . ." <sup>2</sup> What else to do I knew not, except to state the reasons which deterred me, in order that I might follow my own inclination with their consent. When that was to no purpose, I concluded that I had no alternative, in such a state of perplexity, but to follow that

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, in France. Louis du Tillet had advised Calvin to return to that country, where the profession of the Evangel was interdicted. "I greatly desire that on your part it might be possible for you to retire hitherward, and that our Lord had furnished you the means . . . but if that cannot be done as yet, I applaud and appreciate your determination to stop for the present at Basle, without mixing yourself up in anything else. In waiting upon our Lord you will shew plainly whitherward you tend."—MSS. of Paris.

<sup>2</sup> These expressions are taken from a letter addressed by Simon Grynée to Calvin, to induce him to decide on accepting the ministerial charge at Strasbourg. Here is the original text, which Calvin quotes from memory:—"Fac esse quod tuâ unius gravissima culpa res Christi sic labefactæ sint Genevæ, non tamen pia erit ejusmodi pœnitentia, quâ in ista ministrorum qui istic idonei sunt copia, tu istis dotibus non tibi sed Ecclesiæ ornatus, oblatum ministerium repudies."—*Grynæi Epistole*, edition of Streuber, p. 55.

which I thought was pointed out to me by the servants of God. I give you my hearty assurance that care about the body would not have brought me to that conclusion, for I had seriously pondered the question of setting about the gaining of a livelihood for myself in some private station, which I think is not altogether impossible; but I have decided that the will of God has otherwise disposed. If I have erred, reprove me, I beseech you, only let it not be by a simple explicit condemnation, to which I can attribute no authority, against so many reasons and the testimony of individuals who are nowise contemptible, nor ought they to be so accounted in your esteem.

You have made me an offer for which I cannot sufficiently thank you; neither am I so rude and unmannerly as not to feel the unmerited kindness so deeply, that even in declining to accept it, I can never adequately express the obligation that I owe you.<sup>1</sup> I shall abstain, however, as much as possible, from being burdensome to any one, but principally to you, who have already in the past been put to too much expense. My aliment at present costs me nothing. To meet my necessary requirements over and above my daily bread, the money for the books will furnish somewhat, for I hope that you will kindly give me others in case of need. Had you addressed your proposition to me in such terms as to have left no imputation, but only on myself personally, I could easily have put up with it. But inasmuch as you do injustice to the truth of God, and to His servants, it has on my part been inevitable that I must reply briefly, in order that you may not indulge the notion that I have acquiesced. I believe that you have considered our affliction to be quite sufficient to cast me into the utmost perplexity, even such as to throw all former trials into the shade. I have been greatly afflicted, it is true, but never to such a degree as

<sup>1</sup> Du Tillet had made an offer of money to Calvin in the letter above cited:—  
“It is possible that you may be ill provided with money, without which you cannot live there in a manner becoming you; but you need not mind about that, for should you receive nothing elsewhere but from me, if you wish it, God helping, I will supply enough to meet your necessity, as for the present I have no occasion for any money, living entirely in the house of my brother . . . But that notwithstanding, I will find means to furnish you.”

to have to say, *Nescio ubi sint viæ Domini*, (I know not where are the ways of the Lord,) wherefore these temptations are tried upon me in vain.

One of my companions<sup>1</sup> is now before God to render account of the cause which has been common to him and me. When we come thither, it will be known on which side the rashness and desertion has been. It is thither that I appeal from the judgments of all the worldly-wise sages, who think their simple word has weight enough for our condemnation. There, the angels of God will bear witness who are the schismatics.

After having humbly commended myself to your good-will I shall entreat our Lord that He would uphold and keep you in His holy protection, so directing you, that you decline not from His way.—Your humble servant and sincere friend,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[Fr. Copy—Imperial Library of Paris. Fonds Baluze, 8069-5.]

## XXVIII.—TO FAREL.

Death of Courault—Calvin's discouragement and trust in God—answers a question of Saunier regarding the Supper—the faithful at Geneva exhorted not to separate from the new preachers—affectionate advice given to Farel.

STRASBOURG, 24th October 1538.

The death of Courault has so overwhelmed me, that I can set no bounds to my grief.<sup>2</sup> None of my daily occupations can so avail to engage my mind as that they do not seem to turn upon that one thought. Distress and wretchedness during the day

<sup>1</sup> The minister Courault. See following note.

<sup>2</sup> The aged monk, Augustin Courault, a zealous preacher of the Reformation at Paris and at Geneva. He took part with Calvin and Farel; after a short imprisonment was banished from Geneva, found a retreat with Christopher Fabri at Thonon, and was appointed pastor at Orbe, where he died, 4th October 1538. Courault was advanced in years, and had become blind. ("Illuminant les âmes, dit Bèze, combien qu'il fust devenu aveugle quant au corps."—*Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 15.) His death, which was at first attributed to poison, caused the deepest regret both to Farel and Calvin, who were his colleagues in the ministry.

seems only to prepare a lodging for the more painful and excruciating thoughts of the night. It is not merely the want of sleep, to which custom has so inured me, by which I am harassed, but I am utterly exhausted by these melancholy thoughts all night long, than which I find there is nothing more destructive of my health. But that atrocious deed chiefly rankles my mind, if indeed the suspicion is well founded, to which, whether I will or nill, I am constrained to allow some weight. To what a degree of wickedness must our posterity at length arrive when in the very commencement such monstrosities rise up before our eyes? I much fear lest this great wickedness may speedily be punished by some great affliction of the Church. Moreover, it is no slight evidence of the anger of God, that amid so great a scarcity of good ministers, the Church should be deprived of one who stood in the foremost rank of the good. What else, therefore, dear brother, can we do than lament our calamity? although, nevertheless, we are not lacking in solid consolation. This of itself is a great comfort when all do thus testify, by affectionate sorrow as for their own loss, the high esteem in which they held him for courage and uprightness. So neither does the Lord suffer the wickedness of our enemies to remain concealed upon earth. They have not gained the worth of a single hair by his death. For there stands before the judgment-seat of God a witness and avenger of their villany, whose voice will proclaim their destruction more loudly than if it shook the earth. We, the survivors whom the Lord has left behind for a while, let us persevere in the same path wherein our deceased brother walked until we have finished our course. Whatsoever difficulties may be thrown across our path, they will not prevent our arriving at that rest into which he has been already admitted. Unless this sure hope held us firm and steadfast, what ground of despair encompasses us round about? But since the truth of the Lord remains firm and unshaken, let us stand resolutely upon the watch-tower even to the end, until the kingdom of Christ, which is now hidden and obscured, may shine forth.

Our opponents have already sounded the trumpet on account of the sentence pronounced against the town of Minden.<sup>1</sup> As the interest of religion is concerned in the matter, our friends are necessarily implicated. It will be our surest and invincible defence if the Lord of Hosts shall defend us by His own strength. Otherwise we are scarcely strong enough to repel the assaults of our enemies. Let us therefore take refuge in that one asylum, which, even although the whole earth may be shaken, can never be moved.

We do not slacken our endeavour, and continue to cry incessantly for a conference until it shall have been obtained. Saunier<sup>2</sup> wished another question to be discussed by us,—Whether it is lawful for himself, and others similarly situated, to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper from the hands of the new ministers, and to partake of it along with such a promiscuous assemblage of unworthy communicants? In this matter I quite agree with Capito. This, in brief, was the sum of our discussion: that among Christians there ought to be so great a dislike of schism, as that they may always avoid it so far as lies in their power. That there ought to prevail among them such a reverence for the ministry of the Word and of the Sacraments, that wherever they perceive these things to be, there they may consider the Church to exist. Whenever therefore it happens, by the Lord's permission, that the Church is administered by pastors, whatever kind of persons they may be, if we see there the marks of the

<sup>1</sup> As one of the cities in league with Smalkalde for the defence of the Gospel, the town of Minden had just been placed under the ban of the empire. The Roman Catholic princes of Germany confederated at Nuremberg, prepared to execute the sentence against which the Protestant princes had solemnly protested.—Sleidan, *Commentarii*, lib. xii. p. 338, édit. de 1612, in 4to.

<sup>2</sup> Antony Saunier, countryman and disciple of Farel, was honoured to be his companion in announcing for the first time the simple Gospel in Geneva, (September 1532.)—(See Spon, *Hist. de Genève*, tom. i. p. 215, Note P.) Having been appointed Regent of the college of that town, he offered, in 1538, a determined opposition to the pastors who were elected in room of Farel and Calvin, and along with his colleague Mathurin Cordier was banished, on account of his refusal—notwithstanding the advice of Calvin himself, to receive the sacrament at the hands of the new ministers. He retired to the Pays de Vaud, and at a later period became pastor of the church at Morges.



Church, it will be better not to break the unity. Nor need it be any hindrance that some points of doctrine are not quite so pure, seeing that there is scarcely any Church which does not retain some remnants of former ignorance. It is sufficient for us if the doctrine on which the Church of God is founded be recognised, and maintain its place. Nor should it prove any obstacle, that he ought not to be reckoned a lawful pastor who shall not only have fraudulently insinuated himself into the office of a true minister, but shall have wickedly usurped it. For there is no reason why every private person should mix himself up with these scruples. The Sacraments are the means of communion with the Church; they must needs therefore be administered by the hands of pastors. In regard to those, therefore, who already occupy that position, legitimately or not, and although the right of judging as to that is not denied, it will be well to suspend judgment in the meantime, until the matter shall have been legally adjudicated. Therefore, if men wait upon their ministry, they will run no risk, that they should appear either to acknowledge or approve, or in any way to ratify their commission. But by this means they will give a proof of their patience in tolerating those who they know will be condemned by a solemn judgment. The refusal at first of these excellent brethren did not surprise nor even displease me. In truth, at a time of so great excitement, which could not fail to produce an ebullition in the minds of men, a schism in the body of Christ was the infallible result. Besides, they were still uncertain whither at length this tempest would drive them, which for the time put everything in confusion and disorder.

Saunier then proceeded to speak of himself, but with so much contention, that it seemed as if he would never have an end until he had extorted what he sought. There was evident ground of reason why we should deny. For prudence in making a due distinction is required from the minister to whom the dispensation of this sacred mystery belongs. Moreover, he who has not from the first repudiated their fellowship plainly approves their ministry. Lastly, the question having been reduced to these conditions,—whether it were better to yield or

to refuse, I forced him into this dilemma:—If the minister does his duty, all will at once go well; if not, it will beget a scandal which must not be endured, whatever supposed advantages might arise therefrom. But when he perceived that I was firmly determined to accomplish what I sought to effect, he readily acquiesced therein, whatever it was. We know by our experience how difficult it is to keep within due bounds those who are puffed up with a silly opinion of their own wisdom. When we all thought this particular time very unseasonable for discussing the points in dispute among the brethren, the Lord has surpassed our utmost expectation. Whatever we sought has been obtained. Saunier at first seemed to dislike that any formula of confession should be required. He supposed that our friends would be satisfied for this alone, because they had been taught by himself. Afterwards, however, he relaxed his opposition and approved without further controversy, such as I have drawn it in their name. I fear that the person will give you most trouble whose business it ought to be to help you; however, by patient sufferance you will struggle through. I entreat of you, my dear brother, in so great iniquity of the time in which we live, that you will use your utmost endeavour to keep together all who are any way bearable. As to the trifling ceremonies, strive to induce the brethren not to dispute the point with those of their neighbourhood with so much of stiffnecked obstinacy. It will then come to pass that we may carry our point, ourselves free from all, that we may only serve the interests of peace and Christian agreement. If I omit any important points, it is because your letter, which I had given to Capito to read, has not yet been returned to me. May the Lord preserve and strengthen you by His Spirit, confirm you in the enduring of all things, my most beloved brother in the Lord. Your anxiety on my account admonishes me in my turn to recommend your taking care of your health, for all accounts report that you appear very much worn out. I beg and entreat of you, my dear brother, have such regard to others as at the same time to keep in mind that the Church of Christ cannot yet spare you. Greet a thousand times for me all the brethren who are with

you; Viret, Francis also and James, when you write to them. Capito, Sturm, and Firmin, desire to salute you in the most friendly way.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

## XXIX.—TO FAREL.

Second edition of the "Institution of a Christian"—death of Robert Olivetan—state of religion in Germany—first lectures of Calvin at Strasbourg.

*Month of January 1539.*

The grace of the Lord be with you, most sound-hearted brother.

You would have received a longer letter from me had not grief of mind so distracted me that I had neither heart nor hand capable of discharging duty. When I thought that the edition of my work was quietly going forward,<sup>1</sup> lo and behold! a copy is forwarded to me by my brother in the same state in which I had sent it; therefore it must be put off to the next fair-time. This kindness has been repaid to me by Robert. Although there is privately no reason why I should vex myself on this account; yet since I supposed that it would be of public advantage that it should go forth as soon as possible, I could not be otherwise than greatly annoyed that the expectation and desire of many good men should be frustrated by the cross humour of a single individual; for I do not wish to say anything more severe. The death of our friend Olivetan followed upon that other vexation, of which the wife of Sinapi informed me by letter.<sup>2</sup> You will therefore bear with me in my reasonable sorrow, if my letters are not only

<sup>1</sup> He refers here to the second edition of the *Institution Chrétienne*, which appeared in 1539 at Strasbourg.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Olivetan died, in 1538, at Ferrara. That intelligence was announced to Calvin by Francisca Bucyronia, wife of the physician, John Sinapi, a German, settled at the Court of the Duchess of Ferrara as the preceptress of her children.

confused, but also somewhat concise. What you mention about the reply of Konzen cheered me as much as was possible in such sadness. I entreat you, my dear brother, that we may follow up such favourable and auspicious beginnings. Now, for the first time, our spirit can be raised to entertain good hope of the result; but, as you observe, we must have a confederal meeting, without which the fallen and miserably scattered churches cannot be built up. Scarcely could I have dared to hope for any good until I understood that this opening had occurred. Now am I led to entertain the sure hope of an excellent result, if we have once an opportunity of meeting together. We must wait, however, for the return of Bucer, who, when he was arrived at no great distance from home, was drawn back again upon a new piece of business, a secret indeed, but which I will whisper in your ear. Duke George of Saxony,<sup>1</sup> beyond all expectation, intimated that he wished to have some consultation with him and Melancthon about religion and the reformation of the Church, and appointed a day for them to come to Leipsic, on which he promised that he would be present; therefore both secretly set out thither. If he comes to any determination he will draw many others after his example. Some of the princes are impelled by a fierce desire of stirring up war against us, and already they are prepared with all requisite munition. They are, however, kept in some restraint by the more prudent, who foresee that the Turk will not remain quiet if he sees Germany engaged in civil war. Already he has possession of Upper and Lower Wallachia, and has declared war upon the King of Poland unless he allow him free passage through his territories. As soon as Bucer returns I will tire you with a long story, for I am very confident that he will bring along with him a great store of news. He has loaded Saunier and the brethren with superfluous expense, and has hence fatigued them with

<sup>1</sup> George Duke of Saxony, cousin of the Elector of Saxony, John Frederick. Although the princes of his family had adopted the (so called) new doctrines, this prince had constantly opposed the Reformation, which he persecuted in his states. He died in 1539.

labour to no purpose. I am too much intent on the success of this project to have any need to be goaded on regarding it; but what could I do, since the proposed Diet of the princes and free cities on whom the charge was laid has not yet been held? There met lately a council of the cities at Erlangen, but that concerned other matters; nor was it composed only of those of our persuasion, although the cities sent deputies, but of all promiscuously. The Diet of those of our side, both of the princes and of the cities, is called for the eighth of February, before which day ambassadors from the Duke of Saxony and the Landgrave are to come hither. We are so cordial in the undertaking that we shall omit no opportunity of promoting it so far as lies in us.

Having lately been induced by Capito, against my inclination, to lecture publicly, I either lecture or preach daily. Michael writes you. Others more fitted for the work will fall in afterwards, if they have only a little time given them. All send you their most friendly greetings, and specially Capito, who only does not write because he thinks my letter sufficient. Sturm, also, and Firmin, and Gaspar, and Henry, and the others. Adieu, most excellent brother; may the Lord preserve you for Himself and His people. Salute all the brethren from me.

You may hence be able to conjecture my state of composure, from the circumstance that I have altogether forgotten in writing to you what I ought to have told you at the first: I mean, that I had written to you and Zebedeus by Dr. Ulrich. He avers that he entrusted the letters to a faithful hand. Do let me hear by the first opportunity whether they have reached you, and how you were pleased with the contents; for I would willingly hear that you were satisfied with reference to the offence which my letters had given among the brethren at Geneva.

[*Orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

XXX.—FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Fruitless efforts for the union of the two Churches—synod of Zurich—Bullinger's distrust of Bucer—parallel between Luther and Zuingli—Calvin thinks of marrying—news of Germany—policy of the ecclesiastical electors—French Church of Strasbourg—conversion of two Anabaptists.

STRASBOURG, 28th February [1539.]

I have carefully explained to the brethren the matters which you had committed to me on the part of your presbytery. They both welcomed and received your admonitions with a very cordial and attentive hearing, for they clearly perceived and understood the motives from whence they proceeded, and that the dangers which alarm you are not imaginary. They will therefore endeavour, so far as lies in their power, in troublous times like the present, that your warnings may not seem to have been tendered to them in vain. That last point which you urge, about coming to an agreement with those of Zurich, affords a strong presumption, that you do not fully comprehend how much in earnest and how faithfully, our friends have exerted themselves to promote this object. Since the meeting of that last synod<sup>2</sup> they have left no stone unturned whereby they might, in some small degree at least, either lessen or

<sup>1</sup> Under the inspiration of Farel the company of pastors of Neuchatel had put forth a desire for the union of the Churches of Germany and Switzerland; but that wish for union, actively followed out by Bucer, desired with so much ardour by Calvin, must necessarily be the fruit of reciprocal concessions; and certain of the Zurich ministers, too much inclined to exalt the memory of Zuingli at the expense of Luther, seemed not much disposed to favour the connexion. They altogether distrusted Bucer, who, they said, maintained an artificial spirit throughout these negotiations, equally adapted to deceive both sides, and even Bullinger himself, who was of so conciliating and so elevated a character, was not entirely free from these tendencies.—Hospinian, *Hist. Sacramentaria*, tom. ii. p. 290.

<sup>2</sup> The Synod of Zurich, held from the 29th April to the 3d May of the preceding year, had remained without result. The ministers of Strasbourg and of Zurich had separated much dissatisfied with each other.

appease their resentment;<sup>1</sup> for they even ventured to hope to bring them back so soon to a right understanding and entire good-will towards each other. It would appear, however, that they had not forgotten either the reception they had met with in that quarter or the manner in which they were dismissed, and the rumours which had afterwards been spread abroad as to their procedure, as well as the letters which had been written. Because, however, they could of themselves make but little impression, they engaged on their side all the men of worth who had any authority or influence among them, in order that, at the long run, some terms of peace, or at least some moderation of their differences, might be devised. In the meanwhile Bullinger makes public that epistle of his in which he reckons the Turncoats and Weathercocks as stumbling-blocks of offence and hindrances to the progress of the Gospel. There is no one so blind as not to perceive that under these designations he points, as with the finger, distinctly at our friends.<sup>2</sup> They, however, were forbearing enough to teach, by their example, not to return railing for railing, and suppressed their sense of so great indignity until Erasmus, one of the Zurich ministers, had arrived in Strasbourg. In good humour, and with courtesy, we expostulated with him. They did not even satisfy us by a single word of explanation; but some while after, not without their knowledge, Bibliander<sup>3</sup> wrote to Sturm that we were tormenting ourselves by a false application of it; for that Bullinger's design had been not to attack Bucer, but those persons in the territory of Wirtemberg who had acceded to the concord of agreement, for that they had themselves pro-

<sup>1</sup> The theologians of Zurich had accused Bucer of having spread a snare to entrap their good faith by artificial expressions, better suited to veil the difficulties of union than to solve them.—See Hospinian, tom. ii. p. 290.

<sup>2</sup> This letter of Bullinger is only known to us by Calvin's allusion to it. Bucer manifested great displeasure at the conduct of the theologians of Zurich, and bitterly complained of it in a letter to Comander, minister of Coire. But if we may believe the testimony of Sturm, quoted by Hospinian, it does not appear that the friendly relations between the churches of Zurich and Strasbourg were thereby long or seriously affected.

<sup>3</sup> Bibliander (Theodore), professor of theology at Zurich. He died of the plague in 1564.

fessed that they had not always had a clear understanding of the Supper, but that, as for Bucer, those things which had been said at Zurich were no more than might, with perfect propriety, be addressed to him. There is, therefore, nothing for us to dispute about, as if there was any hindrance on our part to their arriving at an entire agreement, or at this present moment to prevent a perfect reconciliation. And further, to say the truth, we have never been otherwise than their friends, however ill disposed they have shewn themselves to us. If you knew with what moderation our friends conduct themselves, you would be ashamed to require anything more of them.

The good men flame up into a rage if any one dares to prefer Luther to Zuingli, just as if the Gospel were to perish if any thing is yielded by Zuingli. Nor, indeed, is there any injury thereby done to Zuingli, for if the two men are compared with each other you yourself know how much Luther has the preference. I do not at all approve, therefore, of those verses of Zebedeus, in which he supposed that he could not praise Zuingli according to his real worth, unless he said of him,

Majorem sperare nefas ;

that it was profane to hope for a greater. Now, while we agree that it is considered unkind to speak evil over the ashes and the shades of the departed ; so it would be impiety in a high degree, in our thoughts of such a man, not to entertain sentiments of honourable esteem. It holds true, however, that the moderation to be observed in the award of praise, is that which Zebedeus has very much lost sight of. Therefore, I am so far from assenting to him, that now at this present, I can see many greater—I may hope for some more—I may lawfully desire that *all* were so. I ask you, dear Farel, if any one extolled Luther in this manner, would not the Zurichers have grumbled, and complained that Zuingli had been overborne ? Foolishly, you will say ; as if, indeed, those were the only men of any understanding who are favourable to Luther. But these things are intended for your ear alone.

I myself, also, am heartily tired of discussing so often that



affair of Caroli, or rather, I am completely worn out; therefore all the more willingly may suffer you to enjoy quiet in time to come, unless some new escapade occurs. Would that only a single opportunity were allowed me, in a familiar and confidential way, to confide to you all my hopes and fears, and in turn to hear your mind and have your help, whereby we might be the better prepared. An excellent opportunity will occur for your repairing hither, if, as we hope, the marriage shall come to pass.<sup>1</sup> We look for the bride to be here a little after Easter. But if you will make me certain that you will come, the marriage ceremony might be delayed until your arrival. We have time enough beforehand to let you know the day. First of all, then, I request of you, as an act of friendship, that you would come. Secondly, that you assure me that you will come. For it is altogether indispensable that some one from thence be here to solemnize and ask a blessing upon the marriage. I would rather have you than any one else. Therefore, resolve whether you think it is worth while, on my account, to undertake this journey. I am waiting to see whether any good will come out of these disturbances by which Geneva is at present thrown into a state of commotion. The affair must have taken a turn one way or other before you can arrive here. Germany, as usual, is in a state of suspense, in expectation of great events. The surmise is very general, that the Emperor aims at more than he avows. Our friends are now assembled at Smalkald, where they will advise upon measures to meet either alternative; so that, whether they settle the matters in dispute by reasonable arguments, or decide their differences by war, they may not anyhow be taken unawares and unprepared. God has already conferred this benefit upon us, that three of the Bishops Electors rather prefer to league with us in defence of their country's liberty, than to plot with the Emperor against it.

Our little church here holds on as usual. Hermann has returned to church-fellowship, and in perfect sincerity, unless

<sup>1</sup> The friends of Calvin at Strasbourg were at this time very desirous of having the Reformer married. See the following Letters, (1539-1540,) *passim*.

I am much deceived.<sup>1</sup> He has acknowledged to me, that out of the Church there cannot exist the hope of salvation; he says, the true Church is to be found among us; that therefore, on his part, there had been a falling away, because he had lived as a sectary in separation from it. This he took to himself as criminal, in following these divisive courses, and sought forgiveness. About Free-will, the Divinity and Humanity of Christ, Regeneration, Infant Baptism, and other points, he was willing to be taught, and embraced our doctrine; he only hesitated as to predestination, on which head, however, he subscribed upon the whole to my views, except that he could not unravel or describe explicitly the difference between foreknowledge and providence. He entreated, however, that this might not occasion any hinderance in the way of himself and his children being received to Church communion. Whereupon, with the courtesy which the occasion called for, I received and welcomed him seeking forgiveness, and reached forth to him the hand in name of the Church. Since then, I have baptized his little daughter, who was more than two years of age. Unless I am very much deceived, he is a pious, God-fearing man. When I exhorted him as to the duty of leading back others into the way of truth, he said, "The least I can do is, that I should now be as earnest in building up as I have formerly been in pulling down." Hans, who lives at Ulm, appears to me to be penitent. That we may not boast, however, and glorify ourselves in this service, the Lord humbles us in a thousand ways. For we are no whit better here than with you, where you declare that matters are as bad as possible. Yet, in these otherwise desperate circumstances, we have always this consolation, that we do not serve God in vain, even when to all appearance we seem to toil to no purpose. If you think proper, you will communicate the letter addressed to the brethren; if otherwise, you can return or keep it in your own possession.

Salute every one of them in person in our name in the most

<sup>1</sup> Hermann of Liege, the celebrated Flemish Anabaptist. He had maintained a discussion at Geneva, publicly, against Farel and Calvin; and overcome on that occasion, he had been banished from the town the 19th March 1538.

friendly manner, although I desire, on my part, to do so on my own account, apart from the rest.

Adieu, my very excellent and right-hearted brother. All here do most lovingly salute you, especially Capito, Sturm, and Claude; for Bucer is absent. But all of them, at the same time, had requested me to undertake the province of replying to your letter, when I laid before them your friendly warnings; on account of which, so far are they from having taken any offence, that their respect, which could scarcely be higher than it is, has rather been confirmed towards you.

My dear friend, again adieu. Although I feel much exhausted, yet I would not suffer myself to be drawn away from writing to you.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### XXXI.—TO BULLINGER.<sup>1</sup>

Excuses his long silence—evidences of brotherly affection—justifies Bucer—his desire for the union of the Church of Zurich with that of Strasbourg.

STRASBOURG, 12<sup>th</sup> March [1539.]

Grace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

RESPECTED BROTHER,—I scarce know how it has occurred, that for nearly a whole year and a half since I withdrew hither I should never have written to you, when it was so often my mind to do so; when there was no want of somewhat to write about; and more than once an occasion presented itself for doing so. But as for the first few months I had scarcely thought of it, and thus already some time had been allowed to slip away, as if the opportunity had passed, I became from day to day more remiss. Lately, however, while your Erasmus

<sup>1</sup> Written to Bullinger after a long silence, this letter was to be the means of drawing closer the ties of friendship which had already united the French Reformer to the minister of Zurich, and to remove the unjust prejudices of the latter against Bucer and the Strasbourg ministers. See the preceding letter.

was here with us, he had offered, if I wished to write, to take charge of any letters; whereupon I eagerly embraced an opportunity, of which above all things I was desirous. I promised, therefore, that I would write to you. As, however, I had returned late from the inn where he was stopping, and he had resolved on his departure for the morrow, I was unwilling to change the arrangement for his journey, although out of kindness he was ready to wait if only I had expressed the wish. The readier, however, that he was to comply, so much more ashamed was I to request him, more especially since I had an opportunity three days later of sending letters to Basle, from whence they could easily be forwarded to you. Notwithstanding that, however, when this last convenient occasion had also escaped me, then at length I came to the conclusion that I must do now what I had too long delayed. What ought we rather, dear Bullinger, to correspond about at this time than the preserving and confirming, by every possible means in our power, brotherly kindness among ourselves? We see indeed of how much importance that is, not only on our own account, but for the sake of the whole body of professing Christians everywhere, that all those on whom the Lord has laid any personal charge in the ordering of His Church, should agree together in a sincere and cordial understanding. Indeed, Satan himself perceives that very clearly, who while he plots, by every method he can devise, the ruin of Christ's kingdom, plies none more earnestly with all his might, than to sow division and discord among us, or somehow at least to estrange the one from the other. For that very reason, therefore, it is our duty to oppose these sort of devices; and the more our adversary strives to rend asunder our connexion, so much the more ought we to strive against him with more determined resolution and intense anxiety to cherish and uphold it. Since, therefore, it is our duty carefully to cultivate friendly fellowship with all the ministers of Christ, so we must needs also endeavour by all the means we can, that the churches to which we faithfully minister the Word of the Lord may agree among themselves. Our friendship, I trust, in virtue of the happy auspices which presided at its commence-

ment, and resting as it does on so solid a foundation, will continue firm and entire to the last. For myself, assuredly, so far as depends upon me, I undertake to persevere in maintaining it firm and unimpaired, because, indeed, I have always very much deferred to you. I have also, as was meet and reasonable, embraced you with singular delight, nor will I ever cease to entertain that affection. Between this church and yours, although I do not see that there really exists any disagreement or secret grudge, yet I might wish there was a closer connexion or rather relationship. How it comes to pass that we do not draw more closely together, as I earnestly desire, it is not for me to determine, only it is too evident not to be observed that the dregs of that unhappy dispute still taint our memories. Hence arise many askant suspicions, which, when they have once fairly taken hold of us, it is not possible that any solid friendship can either exist or have any long continuance among us. On our friends' part, this certainly I dare freely promise and undertake for them, that there is nought they more desire than to cast aside all discordance, that they may sincerely cultivate a brotherly friendship towards you; in one word, to seek no other bond of concord than the pure will of God. As for Capito's sincerity, because I suppose it is quite well known to you, I shall say nothing. For Bucer I will answer, that there is no cause why he ought in anything to be suspected by you. Endowed, as indeed he is, with a singularly acute and remarkably clear judgment, there is, at the same time, no one who is more religiously desirous to keep within the simplicity of the Word of God, and is less given to hunt after niceties of interpretation that are quite foreign to it, but who actually holds them in more abhorrence, than himself. If, however, there is anything you still find wanting in him, he is a man of such modesty and good nature, he will not only suffer the word of admonition from you, but even to be reproved, if there is a need-be for it. Only let him see plainly, that you seek to have that sort of communication with us which ought to exist among the servants of Christ. There is no occasion for my dealing with you on the matter of the controversy itself. Indeed, it is a subject which can scarcely

be settled by letter. And perhaps, I might be thought to act rashly, if not with arrogance, were I to venture anything of the kind, yet often I can scarce refrain myself from the desire that an opportunity were given me of handling familiarly and discussing this question in your presence; for you are aware that I have never conversed with you in such a way about it as to understand what it is that hinders a full agreement between us; but whatever that may be, I feel certain that it is unworthy to be the cause of our disagreement. I require of you, dear Bullinger, or rather, again and again I entreat you, that we may not only be as far removed as possible from all hatred and contention, but even from all appearance of offence. Forgive my anxiety; and, in truth, I do not say this because I have any doubt of your prudence, of your will, or of your deliberate and resolute courage. But charity hath this peculiar quality, that while there is nothing which it may not hope, it is, nevertheless, in the meanwhile anxious. Furthermore, if, to sum up all, you consider how many perils, in this unhappy age especially in which we live, beleaguer and surround us on all hands, you will make allowance, I trust, for this my plainness if you do not pardon it. Adieu, most learned and upright man. Salute, I beseech you, reverently, all the brethren, Pellican, Leo, Theodore, Megander, and the others, whom I do esteem sincerely in the Lord. Would that you may not scruple freely also to admonish me.—Yours,

CALVIN.

These worthy men are French, sprung of good families, whom a laudable curiosity has induced to undertake to visit you and to see your country. Receive them, I pray you, with your wonted kindness.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

## XXXII.—TO FAREL.

Departure of Calvin for the Assembly of Frankfort—the question of Ecclesiastical property—news of Geneva—opening of the religious conferences at Frankfort—disposition of the Roman Catholic princes and Protestants in Germany—policy of Charles V.—Reformation in England—remarkable judgment on Henry VIII.

STRASBOURG, 15th March 1539.

The day after your last letter save one reached me, I set out on the road for Frankfort.<sup>1</sup> So hurried was my departure that there was no time to write to you; what so frequently happens in the event of sudden resolves. It never entered into my mind to undertake that journey until the day before I undertook it. When, however, I had received Bucer's letter, in which he informed me that he could effect nothing in the affair of our brethren, the desire instantly seized me to go thither, partly that the cause of the brethren might not be treated negligently, as often happens in such a crowd of business, partly that I might "interchange thoughts with Melancthon about religion and the concerns of the Church. Unless I am mistaken, both of these reasons will appear satisfactory to you. I was encouraged also by the advice of Capito, and all of them together, with besides, the opportunity of companions; for Sturm, and other worthy men, accompanied me as fellow-travellers. As to the Lord of N., less is to be believed concerning him than is

<sup>1</sup> Calvin was about to set out for Frankfort, charged with an important mission by the Church of Strasbourg. Reconciled by a recent treaty with his rival Francis I., Charles V. had turned his whole attention in the direction of Germany, and solemnly announced his intention to accommodate religious differences in that country. The French king appeared to enter into his views, and the German princes shewed themselves disposed to favour the accomplishment of his wishes in meeting together at a solemn public conference between the Protestants and the Roman Catholic doctors. The day of meeting was fixed by the emperor himself for the 12th February 1539, and Frankfort was pointed out for the theatre of these conferences.—Sleidan, *Commentarii*, lib. xii., pp. 338, 339. Anxious to be represented at that assembly at Frankfort by the most eminent ministers, the town of Strasbourg chose for its deputies Bucer, Sturm, and Calvin.

reported. You know how true is that common saying, that broad rumour acquires strength as it rolls on. He was looking out only for one preacher who, during this time of Lent, might imbue his common people with a purer doctrine. The Lady R. at first invited me thither; but because the way did not appear sufficiently open I excused myself, on the ground of being detained here by another engagement, which was indeed a small matter, but quite sufficient to lay me under the obligation of attending to it. Dr. Ulrich has now been away at a distance for about two months, so that I cannot expostulate with him about the letters. He alleges, by way of excuse, that he deposited them with N., who, if I mistake not, is one of the brethren who some time ago raised disturbances against the people of Soleure. It grieves me very much that they are lost, for assuredly they contained many things which it was of very great consequence not to have published abroad. As for the union which I advised, there is no reason why you should be so averse to it; for I avowed that there was nothing I wished for more than, as far as was possible, that all the pious might withdraw themselves from that side. This one thing I strove for, that they might not schismatically divide any Church whatsoever, which, however it might be very corrupt in morals, and infected with outlandish doctrine, had not cut itself off entirely from that doctrine, upon which Paul teaches the Church of Christ to be founded. Because, however, the question is of such a nature that it is better let alone, unless discussed fully and in a regular manner, I shall urge it no further, except that I wish to testify, that no other union of the brethren was recommended by me than what is pointed out to us by the example of Christ, who, notwithstanding their deplorable impiety, did not scruple to unite with Jews in participating in the mysteries of God. And that you may understand with how much prudence they considered my advice, it especially exasperated them that I made some difference between the minister and the common people, and insisted that it was from him, as the dispenser, that both prudence and faithfulness were required. From private persons I said, that somewhat less strictness and a more easy trial might be exacted, but that every one should



examine himself. Even that, if we shall have an opportunity of conferring face to face together, can be settled with little trouble. When I see the clear judgments of God appearing in those noisome pestilences which have been afflicting the wretched Church, I am partly comforted and refreshed, but also somewhat disturbed in mind, because I perceive that they are sent, not altogether without just cause of anger. It is, however, greatly to be desired, that in whatever way it pleases Himself, the Lord would purify His Church from all filth of the kind. About Gast, my brother has written very plainly. I must at once disapprove of that facility of Grynée in giving recommendations; nor had I delayed so long to speak to himself about it, if it had not been that at the time when your letter reached me, I thought it was right to spare him, for his wife was at the time in extreme danger of her life, for while pregnant she was seized with the plague. Let me understand, I entreat you, where that good and unbroken soldier of Christ — has betaken himself unto. I see you will have no little trouble from N., so long as he persists in strutting about after this manner; but because he cannot be got rid of we must just tolerate him. It is an occasion presented to you of the Lord, whereby He will put your patience in exercise. I owe you no little thanks for having greeted the mayor in my name; for it is important that he should understand that both of us are so united with Bucer and Capito that we communicate freely all impending matters with one another. As to the question of the ecclesiastical property, I wish that it were in my power to give you a more favourable account, although the business is not in the very worst state; for Bucer insisted with so much constancy that he seems to have in no small degree promoted it. Philip alarmed him at first by the difficulty of carrying the business through, but he persevered, and was not to be diverted from his purpose. There was difficulty, however, in obtaining what he wanted, as the princes thought that they had nothing to do with that matter,—they who take upon themselves to administer ecclesiastical property according to their own will. There are others who take it amiss, that the lucre which they have been accustomed

to extract from that source, has been wrested out of their hands; others, although they will not incur any loss, are not easily brought to concur, from the fear of bringing upon themselves the enmity of that class, which you are aware is numerous in Germany. Bucer proposed a measure, based on the ancient custom and practice of the Church, by which he provided both for Christian peace and agreement, and for the public tranquillity of the empire. Seeing that the property which is at this day in the hands of the canons of the principal church in this city, has been bequeathed on this condition, that it should be administered by counts, he consents that a college of the nobility be instituted, by whom these revenues are to be held; those, however, who are admitted to that office, he wishes may neither be from among the clergy nor from the canons, but married persons, who are only attached by their faith to the Church, and who give themselves and all they possess to maintain its peace. As the bishop is a prince of the empire, and as that position cannot be suppressed without producing great disturbance in the empire, he conceives that it would be expedient to do as of old, that in the place of the bishop some one of those counts should succeed, who should have the entire possession of those revenues which are at present assigned to the bishop, and that he shall be called the vice-dominus, as being rather the steward than the proprietor. That it shall be the duty of this administrator to protect the Church when from any quarter it shall be attacked, and for securing that object he must bind himself by a solemn oath. The other ecclesiastical properties are to be applied to more legitimate purposes, such as are the prebends, the chapels, priories, and the rest. I call that a more legitimate use, that they be applied to the support of the ministry, to schools, to the poor, and other ecclesiastical burdens. If that shall be obtained, it will form a tolerable provision in such an unsettled state of affairs. There is some, and now indeed good, expectation, that the princes have begun to take up the matter in earnest; the free cities enter cordially into the arrangement, seeing that their ecclesiastical property is everywhere so wretchedly dilapidated.

Du Tally wrote to me concerning Basil,<sup>1</sup> that he had lately proposed a public disputation to be held at Geneva, but had suffered a repulse, which, indeed, I hear all the more willingly, that false notions may not be spread abroad among a people who are otherwise more than enough eagerly desirous of novelty, and seeing that nobody takes the trouble to oppose these errors by refuting them.

Now I come to the second letter, in which you start with so many riddles. For who these watchmen of the night, drunkards, thieves, are, I can by no means ascertain, unless you explain yourself more clearly. As for that deputation of Le Comte<sup>2</sup> and Genan,<sup>3</sup> no other result was to be expected, but that they should return as they went. Whether there is enough of the spirit of counsel among the brethren I know not; as to their courage I have no doubt. If they have despatched Le Comte without any certain proposed *formula*, I must entirely disapprove of the proceeding, for you know by experience what that mere empty affectation of authority is apt to produce. Let us shew we are content that all right methods may be tried, so that it cannot be said that we have thrown obstacles in the way of improving the state of the Church. They cannot lawfully require of you that you shall approve their ministry, who, everybody sees, have subjected themselves to the censure of the Church. What you say, however, is very true, that those who are conscious of what is bad, desire nothing more than that everything may lie hid, buried in obscurity, lest their own filthiness may be discovered. In such dark involvements, we must consider what we can do; the rest we must commit to the Lord. Without doubt, I could have wished that the remembrance of all our ills should be buried, which, without offence, cannot be brought up again. But of what advantage are enmities,

<sup>1</sup> This was, no doubt, M. Du Tally, a French gentleman, who had taken refuge at Geneva. He was a correspondent of Calvin.

<sup>2</sup> Is this John Le Comte, minister of Grauson, or Beat Comte, minister of Lausanne, who at a later period devoted himself to medicine, and distinguished himself by his devotedness to the care of those who were affected with the plague in that town? (See Ruchat, tom. v. p. 277.) We incline rather to this last conjecture.

<sup>3</sup> Genan, an unknown personage.

contentions, whether they are doctrinal or spiritual, detractions, and other such evils, when bottled up within the bowels of the Church, in order that they may break forth at last into a pestilent ulcer? It is rather to be desired that they may be removed, even at the risk of suffering, if it cannot be done otherwise. There is nothing to hinder our following some middle course, that the honour of the ministry may be restored; that a remedy may be applied to the wretched, ruined state of the Church; that the stumbling-blocks among brethren may be taken out of the way, those evils being concealed and suppressed which there is no necessity for reviving and discussing anew. There are some wounds which, being handled, break out afresh: they are better healed when left to quiet and oblivion. What, I ask themselves, would those worthy men be at, who entertain the thought that I can return without you, who was cast out along with you; that I should lend a hand to those, and co-operate with men from whom I wish to be entirely estranged until they have satisfied the Church? For they so manage the affair, that out of four two may remain of our side; that having been restored as it were by way of favour, I may enjoy a livelihood without any authority, the Church having given no deliverance on the subject. What, therefore, shall we do? where shall we begin, if we attempt to rebuild the ruined edifice? If I shall speak a word which is unpleasant for them to hear, forthwith they will enjoin silence. But I am unwilling to discourse these things and the like further in writing, which you yourself have more ripely considered than any one can set them before you. Besides, if that proposal were to be entertained, I could scarcely be able to hold up my head amid the clashings of the brethren; they will also think that the main point has been attained by my having alone returned. I could therefore have wished, that those who have set this proposal afloat, had rather set some other stone a-rolling; for they call me to a charge of great annoyance and difficulty, and that in vain.

As I promised to you, my letter shall be brief. The state of affairs at Frankfort we found to be as follows: There were present of the family of Saxony, the Elector,<sup>1</sup> his brother, and nephew

<sup>1</sup> The Elector John Frederic, the friend of Luther, and truest protector of the Reformation in Germany.

by his brother Henry, whom they call Maurice.<sup>1</sup> These three had along with them four hundred horsemen ; the Landgrave<sup>2</sup> had brought with him as many lanzknechts ; the Duke of Lunebourg<sup>3</sup> came with less pomp. There were present, also, the younger brother of the Duke of Brandenburg, the younger Prince of Brunswick, and three others, whose names I don't remember. All these were Leaguers :<sup>4</sup> the remainder who are included in the League had sent deputies ; as, for instance, the King of Denmark,<sup>5</sup> the Duke of Prussia,<sup>6</sup> and some others. As for these, it was not strange that they stayed at home, because in such an uncertain and perilous state of affairs, it would not have been safe for them to have remained so far from home. There were few, however, who did not feel indignant that the Duke of Wurtemberg<sup>7</sup> preferred rather to enjoy his field sports in hunting, and I know not what other sportive recreations, than to be present at the Conference, in which both his native country and perhaps his life are concerned, when he was only two days' journey distant. Those who wished to excuse him, said they had no doubt that he had laid the care of attending to these matters on others, who he knew had the matter at heart. Men of the first rank were sent by the free cities. At the first deliberations, war was declared by the unanimous vote of them all, until two of the Electors arrived—the Count Palatine and Joachim of Brandenburg<sup>8</sup>—with the Emperor's letter,

<sup>1</sup> Maurice of Saxony, who had so great a part in the religious wars of Germany with Charles V.

<sup>2</sup> Philip of Hesse, who, from the year 1521, had been favourable to the tenets of Luther.

<sup>3</sup> Ernest, Duke of Lunebourg, promoter of the Reformation in his states.

<sup>4</sup> The Treaty of Alliance formed by the Protestant Princes at Smalkald, (1530,) had been agreed to by a great number of the Towns.

<sup>5</sup> Christian III., King of Denmark, (1534-1559,) who introduced the Reformation into his States.

<sup>6</sup> Eastern Prussia was reformed and secularized, in 1525, by the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Albert of Brandenburg. It formed since that epoch the Duchy of Prussia.

<sup>7</sup> Ulrich, Count of Montbeliard, and Duke of Wurtemberg.

<sup>8</sup> Louis, the Elector Palatine, and Joachim, the Elector of Brandenburg, although favourable to the Reformation, remained attached to the cause of the Emperor, and tried to bring about a reconciliation between the two parties.

and a Spanish Bishop, his ambassador, whom they call the Bishop of Lunden.<sup>1</sup> At first they set forth the commission of the Emperor, authorizing them to treat with our friends either for peace or for a truce, upon whatsoever grounds and conditions might seem best to them. Then, in a lengthy oration, and by strong arguments, they endeavoured to induce them to come to a treaty of peace: they urged especially this point, that the Turk would not remain quiet if he saw Germany involved in civil strife. And already he has the way open to him, since he holds possession of Wallachia, Upper and Lower, and is entitled, by treaty with the Pole, to the free right of passage through his territory: thus, therefore, he already hovers over Germany. They desired that our friends would propound the conditions of peace. If peace could not be agreed on, they asked that a truce might be granted. The good faith and sincerity of both parties have been well sifted by our friends: for Joachim is entirely favourable, and well disposed to the cause of the Gospel; the Count Palatine is not hostile. But because the Spanish Commissions are not to be relied on, they chose rather that the business should be settled and agreed on by the whole of the Electors, to whom the principal authority in the Empire of right belongs. That was hindered, because the Bishop of Mentz<sup>2</sup> has on many accounts been rejected by the Elector of Saxony. Joachim did not venture to give his consent in the Diet from which his uncle was excluded. Therefore our friends presented articles of peace, in which they set forth, that they unwillingly resorted to the thought of war, inasmuch as they laid bare the injuries on account of which they were of necessity driven to that determination. They proposed as conditions of the peace, that they might be free to administer their own churches, and under this administration they wished the dispensation of ecclesiastical property to be regulated. Then

<sup>1</sup> John Vesal, Archbishop of Lunden, was the Emperor's ambassador at the Diet. (Sleidan, lib. xii. p. 339.) He became afterwards Bishop of Constance, and was present at the Council of Trent.

<sup>2</sup> Albert of Brandenburg, the brother of Joachim, the Elector of Brandenburg. This prelate sternly opposed all compromise in religious matters. He made continual complaints of the indulgence shewn by the Emperor towards Protestants.

they reserved entirely to themselves the right of admission into the League of those who might wish to become members of it. When the articles had been presented, we then took our departure. Bucer afterwards intimated that the two Electors granted somewhat more than the ambassador of the Emperor. The reason is, that the Emperor, since he stands in need of the assistance of our opponents against the Turk, as well as of our own, desires to gratify both parties without offending either. The sum of his demand is this, that without any change of the present state, learned, tried, and well approved peaceable men may assemble together, who shall discuss with one another the controverted heads of religion; the matter to be afterwards referred to the Diet of the Empire, that by the declared judgment of all classes of the German Church, the Reformation may be accomplished. A truce for a year to be agreed to for the transaction of these affairs. Our friends are not satisfied with so short a truce, and demand that something more certain may be granted. Thus all as yet is in suspense, nor are we out of danger of war, unless the Emperor makes further concessions. The Duke of Juliers, lately bereaved of his father, sent an embassy empowered to make a statement to the effect, that he had recovered, by the blessing of God, the Dukedom of Gueldres, of which he was lawful lord:<sup>1</sup> at present a controversy had been stirred with him about it, at one time on the part of the Emperor, at another by the Duke of Lorraine, without any sufficiently specious pretext. For Lorraine could put forward no other claim, except that he is the heir of the last Duke, but that he had possessed himself of the Duchy contrary to all law and justice, which had been adjudged, by the sentence of the Empire, to belong to the family of Juliers. That the Emperor pretended some title by purchase, but which appeared to be either collusive or altogether fraudulent: assuredly, since the alleged price was only fifty thousand crowns, at which the town alone may be valued, that amount is certainly below the annual rent of a single year. He sought, therefore, that those of our side would intercede with

<sup>1</sup> On the death of Charles Van Egmont, Duke of Gueldres, his relation, William, Duke of Cleves and Juliers, took possession of that town, of which he was dispossessed by the Emperor in 1543.

the Emperor, that he would not tear in pieces and oppress a prince of the Empire without cause. But that if the Emperor would not hearken to their entreaties, he implored their assistance in the defence of the common liberty. He has got no answer as yet, since they reckon it necessary to take counsel according to the bent of their own affairs. There was nothing said, however, about the League, although he is not hostile to our religious views. He of England<sup>1</sup> petitioned that a new embassy might be sent to him, to which Philip might be added, that he might have the benefit of his advice in further reforming the Church.<sup>2</sup> The princes were all agreed as to the sending of an embassy. They were not disposed to send Melanchthon, because they suspect the softness of his disposition. Nor indeed is it very clear what is or what is not his opinion, or whether he conceals or dissembles it, although he has sworn to me in the most solemn manner that this fear regarding him is without foundation; and certainly, in so far as I seem to be able to read his mind, I would as soon trust him as Bucer, when we have to do with those who wish to be treated with special indulgence; for so intense is the desire of Bucer to propagate the Gospel, that, content to have obtained those things which are chiefly important, he is sometimes more easy than is right in yielding those things which he considers trifling, but which, nevertheless, have their weight. The King himself is only half wise. He prohibits under severe penalties, besides depriving them of the ministry, the priests and bishops who enter upon matrimony; he retains the

<sup>1</sup> The King of England, Henry VIII.

<sup>2</sup> The details of these negotiations will be found in Burnet, and in Seckendorf, *Commentarii*, lib. iii. sect. 19, par. 73. The Protestant princes of Germany, desirous to bind so powerful a monarch as the King of England as closely as possible to the cause of the Reformation, had sent deputies to request his assent to the Augsburg Confession, and the revocation of the cruel statutes still in force against those of his subjects who professed the pure Gospel. Two of the King's counsellors, Cromwell and Archbishop Cranmer, seconded timidly the entreaties of the Protestant princes; but this imperious and violent monarch, satisfied with having transferred to himself the papal authority in matters of religion, shewed indisposedness to promote the interests of an actual reformation. He protracted the negotiations, and added daily by new laws to the rigour of the most hateful despotism—that which is exercised by a prince over the consciences of his subjects.



daily masses; he wishes the seven sacraments to remain as they are: in this way he has a mutilated and torn Gospel, and a Church stuffed full as yet with many toys and trifles. Then, because all do not appear to be of sound mind, he does not suffer the Scripture to circulate in the language of the common people throughout the kingdom; and he has lately put forth a new interdict, by which he warns the people against the reading of the Bible. Moreover, that you may understand that he is quite in earnest, and not by any means jestingly insane, he lately burnt a worthy and learned man<sup>1</sup> for denying the presence of Christ after a carnal manner in the bread, whose death has been greatly lamented by all pious and educated persons. Our friends, however, though sorely hurt by atrocities of this kind, will not cease to have an eye to the condition of his kingdom. I perceive that nothing has reached you concerning the conspiracy except obscure and doubtful rumour. Cardinal Pole<sup>2</sup> had a brother, a man of chief rank among the nobility, and of the greatest authority among the gentry.<sup>3</sup> The family was indeed related to the King by blood; he himself was considered a person of uncommon prudence and gravity. He had conducted himself with such moderation in his brother's matters, that his credit with the King had suffered no diminution. Having publicly declared himself at variance with his brother, in order to avoid the King's suspicion, he deceived them all by his shrewdness. They agreed in secret among themselves, that the Cardinal should lead an army through France, and that as soon as they approached the bounds of the kingdom his brother should raise a tumult, at a time when the King, being occupied in quelling intestine disturbances, would not be able to defend himself against a foreign enemy. It was easy for the Cardinal to arm his soldiery at the

<sup>1</sup> John Lambert, schoolmaster.—See Burnet, *Hist. Ref.* vol. i. pp. 252-254.

<sup>2</sup> He was living in exile on the Continent from the time of the rupture of England with the see of Rome. He returned under the reign of Mary, became Archbishop of Canterbury, President of the Royal Council, and died in 1558, after having been the instrument of a short but bloody restoration of Popery in his native country.

<sup>3</sup> See Hume, *History of England*, chap. xxxi.

Pope's expense. But before the expedition could arrive, the whole conspiracy was discovered by an informer; for in order that the plot might be properly planned and executed, it was necessary for them to have many informed and made parties to it. His nephew, a bold man, when he heard that their schemes had been discovered, would have put himself to death. But having been prevented, he was unable to endure the torture of the rack; and the other conspirators, like him, having made a full confession, the law was executed upon all. Since the King makes such a poor return for so many and so great benefits from God, I greatly fear that at length he may suffer severe punishment for his ingratitude. In the meantime, while the conference was held at Frankfort, the son of the Elector George,<sup>1</sup> who was kept bound in confinement on account of insanity, died in a hopeless condition. If he had survived his father, his guardianship would have given rise to new disturbances. Now his undoubted successor is that Maurice, the son of Henry, whom I have mentioned above as a member of the League. There is therefore good hope that the territory which George now possesses will immediately form an accession to the heritage of Christ; for George is beyond the age when he may be expected to have offspring.<sup>2</sup> In this way you see, that so far as regards the main business, all hangs in suspense, and has no settled bent either way: wherefore we ought all the more to supplicate the Almighty that He would vouchsafe some happy issue out of such a perplexity of affairs. What success I have had in the cause of the brethren, also of what kind, and what were the matters I conversed about with Philip, you shall be informed again by Michael, who has resolved to depart hence before nine days: therefore I am compelled, on account of the urgency of the postman, to send my letter by halves; you will then receive the other portion. Adieu, my dear friendly brother. Greet Thomas and all the

<sup>1</sup> See note 1, p. 81. George of Saxony himself died the same year.—Sleidan, lib. xii. p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> It was not Maurice who succeeded Duke George, but his father, Henry the Pious, who recalled all the exiles on account of religion, and introduced the Reformation into the Duchy of Saxony.—Ibid. p. 344.

brethren for me. Capito and Sturm send a thousand salutations. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.—  
Yours, CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Latin Correspondence, Opera, tom. ix. p. 6.*]

### XXXIII.—TO FAREL.

Conclusion of the Assembly at Frankfort—attitude of the Protestant princes  
—conversations between Calvin and Melancthon on ecclesiastical discipline—opinion of the latter—of Capito—various details.

*Written in the month of March 1539.*

Fearing lest the further delay of my writing to you might be inconvenient, I chose rather to forward a part or portion of my letter than to keep you waiting until Michael should arrive. Now, therefore, I will take up the thread of my narrative; but before I come to the conference with Philip, I shall briefly explain what has been the progress of affairs since that time. The Emperor's ambassador, notwithstanding all that has occurred, has ventured to propose such unjust conditions of agreement that the contest was very near being brought again to the decision of the sword. He required that our friends should have nothing to do with the Sacramentaries. Observe the artifice and wiles of Satan. He catches at this, forsooth, that not only the older and former hatred which he sowed might be kept up, but that new causes of offence may be applied, like lighted torches, to set on fire and kindle greater dissensions. Indeed, our friends do not acknowledge that there are any Sacramentaries, and wish to unite with the Swiss churches; therefore the Emperor has omitted that article, and efforts have been made for the purpose of inclining us more readily to agree to the truce, which I wish may be of advantage to the Church of Christ. To my mind it bodes no good. The Elector of Saxony also perceives this, who, although he is reckoned not over hasty in his resolutions, has come to the conclusion that war is unavoidable. The Landgrave, contrary to the general

expectation, dissuades from war. And although he did not refuse to follow the determination of the allies if they thought otherwise, he, nevertheless, moderated the eagerness of those who had very much relied on his alacrity. Now, therefore, there is an inclination towards a truce, which will give opportunity for deliberation on both sides in promoting a permanent reconciliation. But the adversaries were thinking of nothing else than gaining time to prosecute the war. The Elector of Saxony, after this conference, will visit the Duke of Cleves, whose sister he has married.<sup>1</sup> If the Elector can induce him to declare for the reformed religion it will greatly enlarge the kingdom of Christ, as, indeed, there is nowhere in Lower Germany a more powerful prince, or who rules over a greater extent of territory, nor is there any one even in Upper Germany, excepting Ferdinand, who alone surpasses him in extent of dominion. When Bucer last wrote, nothing had been decided concerning the embassy to the King of France, for procuring his favour and protection to the brethren, as well as commending the cause of religion to his consideration.<sup>2</sup> As to the embassies, they are to be treated of in the last place, because, from the course of their proceedings, they would then deliberate to more advantage, on what ground, or after what method, they ought to state their requests. Let us, therefore, postpone this question until then. I had much conversation with Philip about many things, having written to him beforehand on the subject of agreement, that I might with certainty declare their opinion to several worthy men. Therefore, I had submitted a few articles, in which the whole matter was summed up. To these, without any controversy, he himself at once assented, but confessed that there were in that party

<sup>1</sup> The Elector of Saxony, John Frederic, had married Sibilla of Cleves, who evinced the most noble character on the misfortune of her husband, vanquished and dispossessed after the battle of Muhlburg.

<sup>2</sup> It was not until the next year (1540) that a resolution was adopted on this subject. The princes desired to use their influence in favour of those who were suffering in France on account of their religious opinions; but not before they had obtained correct information regarding the state of affairs in that country, the private inclinations of the king, and the probability that their interference would prove successful.—Sleidan, xiii. p. 361.

some persons who required something more gross and palpable, and that with so great obstinacy, not to say despotism, that for long he seemed to be in actual jeopardy, because they saw that he differed from them in opinion. But although he does not think that a solid agreement can be come to, he, nevertheless, wishes that the present concord, such as it is, may be cherished, until at length the Lord shall lead both sides into the unity of His own truth. As for himself, you need not doubt about him, but consider that he is entirely of the same opinion as ourselves. It would be tiresome to relate what conversation we had about other matters; but this will form the subject of pleasant discourse some time or other between ourselves. As for discipline, like other people, he heartily deplors the want of it. Indeed, one is more at liberty to lament the wretched state of the Church in this respect than to correct the evil; do not, therefore, suppose that you suffer alone in this matter. Instances occur daily everywhere which ought to make every one bestir himself in the endeavour to find out the desired remedy. Not very long since a learned and worthy man was driven away from Ulm with great disgrace, because he would not consent to wink at the vices of the inhabitants any more. He was sent away by all his colleagues with honourable recommendation, especially that of Frecht.<sup>1</sup> The news we have from Augsburg is in no degree more cheering. Thus, for the future we may expect that it will form a kind of sport to hunt away pastors from the ministry and drive them into banishment; nor can this evil be remedied, because neither the common people nor the civil magistrate can rightly distinguish between the yoke of Christ and Papal tyranny. Philip, therefore, is of opinion that the better and wiser method in so great a tempest, with contrary winds, is that we ought in some degree to lie off, and he entertains the hope, that when we shall have more quiet, and be free from external hostility, we shall be more at leisure, and have better opportunity to turn our attention to the application of internal reme-

<sup>1</sup> Martin Frecht, a learned preacher and theologian of the Church at Ulm. He refused to submit to the *Interim*, and died the 14th September 1556, at Tübingen.

dies. Capito, at one time, protests, before God and men, that the Church is ruined unless speedy aid is supplied in such a distressing condition of affairs, at another time, because he sees no progress making he prays for death. If our calling is indeed of the Lord, as we firmly believe that it is, the Lord himself will bestow his blessing, although the whole universe may be opposed to us. Let us, therefore, try every remedy, while, if such is not to be found, let us, notwithstanding, persevere even to the last gasp. When I perceive you to be so much cast down, at times I desire to be with you, that I might suggest some comfort. On the other hand, when I see that I can bring you nothing but subjects for greater annoyance, I submit, however reluctantly, to remain at a distance, that I may not add to your already too heavy burdens. Our brethren of the Pays de Vaud owed me one crown, part of which they had received from me by way of loan, part I had given to the messenger who came with the brother at the request of Saunier. I had desired them to give it to you. If they have given it do you keep it, by which means I shall be so far out of your debt. Whatever shall remain due I will pay when able; for such is my condition at present that I cannot reckon a single penny my own. It is astonishing how much money slips away in extraordinary expenses; and I am obliged to live at my own charges, unless I would become a burden to the brethren. It is not so easy to take care of my health, which you anxiously recommended me to have a care of; but I am too tedious; moreover, am doing injustice to such messengers as the present. Farewell, most cherished friend; may the Lord confirm you by the strength of His Spirit, and bear you up under this heap of troubles.—  
Yours,  
CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Latin Correspondence*, Opera, tom. ix. p. 5.]

## XXXIV.—TO FAREL.

Numerous occupations of Calvin—news of Germany—firmness of the Senate of Strasbourg.

STRASBOURG, 20th April 1539.

I do not remember throughout this whole year a single day which was more completely engaged with various occupations. For when the present messenger wished to carry along with him the beginning of my book,<sup>1</sup> there were about twenty leaves which it required me to revise. In addition, there was the public lecture, and I had also to preach; four letters were also to be written; some disputes to settle, and to reply to more than ten interruptions in the meantime. You will therefore excuse if my letter should be both brief and inaccurate. We shall not clearly understand what was concluded in the conference at Frankfort<sup>2</sup> until Bucer's return hither, which, from what he writes, we may expect before seven days. He informed us, however, by letter, that he had never seen our princes more determined in their resolution to defend the Gospel. Certainly the act which was transacted at Smalkald was produced by no very important matter, in which, however, they displayed true greatness of soul. For there were at that place certain impure images, which they pulled down, together with their altars. They abolished also the elevation of the host in the Supper, which they had until that time retained. There are some just at this present time who dream about I know not what kind of moderation, to which they would like to call us back. I wished just to give you an inkling of this, that you may comprehend that they are very far from trepidation. Our Senate of Strasbourg proves itself hearty in the cause. An abbess who had dilapidated, or had begun to make away with the property of the monastery, was lately given into custody. The Imperial Chamber, at the request of the bishop,

<sup>1</sup> This was undoubtedly "*L'Institution Chrétienne*." See Note 2, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Calvin had returned to Strasbourg without waiting the conclusion of the deliberations of the colloquy at Frankfort.

ordered her to be set at liberty. The mandate, however, was treated with contempt. The members of the League approved of what was done, and declared that they would maintain the cause. A messenger was therefore despatched to the Chamber to give intimation that the Senate would not abide by their judgment, whatever might be the result. We are waiting therefore until they let fly their mimic thunderbolt. Will you see that Balliot sends the money for the payment of Wendelin<sup>1</sup> the printer? At present I can hold on no longer. Greet diligently all the brethren.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Latin Correspondence*, Opera, tom. ix. p. 8.]

### XXXV.—TO FAREL.

Union of the Swiss Churches—first steps for the recall of Calvin to Geneva—some details concerning his ministry and his straitened circumstances—Lutheran ceremonies—the Church property—renewal of the League of Smalkald—constancy of the German Princes—example of fidelity to the cause of Christ on the part of the Town of Strasbourg.

STRASBOURG, *April* 1539.

I begin now to entertain greater hope than formerly of that accommodation in matters of religion, such as it may be.<sup>2</sup> Whenever I took into account with what sort of men we would have to treat, and how very slippery and unsteady we have found their promises to be, I came then to the conclusion that such a reconciliation would be of little or no avail to us. As to rules or conditions fixed beforehand and agreed to on both sides, even although they were not on other grounds more liable to objection, I cannot at all approve of them. Now, however, if what you relate to me is true, that those two individuals have been strongly urged to fall away from their steadfastness, it was quite

<sup>1</sup> Wendelin, the printer at Strasbourg.

<sup>2</sup> Farel laboured hard to bring about a union between the Churches of Geneva, of Neuchatel, and of the Pays de Vaud, which were at variance in regard to the Sacraments, and ecclesiastical discipline in general.



necessary to prevent such evils, by coming to an agreement among ourselves, even on conditions not altogether satisfactory.

From constancy of a more settled kind, however, I do entertain some hope, because, when they shall have given in their adherence to all the churches hereabout, they must then be so strongly bound that they cannot very easily draw back. We have already in some measure succeeded in what we sought to attain as a principal object, the quieting of those dissensions among brethren which are the worst of all, and which rend asunder the churches. We can never, therefore, be too thankful to the Lord, who of his own kindness has so far exceeded our expectation. As to my return, I do not think that what Du Taily had proposed will go forward,<sup>1</sup> for since that time I have heard not a word about it. Neither do I doubt but that the brethren have let that matter pass as superfluous, when they saw the remedy elsewhere. Thenceforward, because I imagine that they had grown cold upon the whole affair, or that it had fallen through, this matter gives me very little concern. Moreover, it was not without reason that I so much dreaded that intelligence which was brought me by Du Taily's letter. I have not stated all the grounds to you, and those few circumstances which I did mention, I touched only briefly, without going into them at large. What I said about yourself carries, certainly, great weight with it; for we ought both of us to be restored at the same time, else it must appear as if I were reponed by way of pardon. In this way, restitution will be conceded to the person of the individual, and not as a matter of principle to the cause itself. But the thought which chiefly alarms me is that which presents itself, when I set before my eyes the great gulf into which I must enter, where surely I felt that it would swallow me up entirely, when notwithstanding it would be less by a half. It

<sup>1</sup> A party, growing every day more numerous at Geneva, deplored the exile of Calvin. As the organ of that sentiment, M. Du Taily incessantly exhorted the Reformer to forget the injury which had been done him, and to restore peace to the congregation and church at Geneva by his return. Calvin would by no means separate his cause from that of Farel, so as to make his return a personal matter to himself, and not, as it was, a question of principle. Therefore, he felt little disposed to resume the function of the ministry at Geneva.

must be acknowledged that I have my own share of contentious wrestlings where I am, and those of the most arduous kind ; but they only keep me in training, they do not overwhelm me. Though it would have been a serious matter this Easter-tide if that pest, concerning whom you make inquiry, had been present ; for I must then have called upon him for an explanation, or he would certainly not have been admitted to the table of the Lord. One of his scholars, the same he wished to stir up against Claude Norman, would have presented himself, unless I had forewarned him that he must previously clear himself to me, or at least promise repentance. He had been absent from sermon for a whole month, and held, as it were, an open mart of gambling and dissipation. A whisper, also, of his whoredom was muttered about ; yet, nevertheless, he would have leaped over every fence around that most holy sacrament, unless I had blocked up the way. He made sport of it with the person who forewarned him of what I wished him to be aware of, saying that he left confession to the Papists. I replied, that there was also a kind of Christian confession, notwithstanding. If the master himself shall return, I will then have open war with him. It is through no fault of mine, nor does it rest with me, that I have not long ago come to close quarters. So plainly and openly have I flouted him even in church because of his impiety, that it could be no more doubtful either to himself or others, to whom I intended my observations to apply, than if I had named him at once, or pointed him out with the finger. Since he has now betaken himself to Frankfort, I have entreated Bucer that he would be on his guard with him as with a sworn enemy. When first he shall perceive himself to be so handled, what an uproar will be in preparation for me ! Therefore, whether I remain where I am or remove, many cares, many troubles and difficulties pursue me. It is very agreeable to me, I own, that the brethren entertain such a regard for me, that they are ready to supply my wants from their own means. It could not be otherwise than that I must be greatly delighted with such a testimony of their love. Nevertheless, I have determined to abstain from putting both your kindness and theirs in requisition, unless a greater necessity shall have compelled me. Wendelin the

printer, to whom I entrusted my book to be printed, will provide me with as much as will be sufficient for any extraordinary expenses. From my books which yet remain at Geneva, there will be enough to satisfy my landlord till next winter: as to the future, the Lord will provide. Although I had at one time a great many friends in France, there was no one who offered me a farthing; and indeed if they had, they might have boasted gratuitously of their kindness, for it would have cost them nothing to have offered what I would not have accepted. Louis had escaped my memory;<sup>1</sup> he was the only person who offered; but even he sold his bounty at too great a price; for he almost advised me to recant. He certainly proclaimed aloud that I was a deserter from the Church. I replied, as became, to such addresses. The letter, however, I fear has been lost. For the present, therefore, I shall content myself with your kindness and that of the brethren; I may put your resources in requisition when there is need. In turn, I request that for this your considerate kindness towards me you would be pleased to accept my grateful affection. I am sorry that the crown-piece has been lost: there were reason for accusing myself of carelessness, unless I had thought that the messenger would have been ashamed to misappropriate it. I like much your plan with regard to Claude,—that, before his awkwardness shall have been confirmed, and, as it were, have become incurable, the sparks of better breeding, which remain as yet in that state of boyhood, may be carefully stirred up in him by his own endeavour. But what do you call my promise to help forward the endeavours of the brethren for the upbuilding of discipline? For to whom could I write, or in what style? Wherefore, either do you yourself open up the way for me, or you need not expect that I will rashly undertake the matter. Of late, I have plainly told Philip to his face how much I disliked that overabounding of ceremonies. Indeed, that it seemed to me the form which they observe was not far removed from Judaism. When I pressed him with argument, he was unwilling to dispute with me about the matter, but admitted that there was an

<sup>1</sup> Louis du Tillet.

over-doing in these either trifling or superfluous rites and ceremonies. He said, however, that it had been found necessary to yield in that matter to the Canonists, who are here the stumbling-block in the way. That, however, there was no part of Saxony which is not more burdened with them than Wittenberg, and even there much would be retrenched by degrees from such a medley. But he made a small reservation, to the effect that the ceremonies which they had been compelled to retain were not more approved of by Luther than was our sparing use of them. I wish that our excellent friend N. could behold how much sincerity there is in Philip. All suspicion of double-dealing would entirely vanish. Besides, as to Bucer's defence of Luther's ceremonies, he does not do so because he eagerly seeks them, or would endeavour to introduce them. By no means can he be brought to approve of chanting in Latin. Images he abhors. Some other things he despises, while others he cares nothing at all about. There is no occasion to fear that he would be for restoring those things which have been once abolished; only he cannot endure that, on account of these trifling observances, we should be separated from Luther. Neither, certainly, do I consider them to be just causes of dissent. ✓

The German League<sup>1</sup> has nothing in it which ought to give offence to any pious mind. Wherefore, I would ask, may they not combine together in the strength which the Lord has given them for the common defence of the Gospel? Moreover, they drag no one into their alliance, either by force or by a kind of necessity, against their will. There are rather to be found some cities professing the Gospel who prefer a league with the Papists, and even with bishops, as Nuremberg. I wish N. could be informed of the subtle practices which have been attempted in the Diet, and of the constancy with which they have been withstood. The ambassador of the Emperor strove to the uttermost that he might detach them from the Swiss churches. He did not indeed name them; but he demanded that they should not undertake the cause of the Sacramentaries.

<sup>1</sup> The alliance of Smalkald, which the intrigues of the Catholic party endeavoured to break up, in the Assembly at Frankfort.

✓ They replied, that they were on terms of brotherly communion with those whom he called Sacramentaries. Such is the courage they have manifested in their latest proceedings. The Emperor imposed a condition upon them, that they should receive no one into the League while the truce lasted, which he had agreed on with themselves. They consented; but also on this condition, that if anywhere they received the Gospel, such might be protected, although not hitherto included in the League; that if such should be attacked, they wished it to be understood that they would consider those as Leaguers who maintained the cause of Christ. They in their turn required also of the Emperor, that no treaties should be entered into, pending the truce, against the Gospel. It was the wish of the Emperor that the Ecclesiastical revenues might be reserved to the priesthood until the expiry of the *inducia*. Our friends assented to this, on condition that due provision be made for churches and schools; and they kept their ground firmly to the last. What will you think when I tell you of the noble example of this city<sup>1</sup> in determined resolution? When the conditions were brought hither which were proposed by the Emperor, that the covenants which had been entered into after the Diet of Nuremberg should be annulled, that in future no new engagements should be entered into among Protestants, and that matters should remain as they were on both sides, until the conference having met, the German Church should be reformed; the Senate forthwith passed a decree, by which they declared, that they would sooner see their wives and children put to death before their eyes; that they would incur the loss of all their privileges; see their city ploughed up and utterly destroyed, and themselves cut off to the last man, rather than they would admit those laws by which the progress of the Gospel of Christ should be interrupted.

Consider, my dear Farel, whether we do not inflict an injury on such men, who ourselves at our ease find fault with them, while they do not allow themselves, either by threats or the fear of danger, to flinch one hair's-breadth from the straightforward path of duty. There is therefore beyond doubt every appear-

<sup>1</sup> The town of Strasbourg.

ance of approaching conflict; and already an attack has been made on the territory of Luneburg. It is our duty, you say, carefully to avoid all that may give offence to the good and pious. I acknowledge it; but it is equally the duty of the good to beware of being too ready to take offence and without reasonable ground. At present while I write, the scholar of whom I made mention above, wishes to be restored to grace, and has, moreover, fixed on Claude as his umpire. The Lord will, I trust, enable us to quell contumacy by a severe lenity. It is well that we have yet fifteen days before the Supper of the Lord, that we may have some trial of him beforehand. Salute for me in the most friendly manner, Thomas and the rest of the brethren. May the Lord himself long preserve you all safe and of one mind. Do you endeavour that the churches may be fervent in prayer while on all hands such dangers press upon us.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Latin Correspondence*, Opera, tom. ix. p. 9.]

### XXXVI.—TO FAREL.

Ecclesiastical news of Switzerland—destitution of the minister Megander—complaints addressed to Bucer—further projects of marriage on the part of Calvin.

STRASBOURG, 19th May 1539.

Health to you, my excellent and most agreeable brother. What you have intimated by letter was very welcome in the way of information, even although it afforded little cause of gladness;<sup>1</sup> for not to be in ignorance is a help, and to know what we are about is of advantage. It is of no consequence, however, to reply to each single point. I did not venture to conclude anything concerning Claude, that my conjecture might not deceive me. I can now judge from the beginnings what amount of success is to be expected in reforming that Church, unless the Lord himself, contrary to our expectation,

<sup>1</sup> From Neuchatel Farel observed attentively the progress of events at Geneva, and sent intelligence thereof to Calvin.

shall give them light; because, if our successors discharge their duty in a faithful manner, they will soon perceive that there is more difficulty than they thought. It is not unlikely, also, that they will be compelled to bear testimony that we have well and faithfully discharged our office. Nor is it wonderful that they try to moderate your zeal, for they have not yet attained such a fervour as to keep up even with your indolence in the race. But do you realize to yourself what are the absolute requirements of the time, and regulate your zeal accordingly.

As to the Church of Payerne,<sup>1</sup> I see no proof that there has been any thought of offering it to Saunier; for it is of very evil example that faithful pastors should be drawn away from their own charge where a vacant place may be left open to others. If Richard continues still the same man he was, and, nevertheless, does not give satisfaction, I know not whom we ought to love. I myself assuredly do not hesitate to prefer him to many Sauniers. On the present occasion also, while I hear him informed against to you falsely and undeservedly, it is impossible not to suspect somewhat of malice and of preconceived mischief in the delation. In our day we complain much, and not entirely without ground, of the contempt of the ministry, and often it is we ourselves who, either by our folly or by our covetousness, furnish weapons of offence to the outrageous populace. These sort of manœuvres have never been countenanced by me. I mean, that one person should have a hankering to be substituted in the place and charge of another, which, with these eyes, I have seen happen in another case. Such things, my dear brother, I state to yourself, lest, in the candour which is so much a part of you, you think all is sincerely gone about, while you may seem by connivance to give countenance to evil and selfish artifice. Nor do I wish to vex any one, or render him more odious, by the imputation of criminality doubtful even to myself, but, according to the duty of a friend, I do not hesitate freely to set forth what I fear rather than what I believe. I am quite ready to agree that he be

<sup>1</sup> The Church of Payerne, founded by the preaching of Farel and Viret.

settled in that locality which he can occupy without doing mischief. It grieves me that Zebedee has been so harshly treated, nor, take my word for it, do those get much thanks from Bucer, who, with such a tyrannical spirit, defend his book.<sup>1</sup> Himself bears much more meekly the liberty I take as often as I dissent from his opinion. Although about these matters I would far rather converse with you face to face, an opportunity for which I look forward to, unless you refuse to give yourself a little trouble. I have told Bucer that they have dealt very unjustly by you, for that all those who were friendly to him persisted in their hostility to you; those, indeed, who formerly were your friends, on his account have become estranged from you. He groaned more deeply than I had expected. When he inquired about the remedy, my answer was, that the sore was irritated by the very handling of it, that it were well, therefore, to let it alone until a better method of treating it might occur to us.

Concerning the marriage I shall now speak more plainly.<sup>2</sup> Previous to the departure of Michael, I do not know whether any one made mention of that person concerning whom I wrote. But always keep in mind what I seek to find in her; for I am none of those insane lovers who embrace also the vices of those they are in love with, where they are smitten at first sight with a fine figure. This only is the beauty which allures me, if she is chaste, if not too nice or fastidious, if economical, if patient, if there is hope that she will be interested about my health; therefore, if you think well of it, set out immediately, in <sup>case</sup> some one else get beforehand with you. But if you think otherwise, we may let that pass. After this, I shall not write again until you come. Do, however, come.

<sup>1</sup> The minister Gaspar Grossmann, (Megander,) had been discharged in 1537, by the Senate of Berne, for having composed a Catechism, which, on some points, did not agree with that of Bucer. Zebedee, minister of Orbe, had been censured for the same reason.

<sup>2</sup> The friends of Calvin at Strasbourg and in Switzerland were bent on bringing about the marriage of the Reformer. Farel and Bucer displayed the most active zeal in the prosecution of their matrimonial project; and it is known that Calvin's marriage, which took place the following year, may be attributed to the management of the latter.—Th. de Bèze, *Calvini Vita*.



You are of all persons the most desired. Come, then ; you will shew your well-disposedness in a remarkable way by making this journey. And, notwithstanding, what should prevent your writing while you are getting ready to set out. All salute you here even in a more than friendly way, Capito, Bucer, Sturm, Bedrot, Gaspar, and Frenchmen whom I do not mention by name, because you do not know them. Salute all the brethren from me. May the Lord long preserve you all in safety, to Himself and for the good of His Church.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Latin Correspondence*, Opera, tom. ix. p. 10.]

### XXXVII.—TO THE CHURCH OF GENEVA.<sup>1</sup>

Recommends anew the counsel of peace and brotherly agreement to the Church of Geneva.

STRASBOURG, 25th June 1539.

The mercy of our God and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied to you by the communication of His Holy Spirit.

Nothing, most beloved brethren, has caused me greater sorrow, since those disturbances which had so sadly scattered and almost entirely overthrown your Church, than when I understood your strivings and contentions with those ministers who succeeded us. For although the disorders which were inseparably connected with their first arrival among you, might with good reason prove offensive to you ; whatever may have given the occasion, I cannot hear without great and

<sup>1</sup> A letter, written in French, like that of the 1st October 1538,—“To the residue of the dispersion of the Church of Geneva.” The French original is lost. It is preserved only in the Latin translation by Theodore Beza. We perceive in it the peculiar circumstances in which the Reformer retired to Strasbourg,—saw it to be his duty a second time to exhort the Church of Geneva. Discord among the members of that Church had never ceased from the time of their being deprived of their first pastors. The authority of the new ministers was constantly treated with contempt, and the town, scarcely reformed, had to struggle with the old disorders, aggravated by the excesses arising from the schism. Observant of these sad divisions, and superior to the resentment of injury personal to himself, Calvin exhorted the members of his old flock, reminded them of the holy sanction of the ministerial charge, and implored them to rally around their lawful pastors.

intense horror that any schism should settle down within the Church. Wherefore, this was far more bitter to me than words can express ;—I allude to what I have heard about those your contentions, so long as you were tossed about in uncertainty ; since owing to that circumstance not only was your Church rent by division quite openly, but also the ecclesiastical ministry exposed to obloquy and contempt. This of itself is of infinite importance. And since, in consequence of that disorder which yet prevails in the Church of God, by reason of the extent of the disease, I can entertain the less hope of an immediate remedy, I understand with the utmost delight that such a calamity has been changed into an assured union and agreement ; since I might conclude that matters would so be brought round, that every one would return to order, and that the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ would be promoted. For where there are quarrels and discord, there is scarcely any hope of improvement. Therefore, as I might promise myself some certain advantage from that reconciliation, I am readily induced to contribute to its confirmation ; for if, even in the midst of such violent storms, I have always contributed my endeavour, according to the judgment and fixed purpose of my conscience, towards keeping and preserving the communion of the Church, so much the more did I need to testify the inclination of my mind towards those pious individuals themselves, when so suitable an occasion presented itself for that purpose. And truly I saw everything at the time in such a state of dissolution, that it did not appear to me to be so easy a matter to rebuild and to restore them to their former state. However that may be, I considered the present most desirable and opportune occasion as offered by the Lord for the restoring of your Church. Now, therefore, when, contrary to my expectation, I have heard that the reconciliation between your pastors and the neighbouring churches, having been confirmed also by Farel and by myself, was not found to be sufficient for binding you together in sincere and friendly affection, and by the tie of a lawful connexion with your pastors, to whom the care of your souls is committed, I felt myself compelled to write to you, that I might endeavour, so far as lay in me, to find a medicine for this disease, which, without

great sin against God, it was not possible for me to conceal. And although my former letters had not been very lovingly received by you, I was nevertheless unwilling to be wanting in my duty, so that, should I have no further success, I would at least deliver my own soul. Neither do I so much question your spirit of obedience (of which, indeed, I have proof) toward God and His ministers, as that I can at all fear that this my exhortation will have no weight with you, neither has my sincerity towards you lain concealed. That my advice has not been taken by you, I consider is rather to be imputed to the circumstances of the time, when such was the state of disorder, that it was very difficult indeed to determine what was best. Now at length, however, when your affairs, by the favour of God, are in a more settled and composed state, I trust that you will readily perceive that my only object is to lead you into the right way; that being so persuaded with regard to me, you may shew in reality by what motive you are brought into subjection to the truth. Especially, I ask you to weigh maturely, having put aside all respect of persons, of what honour the Lord accounts them worthy, and what grace He has committed to those whom He has appointed in His own Church as pastors and ministers of the Word.<sup>1</sup> For He not only commands us to render a willing obedience, with fear and trembling, to the Word while it is proclaimed to us; but also commands that the ministers of the Word are to be treated with honour and reverence, as being clothed with the authority of His ambassadors, whom He would have to be acknowledged even as His own angels and messengers. Certainly, so long as we have been among you, we have not tried very much to impress upon you the dignity of our ministry, that we might avoid all ground of suspicion; now, however, that we are placed beyond the reach of danger, I speak more freely my mind. Had I to do with ministers themselves, I would teach what I considered to be the extent and measure of their office, and to what you also are bound as sitting under their ministry. Since, of a truth, every one must render an account of his own life, each individual for himself, as well ministers as private persons, it is rather to be

<sup>1</sup> Mal. ii. 7; 2 Cor. v. 20; 1 Thess. v. 13.

desired, that every one for himself may consider, what is due to others, than that he may require what may further be due to him from some one else. Where such considerations have their due weight, then also this established rule will operate effectually, namely, that those who hold the office of ministers of the Word, since the guidance and rule over your souls is entrusted to their care, are to be owned and acknowledged in the relation of parents, to be held in esteem, and honoured on account of that office which, by the calling of the Lord, they discharge among you. Nor does the extent of their function reach so far as to deprive you of the right conferred on you by God, (as upon all His own people,) that every pastor may be subject to examination, that those who are thus approven may be distinguished from the wicked, and all such may be held back who, under the guise of shepherds, betray a wolfish rapacity. This, however, is my earnest wish concerning those who in some measure fulfil the duty of pastors, that they may be tolerant, that you also may conduct yourselves towards them in a Christian spirit, and with this view that you may make greater account of that which may be due by you to others, than what others owe to yourselves. This also I will set forth plainly and in a few words. Two things here are to be considered. The one, that the calling of your ministers does not happen without the will of God. For although that change which took place upon our departure may have been brought to pass by the subtlety of the Devil, so that whatever followed on that change may justly be suspected by you: in it, nevertheless, the remarkable grace of the Lord is to be acknowledged by you, who has not allowed you to be left altogether destitute; nor let you fall back again under the yoke of Antichrist, from which He hath once rescued you already. But he rather wished that both the doctrine of the Gospel should still exist, and that some appearance of a Church should flourish among you, so that with a quiet conscience you might continue there. We have always admonished you that you should acknowledge that overturning of your Church as the visitation of the Lord sent upon you, and necessary also for us. Neither ought you so much to direct your thoughts

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against the wicked and the instruments of Satan, as upon personal and individual sins, which have deserved no lighter punishment, but indeed a far more severe chastisement. I would now therefore once more repeat the same advice. For besides that such is the particular and suitable remedy for obtaining mercy and deliverance of the Lord from that just judgment which lies upon you, there is also another very weighty reason that ought to bring you to repentance; lest peradventure we may seem to bury in oblivion that very great benefit of the Lord towards you, in not having allowed the Gospel edifice to fall utterly to ruin in the midst of you, seeing that it has held so together, that as an instance of His direct interference it must be reckoned as a miracle of His power, by which alone you were preserved from that greatest of all calamity. However that may be, it is certainly the work of God's providence, that you still have ministers who exercise the office of shepherds of souls and of government in your Church. We must also take into account, that those servants of God who exercise the ministry of the Word in the neighbouring churches, in order to mediate between the parties in such dangerous contests, have themselves approved of the calling of those men; whose opinions we also have subscribed, since no better method occurred to us by which we could consult your welfare and advantage. That you are well assured of our conscientious integrity we have no doubt, so that you ought at once to conclude, that we did nothing which was not sincere and upright. But putting out of view even all idea of kindly affection, the very discussion of that delicate point was a proof quite as sincere as could be given on my part, that you would have no obscure instruction from me. Therefore, you must seriously look to it, that you are not too ready to disapprove of what the servants of God judge to be essential to your advantage and the preservation of the Church. The other point to be well considered by you is this, that there may be due inspection of their regular discharge of duty, that they may fulfil the ministry of the Church. And here, I confess, discretion evidently (nor would I wish to be the author of bringing any

tyranny into the Church) requires, that pious men should esteem as pastors those who do not stand only on their calling. For it is an indignity not to be borne, if that reverence and regard is to be given to certain personages, which the Lord Himself desires may be assigned only to the ministers of the Word. Consequently, I readily grant you concerning that minister who shall *not* have taught the Word of our Lord Jesus Christ, whatever title or prerogative he may put forth as a pretence, that he is unworthy to be considered as a pastor, to whom due obedience can be shewn in the ministry. Because, however, it is clear to me, in reference to our brethren who at present hold the office of the ministry among you, that the Gospel is taught you by them, I do not see what can excuse you, as before the Lord, while you either neglect or reject them. If some one may reply, that this or that in their doctrine or morals is objectionable, I require you, in the first place, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that so far as may be, you will first of all weigh the matter in your mind, and without any hastiness of judgment. For since we all of us owe this on the score of charity to one another, that we may not rashly pass sentence against others, but rather, so far as lies in us, that we hold fast by clemency and justice, much more is that moderation to be practised towards those whom the Lord is pleased to peculiarly distinguish above others. And even although there may be somewhat wanting which might justly be required of them, (as to which I am not able to speak definitively, since I have no certain knowledge,) you must just consider, that you will find no person so thoroughly perfect as that there shall not be many things which are still to be desired. Wherefore, that rule of charity is not duly honoured by us, unless we uphold our neighbours, even with their very infirmities, provided we recognise in them the true fear of God and the sincere desire of following the very truth itself. Lastly, I cannot possibly doubt, in so far as concerns their doctrine, but that they faithfully deliver to you the chief heads of Christian religion, such as are necessary to salvation, and join therewith the administration of the sacraments of the Lord. Wherever this is established, there also the very substance of the ministry ordained by the Lord Jesus

Christ thrives and flourishes ; and all due reverence and respect is to be observed toward him who is the minister.

Now, therefore, most beloved brethren, I entreat and admonish you, in the name and strength of our Lord Jesus Christ, that turning away from man your heart and mind, you betake yourselves to that one and only Redeemer, and that you reflect, how much we are bound to submit entirely to His sacred commands. And if everything He has appointed among you ought deservedly to be held inviolate, no consideration whatever ought so to deflect you from the path of duty, that you may not preserve whole and entire that ministration which he so seriously commends to you. If already you dispute and quarrel with your pastors to the extent of brawls and railing, as I hear has occurred, it is quite evident from such a course of proceeding, that the ministry of those very persons in which the brightness of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ ought to shine forth, must be subject to contempt and reproach, and all but trampled under foot. It is therefore incumbent on you carefully to beware, lest while we seem to ourselves only to insult men, we in fact declare war on God Himself. Nor, besides, ought it to seem a light matter to you, that sects and divisions are formed and cherished within the Church, which no one who has a Christian heart beating in his breast can without horror even drink in by the hearing of the ears. But that the state of matters is indeed such where a separation of this kind exists, and as it were a secession between pastor and people, the thing speaks for itself. In conclusion, therefore, accept this admonition, if you wish me to be held by you as a brother, that there may be among you a solid agreement, which may correspond with such a name, that you may not reject that ministry which, for your advantage and the prosperity of the Church, I have been forced to approve of without any fear or favour in respect of men. But because, during the whole of that time my pious and faithful colleague in the Lord was here, because my time, so far as ordinary occupations permitted, was entirely taken up in conference, I could not then write to you more fully, as I wished. Thereupon, we thus agreed among ourselves, that I

indeed should deliver to you in few words the right way which you ought here to take, but that himself as he should judge expedient should exhort you as to duty face to face. Here, therefore, with the most fervent salutation written by my own hand, do I supplicate the Lord Jesus, that He protect you in His holy fortress of defence; that He may heap on you His gifts more and more; that He may restore your Church to due order, and specially, that He may fill you with His own spirit of gentleness, so that in the true conjunction of soul we may every one bestow ourselves in the promoting of His kingdom.

Your most devoted,

J. C.

[*Calvin's Latin Correspondence*, Opera, tom. ix. p. 10.]

### XXXVIII.—TO FAREL.

Journey of Farel to Strasbourg—scanty remuneration of Calvin—  
sale of his books.

STRASBOURG, 27th July [1539.]

We have nothing new since you left us, except that, on the self-same day, about three hours after your departure, the directors resolved to augment my salary. They proposed to give me a stipend of a hundred florins, on the condition that I should resign that which I had formerly received; but when it came the length of the college of the canons, they objected against it the royal caveat, by which manœuvre they have excluded me. Thus am I made none the richer. I send you a reckoning of what you paid for me of our expenses at Hagenau, although you had no right to be repaid a single penny; for it was your duty to have admonished me. I have a valid excuse, which did not occur to me until it was too late to plead it. Let me remind you as to what I formerly wrote, that if a cask should arrive from Michael of Geneva, you would take charge of it on account of Wendelin. Should any person be inclined to buy the books, do you sell them, but mine for not less than nine or ten batzen at the lowest, unless, perhaps, any one like Cressonnière will take a large quantity, for



then you may exercise your discretion. The carriage, indeed, will cost no small sum, and must yet cost, before the books reach you. Adieu, my most excellent and kind brother. Salute most earnestly and lovingly all our brethren. Long may the Lord preserve you all.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### XXXIX.—TO FAREL.

Reconciliation of Farel with Caroli—intercession of the Senate of Strasbourg in favour of the French Protestants—answer of Calvin to the letter of Cardinal Sadolet.

*In the month of September 1539.<sup>1</sup>*

Yesterday, Henry came hither after supper time. As soon as I rose from table I went to Bucer, read over to him your letter, which made him very glad, especially because he could perceive from it your great leniency towards Caroli. He at once acknowledged that he could scarcely have felt himself able to treat that person with so much clemency. Should he visit Basle there is considerable risk of his being somewhat more severely handled by Grynée, as both Viret and Zebedee, reproving his over-complaisance, have changed his feelings towards that individual, as I have been told. But we have been delighted to hear of your kindness in this case, which can do no injury to the Church, and which may tend to break down the opposition of the wicked.

To-day, these two young men came to me in the morning, which occasions my writing somewhat sooner, but more briefly. In the case of our brethren we have performed what was our duty, nor was the Senate,<sup>2</sup> according to its usual devotedness, at all behindhand in taking up the matter. As soon as the affair was settled I sent you notice. I perceive, however, that the letter had not yet reached you at the time you wrote. The

<sup>1</sup> The date of this letter is in the handwriting of Farel.

<sup>2</sup> The magistrates of Strasbourg united themselves to Protestant princes of Germany to intercede in common with Francis I. in favour of his cruelly persecuted Protestant subjects.

messenger whom they sent to the Duke of Saxony and the Landgrave has not, up to this time, returned; he is hourly expected to arrive. Bucer is with the Chancellor almost daily. Be not alarmed, my dear brother, we are not iron-hearted in this quarter, nor will it be the fault of the Senate nor of the ministers, if the pious do not get help, such as in these times can be had. I perceive that, on many accounts, the Genevese will be wretched. Sulzer<sup>1</sup> had brought hither the epistle of Sadolet.<sup>2</sup> I was not very much concerned about an answer to it, but our friends have at length compelled me. At the present moment I am entirely occupied upon it. It will be a six days' work. I send my book to you since I cannot repay your kindness by the return of a gift in kind. Adieu, most amiable brother. Salute very lovingly for me the whole of our brethren. Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

#### XL.—TO FAREL.

Caroli at Strasbourg—Proceedings of Sturm and Bucer for the reconciliation with Calvin.

STRASBOURG, 8th October 1539.

Whenever of late a new occasion of writing presented itself, I wished to avoid writing until the affair of Caroli,<sup>3</sup> the matter

<sup>1</sup> Sulzer, minister of the Church of Berne. At a later period he was pastor of the Church of Basle.

<sup>2</sup> Cardinal Sadolet, Bishop of Carpentras, informed of the troubles of Geneva, had written to the magistrates of that town exhorting them to return to the communion of the Roman Church. Calvin wrote a reply to Sadolet, and that letter, dated from Strasbourg, 1st September 1539, is one of the most remarkable monuments of the Reformer's genius. See *Cal. Opera*, edit. d'Amsterdam, tom. viii.; and the *Recueil des Opuscules*, p. 145.

<sup>3</sup> Condemned by the Synod of Lausanne, and banished by the Senate of Berne, Caroli had returned to the Church of Rome, and had in vain sought the favour of the Cardinal de Tournon. Deceived in his expectations, he reappeared in Switzerland, confessed his past offences, and obtained the forgiveness of Farel. Afterwards he proceeded to Strasbourg, where Bucer and Sturm tried every means to reconcile him with Calvin.—Ruchat, *Hist. de la Réformat. en Suisse*, tom. v. pp. 129-134.

in hand which detained our friends, might be brought to some conclusion. My concern about it kept me intensely anxious. Bucer did not think it fitting that I should be present at any of the proceedings until they had arrived at some hope of agreement, or that at least some inclination thereto had become apparent on either side. On my part, he found no difficulty in obtaining his wish that I would say nothing harsh, because that would only stir up new disturbances; and this he appeared greatly to desire, that there might be all the freer opportunity of speaking against us. They had commenced, so far as I have been able to learn, with doctrine; for they have inquired, whether there was anything he thought defective in that faith which we preached. He himself discoursed about certain points of doctrine, which are particularly enumerated in the minutes which were afterwards written out and attested by our signatures. Thence they proceeded to inquire into the matter of his falling away from the truth, which was the crisis of the whole affair. He endeavoured in every possible way to excuse himself. He boasted, moreover, that at first he had a most just cause of complaint against us, that he did not immediately rush forward to accuse us, but required in a friendly way, that we should subscribe the three creeds; that we not only declined doing so, but disparaged with much scornful derision those three symbols, which by the perpetual confession of good men have always been held as of established authority in the Church. Thereupon they excepted, that he had not on that account any sufficient ground why he should fall away to the Papists. Then, having rebuked him very severely, they admonished him to repentance. When called upon, I replied to his objections, and in the first place, most assuredly did not spare, to declare the whole business as it stood from the very commencement. There was some little difficulty in clearing ourselves as to the symbols; for it was certainly somewhat discreditable that we should have rejected those documents, which, since they have been received by the approving judgment of the whole Church, ought to be considered as beyond controversy. Although, therefore, it would have been easy for us to palliate that also, by replying we did not reject these symbols, far less disapprove them,

but that we had only refused our subscription, in order that Caroli might not thereby find occasion of triumph in his attacks upon our ministry, there would still have remained somewhat of suspicion in regard to us. That circumstance especially procured him favour, because a little before that, Claude, who it was clear had been often condemned by all the Churches, had been received again into the office of the ministry. Therefore, although I shewed that he had done that from malice, I could not take away from him every pretext for attacking us. It was my duty to give satisfaction on the score of battologies. But by no means have I admitted that there was here any useless battology, or mere contending about words. I confessed, however, that I would not have spoken unless I had been forced by his wickedness to do so. But it would be requisite that I should write you a volume were I to relate everything. I have, however, disclosed to them the sum and substance of our whole contention, and have so digested it point by point, that it might appear easily enough the evil did not proceed from us. Never have I felt more decidedly how much our Bernese friends whom you know have injured us by their accusations. There was not an individual of those of our own people who entertained a doubt about our innocence. They annoyed me, however, about the creeds, because we had been unwilling to subscribe them, when that might have been done without danger, and might have relieved us from much suspicion. Therefore they disapproved unanimously of our conduct. These things took place in the absence of Caroli. Thereupon Bucer requested that I would state all those matters in which he had been faulty. That I would not do; for he always had something to allege by which he could either slip away or might palliate his offence. Since, therefore, I saw that there was no good to be done in that way of proceeding, I thought it best to declare that I would not bring any accusation against him; that it would satisfy me if he acknowledged heartily and sincerely that he had sinned. But when I foresaw that an out-gate would not be very easy, there was nothing I urged more strongly than that they should proceed without me; that I had

no wish to throw hindrances in their way, provided they would not force my assent. This, because they considered that it was the greatest hindrance of all, they have not granted. Articles, therefore, have been drawn up, in which some things that he (Caroli) himself had proposed have at his own request been expunged; these articles were sent to me at a late hour in the night. When I had read one passage in particular, I was so alarmed, that throughout the whole of this year I do not remember to have been so much grieved. The next morning I summoned Sturm to my aid. I explained to him the cause of my distress. He represented the matter to Bucer. They appointed a meeting with me together at the house of Mathias, where I might explain fully what it was that distressed me. There I sinned grievously in not having been able to keep within bounds; for so had the bile taken entire possession of my mind, that I poured out bitterness on all sides. There was of a certainty some cause for indignation, if moderation had only been observed in the expression of it. I complained, on the ground that they had presented these articles to me for the purpose of discharging Caroli; that they had given it as their opinion that they appeared to themselves to be good, while I was unheard; that after judgment already pronounced, they required me to subscribe, which if I should refuse, I must look henceforth upon them as adversaries. But the point which chiefly stirred my indignation, was because therein Caroli declared, that he committed to the Lord the offences by which he had been driven to defection, and therefore he committed matters which partially concerned other parties. In the conclusion of my speech, I stated my resolution rather to die than subscribe this. Thereupon there was so much fervour on both sides, that I could not have been more rude to Caroli himself if he had been present. At length I forced myself out of the supper-room, Bucer following, who, after he had soothed me by his fair speeches, brought me back to the rest. I said, that I wished to consider the matter more fully before making any more distinct reply. When I got home I was seized with an extraordinary paroxysm, nor did I find any other solace than in sighs

and tears ; and I was the more deeply afflicted because you had occasioned me those evils. Ever and anon they were twitting me with your lenity, who had mercifully embraced Caroli upon the spot ; that I was too headstrong, who could not be moved one whit from that judgment which I had formed. Bucer, indeed, has tried every mode of representation, that he might soothe my mind upon the subject, but, in the meanwhile, sets up your example invidiously against me ; nor, indeed, can you thus excuse yourself of inconsiderateness, or that you were too easily led away by him ; and that I may freely speak my mind, that one might justly have expected from you more both of gravity and constancy and moderation. These good brethren have insisted that you should receive Caroli into favour. On which you have not merely given way, but you have fallen prostrate. This you yourself have discovered shortly after you repented of it, and you might have recovered yourself without repentance, unless you had gone too far. Do you suppose that I take any comfort to myself from the accusation of your negligence, which has caused me so much annoyance ? Had I been able to speak with you face to face, I would have turned upon you the whole of the fury which I have poured forth upon others. When I had somewhat come to myself I sent for James, and inquired what had taken place with him. Some things he related rekindled anew in me the angry passions, therefore I requested that he would point out the particular occasion where or when he imputed the blame of his falling away as forced upon him by others, and expressly that the conditions might be confirmed, upon which he had been received back by you into favour at Bonneville.<sup>1</sup> I would have accomplished something better if you had not prevented me. To you it is to be imputed if anything is faulty. First of all, that you did not temper or qualify your reconciliation by that moderation which ought to be observed ; that you ought not to have received him back into communion, unless upon his own solemn attestation acknowledging his offence, and upon repent-

<sup>1</sup> Bonneville, on the Lake of Biene. It was there where the interview between Caroli and Farel, accompanied by the two deputies from Neuchatel, had taken place.

ance; and, lastly, that you did not inform me by writing of all these matters at the time when they happened. I hope, however, that the document, as it now stands, may be endurable; but it has cost me much grief and trouble. All that remains for us, now that we have received him back again into favour, is to persevere and maintain constantly, the grace we have sanctioned, for if we ought not to cast him off, he must, by every endeavour, be retained. That cannot otherwise be brought about unless you restrain all your people, that they do not insult him. The written document, as soon as it shall have been written out formally, will be forwarded to you. Therein he is bound by sufficiently powerful obligations not to attempt any fresh mischief. However, do you yourselves observe that same mildness of demeanour towards him which you have prematurely shewn. But these things, as well as what remains to be said, I shall urge more fully when the writing shall be sent. At present I wish to inform you, in a few words, what was the conclusion of this affair. Caroli has just set out to go to Rognac,<sup>1</sup> for what purpose I have not discovered, unless that he may seek some retreat for himself until there is an opportunity of doing something with you. Alexander accompanied him, whom he excused himself for having taken along with him, upon the advice of Barbarini. There was no occasion, however, of apprehension, either on your part or on ours, on his account; for here we are not quite so facile as readily to embrace those whom other Churches have cast out. He also, indeed, requested to be heard; but we had no leisure. Upon his return, so far as depends upon me, I will not intercede that he may be heard, unless he shall declare to me his whole history, to which proposal, in respect of his dignity, he may except. Your letter I shall answer soon; for a severe cough has seized me, which does not suffer me to write more at present. This person who delivers my letter to you was recommended to us by the Seigneur de Rognac, for whose sake we have endeavoured to find employment for him, but were not able. Among the manual arts his inclination and taste led him to try

<sup>1</sup> Rognac—is it the burgh of that name in Provence, department of Bouches du Rhone?

the handicraft of bookbinding; hence he has gone thither that he may try everywhere. I willingly recommend him to you, and hope you may be able to serve him; for Rognac is worthy and deserving, for whose sake I willingly would entreat this of you, and even much more. All our friends greet you in the most friendly manner, chiefly Capito, Bucer, Sturm, Bedrot,<sup>1</sup> Claude, Gaspar, James, with his companion Enard, and all the Frenchmen. Because I am aware that you are quite accustomed to my rudeness, I will make no excuse for treating you so uncivilly. Salute all the brethren for me, chiefly Cordier and Chaponneau and Thomas. Do as seems best to yourself in regard to the epistle of Sadolet, only, however, let me know what you do. Cordier will greatly oblige me if he will entrust to me the Psalms which he has already written out.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

## XLI.—TO FAREL.

Farther details of the reconciliation of Calvin with Caroli—the minister Alexander—a lecture of Bucer—negotiations of the Protestant Princes of Germany—their answer to Henry VIII.—French translation of the epistle to Sadolet.

STRASBOURG, 27th October 1539.

Pardon me, my most amiable brother, for not having written to you since that discontented letter<sup>2</sup> which lately had been forced out of me by my ill-humour in its first fervour. I do not quite remember what I may have written. I am aware, however, that I had not sufficiently softened the expressions, because this single solace of my grief remained, to expostulate with you for having created such annoyance to me through your extreme facility. Now, you excuse your fault in a lengthened apology, although, nevertheless, you try to defend what you have done; the sum total, however, of the defence

<sup>1</sup> James Bedrot, native of the Grisons, professor of Greek in the Academy at Strasbourg.

<sup>2</sup> That is to say, the preceding letter concerning Caroli.



consists of entreaty. After this, therefore, look to it that you set bounds to your clemency, and take care that it does no harm to others. I did not omit any of those things which you enumerate in your epistle, when I came to speak upon the matter. For I have diligently tracked all the exploits which he has perpetrated since his going away, both at Geneva and at Lausanne, and also in France ; but afterwards he was brought in, and according to his pleasure, he softened down some things, others he made light of, and in some he threw back the charge upon ourselves. They did not venture to trust me with him, that he might not exasperate me beyond all bearing. They also qualified his answers, or suppressed them entirely. Thus have I been deceived in the whole affair. When I foresaw this from the first, my intention was expressly declared, to take no part either in approving or in disapproving of what might be done. For all the matter in discussion was, that the person might not be cast off by us who had been received by you. You deny that you are the Church. But who can suppose otherwise than that you have recommended him on the certificate of the Church ? Deny it if you can, that you attested his reconciliation by your letter. Moreover, what you wrote as applicable to you, was understood as referring to the whole Church, from whose authority all were of opinion that you had not departed. In this way, I have been left alone in my opposition. That, also, deprived me of authority, that he had succeeded in getting our friends to think he had some reason for discussing that controversy about the Trinity, in which respect Capito helped him not a little, who informed Bucer that he had formerly received a letter from you, in which you acknowledged that you dissented on that point from others, or I know not what to the same purpose, for Bucer has not clearly explained it to me. All of them, also, have strangely annoyed me about the creeds. These, and matters of a like kind have effected, that they have come to judge him not altogether unworthy of compassion. But upon what conditions he was received, you will understand from the minutes. I will consistently perform what I have there promised, if he faithfully observes his engagement. If, however, he may

happen to deceive, that instant I am free, for I have bound myself in regard to him only conditionally.

With reference to Alexandre,<sup>1</sup> I am already thoroughly informed, so that I can welcome him, as often as he calls, according to his deserts; and I shall have more weight in that cause, because it will not appear so much as if I were pleading my own case. Listen to a signal instance of his impudence. Once he ventured to enter our dwelling with the view of obtruding himself upon me in some way or other. When I happened to go down to the lower part of the house, there I caught him with the domestics. He bowed in a very courtly style, and put himself in the gesture of preparation to speak. I condescended to regard him neither by look nor by salutation. Nevertheless, I summoned one of them, of whom I requested that he would desire him to go away, for that we did not suffer those to remain on our premises who had been cast out of the Church of God. From that time he has not dared to present himself to me. Now let him come, he shall not find me unprepared. You will be amused, also, when you hear how Caroli was received at one of Bucer's lectures. He was treating of the passage about stoning the false prophet: when he had defined what was meant by the expression *Pseudo Propheta*, he said, that he was not a person who might teach somewhat beyond or independent of the Word of God, but one who could welcome or approve of dogmas opposed to the Word of God. He added an example concerning those who would imagine a certain place in which souls are purified, and he pronounced that doctrine to be absurd; but on account of that we ought not to condemn any one, provided he so professed it that he left it undetermined; but that he who maintains that the dead are aided by our prayers, was not only to be condemned of vain worship, but also of impiety. When he spoke these words, at one time he looked towards me, and at another he turned his eyes to Caroli. Now, however, since we have agreed with him, we must take care that he has no good ground of complaint against us, either on the score of consistency or sincerity. I may, nevertheless, some-

<sup>1</sup> Alexandre, late minister of Thonon. He had been excommunicated by the presbytery of Neuchatel for having deserted his charge.

how understand with what adroitness he has conducted himself with Rognac. He affords me an opportunity of speaking of the church at Metz, and what has happened there. He passes on thither, and seizes an opportunity of preaching. Instantly an official appears, who orders him to be cited. What passes with him thereupon I know not, except that shortly afterwards he withdraws. About fifteen days before, I had sent my brother thither. He lived with an excellent and most upright man, and kept very quiet. As soon as they got knowledge of it, they required of his master that he would send him away. He refused to do so. Then they turned their fury against my brother, and ordered him to depart the city within seven days. He replied, that it was both an unjust and unusual proceeding to pronounce against an unoffending man without hearing him. He therefore went to the magistrate, sought a hearing, was refused; appealed to the provost and his council, which consists of persons of some rank. He presented, according to custom, a petition and supplication, but he made nothing of it. Nor did they treat him only in this way, but they decided that no stranger in future, upon whom any suspicion might fall, should be suffered to remain. Briefly, I wish you to understand, that the way in that direction, for the present, is shut against the Gospel. Therefore, we must wait for a better opportunity, which I shall be always looking for. Those small vermin, *Malizi* and *Crociati*, you cannot do better than constantly to crush and bruise them, which you may do without danger, for they can only spit spent venom.

That information which the French ambassador has received about the Edict<sup>1</sup> has been the doing of Bucer, who has underhand instructed Doctor Chelius<sup>2</sup> to write to him, that all our friends were greatly estranged from the King on account of that cruelty.<sup>3</sup> Not a word about the embassy. Bucer himself dic-

<sup>1</sup> This refers, doubtless, to the Edict which was published the following year in France. It contained most rigorous clauses against heretics.

<sup>2</sup> Ulric Chelius, a distinguished physician, the friend of Bucer.

<sup>3</sup> See notes 2, pp. 105, 126. The Protestant princes of Germany, irritated by the persecutions directed against their brethren of the Reformed Churches of France, threatened the rupture of all friendly relations with the reigning sovereign, Francis I.

tated the letter, and certainly, already we had almost begun to despair about it. The Landgrave had yielded, and the matter was already settled, unless the Elector of Saxony had stood out, who supposes that he does his duty well, provided he keeps himself at as great a distance as possible from all his adversaries. In the meantime, the pious who are endangered are deserted. The King of England had lately despatched an embassy to him, to excuse himself for having sent away his ambassadors and those of the Landgrave without having attained their object.<sup>1</sup> He alleged as a reason, that they did not appear to him to be furnished with a sufficiently ample commission. The Elector replied, that the proverb spoke truth which said, that loop-holes of escape are always to be found by those who wish to play fast and loose; for that the ambassadors had full power of entering into the treaty which he and his allies were willing to make with him. That he deceived himself if he could suppose that our friends could be induced to mix themselves up with all his peculiar controversies; they would not engage in any other alliance than such as would be for the sake of the Gospel. Besides, that the King had sufficiently displayed the temper of his mind when he published that impious Edict;<sup>2</sup> for that his conscience impelled him to this harsh language, nor could even he prevent the learned in his own dominions from denouncing so great impiety. The Landgrave, with no less constancy, more mildly replied, that he would smooth the way for him, if there was hope of mending the matter. The convention is now appointed for the 19th November, in which both embassies will be dealt with. Early yesterday a messenger arrived, although it is not

<sup>1</sup> See p. 101, note 2. These deputies had at first been most graciously received by the King of England. They held frequent conferences with his counsellors, at the house of Thomas Cromwell, regarding the object of their mission—the foundation of a defensive alliance between the German princes and the English monarch. Henry appeared favourable to the project. This was, however, but a political ruse; for, after having amused the deputies with fair words and pretended negotiations, he allowed them to depart.—See Seckendorf, lib. iii. sect. 19, parag. 73; and Burnet.

<sup>2</sup> The Act of the Six Articles, called the *Bill of Blood*, promulgated the 28th April 1539. See Burnet, *Hist. Ref.* vol. i. pp. 256-260.

yet known what it is about ; the consultation, however, appears to be of importance. You can thence, also, conjecture what has so suddenly called them together. It will be a journey of ten days for our friends ; for the others somewhat more, who have not yet had notice of it.

Do you know what has happened to Count William ?<sup>1</sup> While he wished to defend these valleys of the Alps against the assaults of the Comte de Montmian, he incurred the enmity of the Constable,<sup>2</sup> which has proceeded to that extent, that he forced himself away from Court without even taking leave of the King, having, however, previously resigned his offices. The story is tedious, therefore I cannot relate the whole of it.

The translation of my Epistle to Sadolet I was not able to compare throughout, for that employment required one whole day. I have looked over it, however, and having partially examined, I am able to form an opinion of it. It is not amiss. I am unwilling, however, that it should be published before it has been corrected. In some respects it is faulty ; I fear, however, that should Antony Pignorius delay, some person may be beforehand with him, who has perhaps already finished it. For I did not waste a third part of the time in composing it which has passed away since he wrote that he had begun, nor do I doubt that this has been by the advice of Michael. The Secretary of Payerne has one of his brethren here. By way of return, he is educating his brother's son. He has entrusted him to the care of Gaspar, a good and worthy man. The mother is meanwhile very anxious, because she hears not a word about her son. Do, therefore, try and make him write briefly how he is getting on. All here salute you in the most friendly way ; Capito, Bucer, Brito, the scholars of Claude, James with his comrade Enard, the whole of our household, where at present my brother is stopping with us. It will be better to keep this letter to yourself, than to let it go farther.—Yours,

CALVIN.

Salute for me respectfully all the brethren, your colleague

<sup>1</sup> William du Bellay, Lord of Langey, and Viceroy of Piedmont, then occupied by Francis I.

<sup>2</sup> Anne de Montmorency. He had been promoted to the office of Constable in 1538, for his able defence of Provence against the Imperialists.

Thomas, and the others. I have not been able just at present to write to Michael. Do you, however, urge him to write, by the first opportunity, what has been done about the Psalms. I had commissioned one hundred copies to be sent to Geneva. Now, for the first time, I have been given to understand that this had not been attended to. It has certainly been very neglectful so long to delay informing me. I cannot at present get the Minutes. Within a few days you shall receive them.

(*Postscript, in French.*)

You have sent me word by Alexander, that you have got for me *Pias Orationes Lutheri*, of which you make no mention. I beg you will let me know also about that.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

## XLII.—TO FAREL.

Caroli—encounter between William du Bellay and the Constable de Montmorency—preparation for an approaching Assembly in Germany—negotiations with the King of England—salutations addressed by Luther to Calvin—hope of an accommodation between the Swiss and German Churches.

STRASBOURG, 20th November [1539.]

For a long time I have been eagerly on the outlook for your opinion about the minutes of reconciliation with Caroli. That personage has not returned, and there need be little doubt that he seeks to nestle in that quarter; and assuredly it was no bad determination for him to arrive at. The kitchen of a courtier smokes very freely, and you are aware he has a quick scent in that direction. I am afraid, however, that he may not long continue with those who do not like to be out of favour with the King. Whatever shall happen, if he keeps his promise, it will be our duty, by the observance of all due civility, to have at least deserved well at his hand. The state of the affair as to Count William stands thus:<sup>1</sup>—After the Comte de

<sup>1</sup> The Memoirs of Du Bellay furnish no information in regard to the discussions which are treated of in the close of this letter, and of which the Waldenses of

Montmian had broken violently into the valleys of the Alps, and had inflicted many wrongs upon the good brethren, the Count complained in earnest about them to the Constable, and did not hesitate to use threats. The latter wished at first to calm the temper of the Count, and to soothe his kinsman by cajoleries. The Count thereupon spoke more angrily, until at length the other also began to wax fierce. Hence there has grown up an undissembled hatred on both sides. The Count instantly thereupon, by a letter, which he allowed me to peruse, threw up the alliance in which he had previously been engaged with the Comte de Montmian. He said, that it appeared to him wicked and villanous, if, as was reported, he had invaded those valleys and had plundered a peaceful inoffensive race of men. An answer was returned on the part of Montmian, in which he said that the Count was a base liar. He added, also, that those people suffered no more than they deserved, on account of their rebellion against God and the King. The Count, with all speed, despatches a person by whom he challenges his adversary to single combat. In his progress, the messenger is told of the death of the adversary. In the meantime the Constable defends the adversary of the Count, . . . who provoke him with all manner of affronts. Treated after this fashion, the Count throws up the<sup>1</sup> . . . service of the King. And lately he received a letter from his Majesty, along with the defamatory libel of his opponent. To the King he replied, that he had a defence prepared in answer to all that was objected against him, if only he was allowed to speak the truth without offence to the court; for that he . . . against the Constable, whom they had discovered to be the source of all the mischief. Most assuredly he poured forth all his bitterness against him; and that he might not appear to do anything covertly or underhand, he despatched four or five copies, which were to be presented to the Dauphin, to the King of Navarre, and others. Among other things which he has

Piedmont were the subject. William du Bellay was governor of Piedmont, which had recently been subjugated by Francis I., and did honour to himself by the generous protection which he extended to Waldensian Churches.

<sup>1</sup> This word, as also several others, is effaced in the original.

been forced to hear, that story was cast up to him about his brother, who they say defiled the holy cup. He replied, that it was a falsehood; if it had been true he himself would have punished such an outrage, nor could he have escaped with impunity after such an act of sacrilege, either at Basle or here, or at Geneva: that the enemies of the Gospel, however, invent many stories, for the purpose of grieving and annoying us, and that this was one of them. He loves both of his brothers very much. When I lately supped with him, and one of the superior clergy of the cathedral was present, who it is thought will one day be bishop, he spoke in a friendly way of both. I stayed nearly two days with him, that I might write his letters.

On the 19th of this month the Convention is appointed to meet, as I have already written to you.<sup>1</sup> The chief point for deliberation will be, what they ought to advise now that the Emperor has given them the slip. There are very many and great surmises of war. The Margrave-Elector of Brandenburg<sup>2</sup> has summoned Philip, and has written to the Landgrave that it is his intention to receive the Gospel and to root up Popery. While the truce has lasted, therefore, we have acquired no small accession. It is doubtful as to Gueldres what may happen. He has betrothed his sister to the King of England,<sup>3</sup> and within a few days will send her away. The English king has courteously entertained the ambassadors of our princes. What more can I say? Never was there a time of greater preparedness for the reception of the Gospel. When the Emperor heard of the marriage he tried to induce the King, by means of Duke Frederic,<sup>4</sup> brother of the Elector-Palatine,

<sup>1</sup> That meeting took place at Arnstadt, a town of the Thuringi. See Sleidan, lib. xii. p. 347.

<sup>2</sup> Joachim II., Margrave-Elector of Brandenburg, (1534-1571.) After having shewn himself all along faithful to the cause of the Emperor, this prince established the Reformation in his States.

<sup>3</sup> Henry VIII. sought again at this time the alliance of the Protestant princes of Germany. He espoused (Jan. 6, 1540) Anne of Cleves, whom he repudiated some months afterwards.

<sup>4</sup> This prince, who at this time still wavered between Catholicism and the Reformed doctrines, succeeded his brother as Elector-Palatine, in 1544, and completed the work of the Reformation in his State.



to take the Duchess of Milan, whereby, uniting their influence, they might recover the kingdom of Denmark. The English King replied briefly, that not only would he never attempt anything against the King of Denmark, but that he would assist him and his allies as a duty to which he was bound. He then advised Frederic that he should unite with us and bring his brother also into the League. And the more to encourage him, he promised that he would bring it about that the Palatine's interest should be espoused by the King of Denmark. Our friends will now undoubtedly press forward. Bucer has been summoned by the Landgrave: it is doubtful whether for the purpose of proceeding thither with the deputies or not. Our friend Sturm has a commission from the Senate to look after the interest of the brethren. Accordingly, when I was requested by him to do so, I have briefly pointed out what appeared to me the best method of proceeding. I send you a short copy of it, although it has somewhat cooled the inclination of Bucer, as he understood afterwards that the report was false, which having reached us by your letter, we inconsiderately spread abroad. For you will remember you had written, that some one had been burnt at Paris. Two persons have been here, who steadily deny the fact. Be careful, therefore, for the future, that you write nothing but what you have ascertained as certain. Besides, Bucer was all the more displeased, because he had already written to the same purport to the Landgrave. I have already stated what I thought of the royal edict. If it really was supposititious, as I very much fear it was, how greatly must it weaken our credit! I have certainly regretted to have spoken of it on such insufficient information. Let us therefore be more wary for the future, by which means our authority will have more weight and be more effectual for the help of the brethren. Believe me, I do not fail, whenever an occasion presents itself, to render all the aid in my power, which I merely mention, because many suppose me to be asleep, because not always boasting.

Crato, one of our engravers, lately returned from Wittemberg, who brought a letter from Luther to Bucer, in which

there was written:<sup>1</sup> "Salute for me reverently Sturm and Calvin, whose books I have read with special delight." Now, consider seriously what I have said there about the Eucharist; think of the ingenuousness of Luther: it will now be easy for you to see how unreasonable are those who so obstinately dissent from him. Philip, however, wrote thus:—"Luther and Pomeranus have desired Calvin to be greeted; Calvin has acquired great favour in their eyes." Philip has informed me at the same time by the messenger, that certain persons, in order to irritate Luther, have shown him a passage in which he and his friends have been criticised by me. That thereupon he had examined the passage, and feeling that it was undoubtedly intended for him, had said at length:—"I hope that Calvin will one day think better of us; but in any event it is well that he should even now have a proof of our good feeling towards him." If we are not affected by such moderation, we are certainly of stone. For myself, I am profoundly affected by it, and therefore have taken occasion to say so in the preface which is inserted before the Epistle to the Romans.<sup>2</sup> If you have not yet read Philip on the Authority of the Church, I

<sup>1</sup> Here is the passage of the letter of Luther, containing a flattering allusion to the letter of Calvin to Sadolet: "Bene vale, et salutabis D. Joannem Sturmium et Joannem Calvinum quorum libellos cum singulari voluptate legi. Sadoletum optarem ut crederet, Deum esse creatorem hominum etiam extra Italiam. Sed hæc persuasio non penetrat corda Italarum, cum tam soli præ cæteris exuerint plane humanum sensum præ superbia."—Dr. Martin Luther's *Briefe*, edit. de Wette, tom. v. p. 411. ✓

<sup>2</sup> The preface of this Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans is dedicated to Simon Grynée, and contains an eulogium of Melanchthon, of Bucer, and of Bullinger, accompanied with the following reflections:—"God never designed in such a way to exercise liberality towards His servants, as that each should be endowed with a full and perfect understanding on every point; and doubtless, in this respect, He intended, in the first place, to keep us humble, and next of all to keep up and maintain the desire and the exercise of brotherly love and communion. On this account, since such is the case, we have no reason to expect, in this present life, to see what would otherwise be so desirable, that in the understanding and the exposition of certain passages of Scripture, there ever can be among us an out-and-out entire agreement, (in allusion to the sacraments,) yet we ought to be particularly careful, when we do depart from the opinion of those who have written before us, that we do so without being carried away by the silly appetite for saying something new," &c.—*Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, Geneva, in 4to, 1562. ✓

desire you may read it. You will perceive he is much more considerate than he appeared in his other writings. Capito, Bucer, Sturm, Hedio, Bedrot, and others, salute you most lovingly. Do you also salute respectfully all the brethren.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### XLIII.—TO FAREL.

Persecutions in France—policy of Francis I. and Charles V.—ecclesiastical discipline—University regulations at Strasbourg—illness of Farel.

STRASBOURG, 31st December 1539.

To-day, immediately after sermon, Fatin<sup>1</sup> intimated that he was about to leave, when I had been invited to sup with a friend; whence I returned long after eight o'clock, much refreshed. You must, therefore, expect a letter from me, as from one who am scarcely sufficiently free and disengaged for writing. I am sorry that that holy brother is deceased, as becomes me. Since, however, it has so happened, I rejoice that the messenger has confirmed your letter about his death, whereby I can more certainly aver that it is so. The sentence had not been executed upon Michael so lately as the end of November, at which period the care of his safety was commended to me by letter. Our friend Sturm has returned from the convention: it is not known what has been done. We conjecture, however, that this silence betokens somewhat of importance. He has brought word, that the proposal had been made about the brethren; but it seemed to many, that the present was a very unsuitable time to send an embassy which could have no other effect than to sour the temper of the King. Those two sovereigns appear to have agreed together to attempt the doing of great things.<sup>2</sup> The Emperor is enrolling an army not far off from this. The pretext is, the cities which have revolted, but it seems that the

<sup>1</sup> Minister of the Church of Neuchatel.

<sup>2</sup> The truce of Nice had for the moment reconciled Charles V. and Francis I.

great pressure of the war is to be directed upon Gueldres.<sup>1</sup> But he will neither be abandoned by the King of England nor by the Elector of Saxony. What alliance he may have entered into with our friends, or whether there be any, is uncertain. Two ambassadors have been sent to the Venetians, the Marquis of Guasta and Marshal Annebault, to reclaim the towns which they have seized upon belonging to the duchy of Milan.<sup>2</sup> They rather seem to me to be heralds, than the messengers of peace. Either all conjectures deceive, or in a short time we shall see the whole of Europe in a state of war, for already the seven cantons are said to murmur. There is no hope of peace for our friends except that which shall have been obtained by war.

Concerning the discipline, you do well to press it; but when the subject is well weighed, I do not know whether it can be established unless with the consent of the churches. It is therefore much to be wished, that some time or other the Churches may assemble to deliberate about that matter. We see, indeed, how very necessary it is. There was some slender form of discipline at Basle. What did exist has been half swamped in the midst of these disputes. So far have Myconius and Grynée advanced in that championship, which they imagined, in the defence of Christian liberty. If we can deliberate together, let us try whether somewhat may not be accomplished. Capito will write to the Bernese as you have requested, and I will address our brethren. I think I have already written to you with considerable prolixity on the case of Caroli. Although I entertain no hopeful expectation concerning that individual, nevertheless I am prevented, by the consent of the Church, from despairing of him altogether. Let us wait and see how he conducts himself where he now is. Rognac has promised me by letter that he would come hither within a few days; then, I shall ascertain all about him. Should we be able to convict him of unfaithfulness, he can

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Cleves had been put in possession of the town of Gueldres, notwithstanding the protestations of the Emperor, and with the tacit approbation of the French King.

<sup>2</sup> The King of France and the Emperor equally put forth pretensions to the possession of the Milanese.

have no ground to hope henceforward to be entertained by us. Gaspar is more distractingly anxious than he ought to be on account of having incurred some amount of debt, in order somewhat to prolong his studies. At this present time he has no money wherewith to maintain himself for only two months, the time which he had fixed for himself. If somehow or other so much could be raised for him, it would be doing him a service. Michael, the bookseller of Geneva, has informed me that he has sent hither the remainder of my books, with my brother's wearing-apparel. If they come to you, will you open the package, and if you can sell any of the books, dispose of them? Will you undertake the charge of forwarding those which remain to Basle as soon as possible? Furthermore, since he complains that my book does not sell, and that he is overburdened with more copies than he can get rid of, I have written in reply that he might send a hundred copies to you, which I take on my own account. If he shall have done so, will you let me know immediately? I have rather chosen to involve myself in this difficulty than that my credit should be put in peril. But after this he may seek some one else who for his sake alone may undertake so much trouble. I experience here the same insolence as you yourself so much complain of. Some rules for the Academy have lately been made, by which the discipline will be tightened in the case of such as are here for the sake of study. Among our French friends, even among those who live with me, some are quite frantic. To-morrow it will be intimated to them that they may depart unless they choose to obey; and I have no doubt that they will avail themselves of the intimation. Whence you understand how well-disposed they can have come hither, that is, that they may have more licence. Wherefore it is the rather to be watchfully looked to by us, that the reverence and authority due to the Church may not be wanting, in order to subdue those lewd and mischievous desires; although, nevertheless, I see that some allowance must be made for the folly of mankind; nor ought the rigour of discipl'ine to be stretched so far that they may not play the fool on some occasion. Greet for me most kindly all the brethren. Excuse me

also to Cordier, because for the present I cannot reply to him.—Yours,  
CALVIN.

Although I have omitted what ought to have been done in the first place, to congratulate you on your restored health, it was not because I rejoice the less on that account; for while I reflect how much of the greatest importance may depend on one little man, it is not possible for me not to be in a more than ordinary degree anxious about your life. Therefore, from the time that the report of your illness was brought hither, I have not enjoyed one pleasant moment until I heard you had recovered. On that account I experienced the like joy from hearing by the messenger good news of your health, as he enjoys who is delivered from a long-continued sickness.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.*—*Library of Geneva*. Vol. 106.]

#### XLIV.—TO FAREL.

Further mention of Caroli—discussion with Hermann the Anabaptist—good understanding of Charles V. and Francis I.—alarm of the German Princes—some detail of the propositions addressed to Calvin.

STRASBOURG, 6<sup>th</sup> February 1540.

I entreat you, my dear brother, when I expostulate with you, chide you, get warm with you, accuse you, that you may take it all the same as if you were dealing thus with yourself. Concerning Caroli, the Lord will give counsel, in whose case, if there has been anything sinful on our part, the Lord can correct it. Our friends also acknowledge, that they were more lenient than they ought to have been. But because there is not among us that severity of discipline which ought to exist, they have been compelled to deal more indulgently with him than they could have wished. Especially that error hath deceived us all, that we supposed he had been reconciled to you. For we received him on the condition that all the engagements should remain binding by which he had been received to favour again by you at Bonneville. If he shall return, let us take care that our gentle treatment of him may not prove hurtful to

you. Where he is at present, I do not know that he could do any harm, even if he would. Should he speak reproachfully of us, he will not, as I expect, be very likely to be hearkened to. For I am already aware that he thinks better of you than rashly to entertain any accusation. Myself also, that I may acknowledge the truth, have recommended him to Rognac, but simply on this ground, because he had repented, because he had returned to us, because, having acknowledged his offence, he had sought and obtained pardon, because we hoped that he had cordially returned to us. Thereupon I requested that, if he did not conduct himself otherwise than became the servant of Christ, the estrangement which had taken place might not be prejudicial to him. He has not come to Rognac; therefore, he has not availed himself of that recommendation. There, however, Alexandre has been received into favour by Robert Vallis, in whose family you know that he was formerly. When he had afterwards been sent hither, I wrote to Rognac that I could not conscientiously receive him into my house, nor have anything to do with him. He courteously excused himself, as having sinned through ignorance, not having been aware that he [Alexandre] had been excommunicated. He is coming here, however, with his wife this Lent. Then I will make strict inquiry about Caroli. What you complain of, that the sacred ministry has so miserably dwindled away in that quarter, is too true. Wherever you turn your eyes, you may find innumerable causes of lamentation. And while, of a certainty, I see no way of putting an end to it, my courage would entirely fail me, if this single thought did not sustain me, that whatever may happen, the work of the Lord is never to be deserted. Notwithstanding, in the midst of so many evils, the Lord from time to time bestows somewhat that refreshes us. Hermann, who disputed against us at Geneva, besought me to appoint a day for conferring with him. In regard to infant baptism, the human nature of Christ, and some other points, he now acknowledges that he had fallen grievously into error. There are some other things in which he still hesitates. But this affords good hope, when so many difficulties have been taken out of the way. Count John has at length presented his boy, rather big for his age, to be bap-

tized. I have long borne with his weakness, since he told me that he thought he had good reasons for delaying. At length he said, that he no longer cared for those whose perverseness could by no means be worn out or subdued.

That which has been reported with you about the passage of the Emperor, is fabulous.<sup>1</sup> Our friends had a person there who might keep an eye on all that was going forward. It is certain that there was no discussion of serious matters. A day, however, was fixed, in the beginning of March, when the Emperor and the King are to meet at Amiens.<sup>2</sup> If they can agree together, we may well be apprehensive of their conspiring for our destruction. Ferdinand will be present, who is already well advanced on his journey. The rumour goes that the Duke of Savoy,<sup>3</sup> also, is on his journey through Italy, that he may come into Germany by the Tyrolese Alps, and certainly there will be little hope of recovering his rights if these two sovereigns settle the business in his absence. Our friends have put the Emperor in mind of his promise. Meanwhile, however, they are as boisterous and unmanageable as if war had already been declared. The former month they appeared too indolent. At this present it is marvellous how stirring they are, and how greatly excited. Nevertheless, in the midst of such commotions as these, I am so much at my ease, as to have the audacity to think of taking a wife. A certain damsel of noble rank has been proposed to me, and with a fortune above my condition. Two considerations deterred me from that connexion—because she did not understand our language, and because I feared she might be too mindful of her family and education. Her brother, a very devout person, urged the connexion, and on no other account than that, blinded by his affection to me, he neglected

<sup>1</sup> The town of Ghent having revolted, Charles V. sought permission from the French King to pass through France, in order to suppress more promptly the revolt. Francis consented, and, on the faith of his word, Charles did not hesitate to traverse the states of his rival. His expedition was a triumph. The two sovereigns made their formal entry into Paris, January 1, 1540.

<sup>2</sup> Amiens. The interview proposed in that town between the two monarchs did not take place.

<sup>3</sup> Charles, Duke of Savoy, dispossessed of the greater part of his territory by Francis I.



his own interests. His wife also, with a like partiality, contended, as he did, so that I would have been prevailed upon to submit with a good grace, unless the Lord had otherwise appointed. When, thereupon, I replied that I could not engage myself unless the maiden would undertake that she would apply her mind to the learning of our language, she requested time for deliberation. Thereupon, without further parley, I sent my brother, with a certain respectable man, to escort hither another, who, if she answers her repute, will bring a dowry large enough, without any money at all. Indeed, she is mightily commended by those who are acquainted with her. If it come to pass, as we may certainly hope will be the case, the marriage ceremony will not be delayed beyond the tenth of March.<sup>1</sup> I wish you might then be present, that you may bless our wedlock. As, however, I have troubled you so much more than I ought during the past year, I dare not insist upon it. If, however, any one of our brethren should have a mind to visit us, I would prefer that it were at that time, when he could supply your place; although, nevertheless, I make myself look very foolish if it shall so happen that my hope again fall through. But as I trust the Lord will be present to help me, I express myself as though I spoke of a certainty.—To return to public affairs. Since the Emperor has declared to our Princes, through the Archbishop of Lunden, that he had not given up the idea of having a Diet, that they may not be caught unawares, they have desired that some competently learned men of skill and judgment should be present at Smalkald, to lay down the method of procedure. Bucer proceeds thither before the 20th of the present month.

Adieu, much longed-for brother. May the Lord preserve you and all the others your colleagues, whom salute most lovingly in my name, especially Cordier, my preceptor, Thomas, Onerus, and Nicolas. Our friends have requested to be kindly remembered. This letter I send you by Brito, (the Breton,) whom I could have wished to have retained here a

<sup>1</sup> The marriage of Calvin with Idelette de Bure did not take place till the following month of August.

year longer, if I were not forced to approve his reasons.—  
Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

XLV.—TO FAREL.

Impressions of Calvin on his recall to Geneva—rigorous application of discipline  
in his church—news of Germany, of France, and of England.

STRASBOURG, 29th March 1540.

I have already waited so long for your letter that I may well doubt whether I ought to wait any longer. My anxious wish to hear from you kept alive my expectation, and shall even yet sustain my hope for some few days; but if at length my hope shall give way, you will see how indignantly I have borne this disappointment; and your neglect is all the less to be tolerated, because Geneva at this present time affords you such abundant material for correspondence. Du Taily, however, has written to me, and yet I do not clearly understand from his expressions what has been the catastrophe of this drama. Michael, also, the printer, has communicated to me at Blecheret, that my return thitherward might be brought about; but rather would I submit to death a hundred times than to that cross, on which one had to perish daily a thousand times over. This piece of information I have wished incidentally to communicate to you, that to the utmost of your power you may set yourself to oppose the measures of those who shall endeavour to draw me back thither. And that I may not appear to be looking in one direction and rowing in another, I will lay open my mind to you whenever at any time you ask me to do so. We are as yet in a state of suspense as to the marriage,<sup>1</sup> and this annoys me exceedingly, forasmuch as the relations of that young lady of rank are so urgent that I may take her unto myself, which, indeed, I would never think of doing, unless the Lord had altogether demented me. But because it is unpleasant to refuse, especially in the case of such

<sup>1</sup> See the preceding Letter.

persons, who overwhelm me altogether with their kindness, most earnestly do I desire to be delivered out of this difficulty. We hope, however, that this will very shortly be the case; and during the next four or five days another engagement will turn away my mind from the subject, and itself will engross all my attention.

In this place hitherto many individuals were in the habit of making a rash approach to the sacrament of the Supper. On Easter-day, when I gave out the intimation that we were to celebrate the Supper on next Lord's-day, I announced, at the same time, that no one would be admitted to the table of the Lord by me, who had not beforehand presented himself for examination. The greatest difficulty will arise in correcting that silly eagerness to press forward which has taken possession of some Frenchmen, so that it can scarcely be driven out of them. You are aware of those regulations that have been made for the Academy, that the young men confining themselves to the distinction of the student's gown must lay aside the wearing of a sword, that they must give up their names to the rector, and such like. Now, in order to evade these rules they renounce entirely the profession of the belles-lettres; but as this bears upon it the face of manifest contumacy, I have resolved on no account to allow it, for I would rather that the whole of them should go away than that they should remain at the expense of discipline. Leo Juda<sup>1</sup> lately requested of me to allow him to publish, in German, with the addition of my name, the first of those two Epistles which I wrote four years ago;<sup>2</sup> that one, indeed, (I mean the one in which I am made to coax and flatter the Popish bishops,) he has published at this fair-time without the name. The answer I gave was very friendly, but, at the same time, contained some rather cutting admonition. A little before that I had written almost to the same purpose to Bullinger. If it shall

<sup>1</sup> Minister of the Church of Zurich.

<sup>2</sup> They are the two letters entitled: *Epistolæ duæ, prima de fugiendis impiorum illicitis sacris, et puritate Christianæ religionis; secunda de Christiani hominis officio in sacerdotiis papalis ecclesiæ vel administrandis vel abjiciendis.* Geneva, 1537, in 8vo.

succeed I will let you know the course I may take. Our friends are hitherto at a standstill as to what they intend to do. The reason of their offputting is because they have not as yet received any certain return by way of answer from the Emperor, who, however, begins to be much more tractable. The meeting of the King of England with our sovereign has somewhat tamed his arrogance, which may have considerable influence in changing the whole of his measures.<sup>1</sup> He made use of this sophism, that he would not bind himself to the King by promise on any account, but that he would inflate him with empty hopes for the future. Already the King seemed to himself to have possession of Milan. Lately, however, when the Emperor's inclination was put to proof by the ambassador, he found that it was not easy to bring him that length. It is said, indeed, that in everything he has given the King his choice, provided only that he does not ask Milan. On that account, therefore, it is that the Constable is gone to him, and if he does not get what he seeks, we suspect that they will be more ready to go to war than ever. Neither, indeed, will the King of England, in such a crisis of affairs, yield in any point, much less the admiral,<sup>2</sup> who is now restored to his former post of honour and favour. Before few months are over we shall see, if I am not mistaken, a wonderful change of scene, but, in the meanwhile, the Lord must be entreated that in this turn of affairs he would both hasten forward the decision and also confirm the resolution of our friends. May the Lord keep you all in safety, continually under His protection. And foremost of them all, adieu, my very excellent and right trusty brother. Capito, Sturm, Bedrot, Claude, and my brother, salute you. Nicolas and the others do not know that I am writing.

CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 259.]

<sup>1</sup> This interview, which had been proposed to be held at Calais, in reference to fresh matrimonial projects of Henry VIII., did not take place, (see Hume, cap. xxxii.,) and after apparent hesitation on the part of the English monarch between an alliance with Francis I. and one with the Emperor, he turned to Charles V., sacrificing at once the friendship of the King of France and that of the German Princes.

<sup>2</sup> Sir William Fitz-Williams, high admiral, recently created Earl of Southampton.

## XLVI.—TO FAREL.

Reconciliation of parties at Geneva—Insufficiency of the ministers of that Church—Policy of Charles V.—Courageous attitude of the Protestant Princes—Favourable news from England—Cruel persecutions in France—Ecclesiastical discipline in the French Church at Strasbourg.

STRASBOURG, *Month of May* 1540.

Because I promised to write you fully about every thing, in order that my promise at least in some measure may be fulfilled, I have set aside the whole of this day to you. You will receive, therefore, full and weighty performance, unless perhaps unexpectedly I shall be called away. Concerning the state of the Church at Geneva, we can discourse more at large, when you shall come hither. That news was indeed most delightfully welcome, when I heard that a stop had been put, somehow or other, to these janglings and contentions.<sup>1</sup> For I have always thought that no good was to be expected of that unhappy city, so long as it laboured under that fatal malady. I could only desire that their reconciliation may prove to be in the Lord. For, as you say, unless Christ is the bond of our agreement it will be cursed. Where is the advantage, then, of union out of Christ? since we know that all such combinations shall be broken up by God. As for me, I do not yet see that they have respect to the will of the Lord as they ought. Indeed, they do not sufficiently reflect upon their past conduct, and as they have no thought of correcting the mischief, now that a reconciliation has been brought about among themselves, nor show any anxiety to make their peace with God, I fear that they will, in the long run, suffer the penalty of that kind of security. They have, it is true, given some show of penitence,

<sup>1</sup> The citizens of Geneva, perceiving at length that their divisions were ruinous to their country, resolved in a General Council, assembled Feb. 1, 1540, to be at agreement with each other, and to live in unity together. The recall of the banished ministers put the seal to this reconciliation.—Ruchat, *Hist. de la Réformation*, vol. i. p. 137.

in that, after so much discord, they have returned to a good understanding ; but they have not yet put on that disposition which they ought to cherish. It is however something, that they have begun to be curable, even although they be not yet quite restored to health.

About the preachers, I cannot yet venture to decide, except that I always find them to be much wanting. But in so far as you consider that the publication of my reply to Sadolet, which has been printed there, is a proof of their being nowise evil-disposed, in that you are deceived, if others have written me the truth. For they have declared that the preachers who opposed it made amends, as far as lay in their power, but that the Senate yielded against their will. And yet I do not attach much weight to that, provided they so conduct themselves in the discharge of duty, that they prevent every occasion of interference either by me or on the part of others. For although, in as far as regards myself, it is of no consequence whatever, for that very reason, I do not care by whom it is that the work of the Lord is carried forward, provided that it is well done ; but they are deceived in thinking that they can get on very well without help, seeing that they are scarcely got half-way on their journey, even with the aid of many helpers. As for what I always express, that I am horrified at the mere mention of a recall, for that you know that I have good enough reason. Nor am I so entirely frightened by the consideration that they so obstinately refuse you, although I confess that to me that is the highest consideration of all. But there are many others which it is unnecessary at present to mention, and may better be delayed until your arrival. The farther I advance the more distinctly do I behold out of what a whirlpool of danger the Lord has delivered me.

The Diet of the Princes and free Cities<sup>1</sup> came to this conclusion, to offer to agree to all just proposals, provided that the Emperor would call a Synod of the whole empire. They received an ambiguous reply. In the meantime, the Emperor

<sup>1</sup> The meeting at Smalkald took place the 1st of March, to draw up a form of agreement between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants.—Sleidan, book xii. p. 351. The meeting separated on the 13th April.

is informed by the opposite party, that they would not abate one jot of their resolution, but would endeavour by every means to engage others on their side. Therefore, he is trying to devise a method by which he may satisfy both parties; and therefore it is, that among the Papists, and among our friends, he craftily employs the Chancellor Granvelle<sup>1</sup> and two Counts,<sup>2</sup> who are to interpose as mediators, and to sound the views of our friends, that they may be better able to explain to the Emperor, and to obtain what is reasonable. If you do not yet understand the artifice, our friends strove with the utmost earnestness for the Diet which had been promised them. On the other hand, the Papists sounded the alarm with a continued blast of the trumpet, crying out, that it was a very unseemly thing that the Emperor should any longer tolerate the shufflings of our friends. Because his plans have been hindered, seeing that he neither dares to proceed with the war, nor is of opinion that they can have a Synod without turning the whole of Germany topsy-turvy, he tries to restrain the fury of the Papists, while he says, that he wishes to keep a cautious outlook, lest by doing anything rashly and untowardly, they may involve him along with themselves in the war; and he yields nothing to our side. Notwithstanding that they perceived they were merely put off by this pretence, yet they came to the determination, that nothing on that account should be rejected that might seem to favour the peace and tranquillity of the Church. They therefore drew up a joint reply to Granvelle, from which you will understand what may be their courage.<sup>3</sup> Since the Emperor neither understands the Latin language nor the German, it has been thought best to send it written in French. I send it to you, however, on this condition, that you do not openly divulge it. Only two copies besides this which you will receive have been copied out; one, which will be pre-

<sup>1</sup> The Chancellor Granvelle, father of the celebrated Cardinal Granvelle, minister and ambassador of Charles V.

<sup>2</sup> They were the Earls of Thierry of Mandersheit, and William Nuenar, *magni consilii et dignitatis viri*.—Sleidan, book xii. p. 352.

<sup>3</sup> See that answer related fully in Sleidan, book xiii. pp. 353-61.

mented to the Emperor, the other, Doctor Ulrich took with him to Soleure, that it may come to the King, through the ambassador. I wish therefore that you may communicate it only to a few. But I mainly beseech you, on no account to allow it to be copied. Here, moreover, the resolution is unanimous, if they are attacked instantly to advance forward, and not to wait, unless their conscience keep them back; for there is not a single individual who is not quite prepared to undergo all hazards rather than that the free course of Christ's Evangel be stopt, so far is it from their mind that they would suffer anything to be taken from it. Here, at Strasbourg, the Senate having despatched a deputy, has refused the judgment of the Imperial Chamber. If they continue this system of attempted terrorism, they will stir up great commotions. Hitherto the controversies have hung in suspense between the Emperor and the King. That is the reason which delays the Emperor that he does not immediately make an onslaught upon us. The Papists strive with all their might to relieve him of all other business, so that he may gird himself for attacking us. But chiefly the Duke of Brunswick, who has brought over the Duke of Gueldres to the Emperor, that they may treat together about that duchy. Our friends, however, are so well satisfied with their own strength, that they are not at all frightened by these manoeuvres. Three of the Electors take a middle course—the Elector-Palatine, of Cologne, and of Treves, and will rather take part with us than suffer us to be oppressed. Two we have professedly on our side. Frederick wished by our means to obtain some advantage from the King of Denmark: he could not succeed, which the Landgrave also considered to be right. Then he is forced to cultivate the friendship of the Emperor. You see at how much Christ is valued where the world has taken such a hold of the soul of man. The English Parliament is now met.<sup>1</sup> We are informed that the spirits of all the pious are raised

<sup>1</sup> In the intense desire of concluding an agreement with the King of England, the German princes shewed their willingness to open a colloquy for that object, but these conferences did not take place, and the hope of a happy reconciliation between the churches of England and Germany was not realized.—Sleidan, book xiii. p. 361.



to the highest expectation. If the Lord shall now put it into the King's heart, the Gospel will be established in that kingdom. Until we shall have heard that there is some inclination that way, we shall toil in vain with regard to Calais.<sup>1</sup>

My affairs are in the same state in which they were before. Our messenger will be here before the end of the week unless he has deceived us. Therefore I have detained James with me, so if anything happen he can let you know in time. Although (as he had already determined) I shall not longer delay his setting out. I will, therefore, despatch him after Whitsuntide. He had himself intended to start off three days earlier.

As to what you ask me about the Letter of Viret, I can tell you nothing but this, that it has always appeared to Capito, that Viret and all of you prosecuted this cause in a more sour and peevish spirit than was right, or at all events, with greater scrupulosity and excess of niceness. They have always promised that they would not combine together to open up an entrance to him in that quarter, but that they would rather throw every obstacle in his path in order to shut up the way. But he was not in the least offended. If you will take my advice, let us delay on both sides to decide about that affair. Therefore, I have suppressed the letter of the Count which you lately sent, that it may not give any offence. For it was so worded, that it could not be at all acceptable; and also, that I may cut off every handle for strife, I shall make no reply.

I am struck with horror when I hear with what cruelty the godly are persecuted in France, at this time, more especially, when we can bring them no help, nor do I doubt that it is the best who will be most endangered. For the more any one is right-hearted, and preaches Christ with greater boldness and constancy of spirit, for that very reason he can all the less be tolerated by Satan. Yet somehow it now and then happens that the Lord does preserve in safety some of the excellent ones, while others are

<sup>1</sup> Without doubt on the subject of the free proclamation of the Gospel in that town, then subject to England. It was not restored to France till 1558, by Francis of Lorraine, Duke of Guise.

hurried off to the stake. A fellow-countryman to James, who was burnt at Sedan or Melun, was here last year, and had requested of me a letter of exhortation to the brethren of that district. I was given to understand for certain, afterwards, that he had been infested with the errors of the Anabaptists, and had been raving worst of all on that head. It has, therefore, grieved me since, that I had opened for him a pathway by my letter to many good people. I am afraid lest by his death the Gospel shall have been rather set on fire than promoted. That I now mention I have not from uncertain rumour, but from his relations. The person whose sister he married makes no secret of what sort of person he was. As for the death of Michael, the statements of one who had been present at the scene of the execution did not fully agree with your letter. In truth, I think that this rule ought to be observed by us, that even when we feel that we can both speak and think the best concerning those who have suffered for the Gospel, that we ought to be on our guard against overdoing, where it does not clearly appear how the persons conducted themselves during life as well as in death.

I am glad that Gaspar<sup>1</sup> has been provided for. He is, indeed, worthy of it ; and I hope he will have the charge of the school. Toussain<sup>2</sup> has requested to have three or four ministers from me, if I had here such as I could recommend who were qualified for ruling in the churches. He expressly sought to have James, but he rather preferred to reserve himself for you.

What may be the nature of that jurisdiction of Count William<sup>3</sup> I have not yet been able by frequent inquiry to ascertain. When you come hither you will perhaps be better able to inform us. We can also exchange thoughts together about all those matters to which you think that some remedy ought to be applied. If I supposed that Cordier was deliberating whether it may not be expedient to return to Bordeaux,

<sup>1</sup> Gaspar, called Cormel, minister of Neuchâtel.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Toussain, late canon of Metz and almoner to the Queen of Navarre. He was at this time minister of the Church of Montbeliard, which he administered till an advanced old age.

<sup>3</sup> William du Bellay, Viceroy of Piedmont.

I would willingly declare what I feel, only I do not think he is so great a blockhead as to set consultations agoing on any such question. I will tell you, *viva voce*, why we ought not to write to these French bishops. I return many thanks to the brethren for having received my advice with so good a grace. As, however, there is some risk that others may take it amiss that you had begun, that affair can be delayed for a little while longer, and I am not sorry for it.

I do not wonder that examination of ours about which I wrote to you has made the worthy brother hesitate; nor is it anything new that the well-disposed should dread lest we fall back into some superstition or other whenever they hear that we appoint anything which has the slightest affinity or similarity with Popish absurdities. Yet, while I have no wish to drive that zeal of watchfulness out of them, (for in this respect we cannot be more earnest than is right,) on the other hand, I could have wished that they were a little more careful in distinguishing the wheat from the chaff and rubbish. I have often declared to you that it did not appear to me to be expedient that confession should be abolished in the Churches, unless that which I have lately taught be substituted in the place of it. In order that I may the better explain to you my method, let me first of all state the real nature of the case.

When the day of the sacrament of the Supper draws nigh, I give notice from the pulpit that those who are desirous to communicate must first of all let me know, at the same time I add for what purpose, that it is in order that those who are as yet uninstructed and inexperienced in religion may be better trained; besides, that those who need special admonition may hear it; and lastly, that if there are any persons who may be suffering under trouble of mind they may receive consolation. But what we have most to guard against is this, lest the common people, who do not sufficiently distinguish between the kingdom of Christ and the tyranny of Antichrist, may think themselves to be brought back under a new servitude. I endeavour, therefore, to dispel any such apprehension. I not only bear witness that I disapprove of the Popish confession, but openly and plainly set forth the reasons why I object to it; then, in general, I declare that not only

are those superstitions in which the Church was involved to be abhorred, but that no law of practice is to be brought in, which may bind the conscience in its snares; for that Christ is the only legislator to whom we owe obedience. After that, I teach, that this in no way derogates from our Christian liberty, since I enjoin nothing whatever that Christ himself has not appointed. What shameless effrontery would it be for any one not even to condescend to avouch his faith in the face of the Church with whom he sought communion, and how wretched would be the state and condition of the Church if she could be compelled to receive to the partaking in so great a mystery, those of whom she is altogether ignorant, or, perhaps, regards with suspicion. And, to say nothing about the Church, how shall the minister himself to whom the dispensation of this grace is committed, on condition that he may not cast it before dogs and swine, that he must not pour it out to the worthy and the unworthy without any distinction, discharge this onerous duty, unless he proceeds upon some fixed and certain method for separating the worthy from the unworthy communicants? It were mere trifling, however, to insist farther upon these matters with you; time, moreover, would fail me, for what I was afraid of has happened, that I would frequently be interrupted while writing. Last of all, I maintain the necessity and advantage of this course of proceeding, which you will, as thus explained by me, report as my reply to the good man. The three young noblemen whom you had so hospitably entertained commend your liberality all the more that you excuse yourself so anxiously for having done less than you wished to do. More than that, they think they see that in this way you extenuate your kindness towards them. Capito, Bucer, Sturm, Bedrot, Claude, all the Frenchmen, desire to be remembered in the most friendly manner; there is not one of them who does not most eagerly look for your arrival, not less on my account than that they may get a sight of you, for as they love both, they think of both. Nicolas and Henry are closely pursuing their studies; Nicolas, especially, is quite absorbed. James is staying with me for these few days before he leaves. Every one of these also reverently salute you along

with my brother. In return will you greet the brethren very respectfully for me, and tell them from myself that they do truly hold a place in my remembrance. My preceptor Cordier, and Michael, will excuse, or, at least, pardon, that they do not receive any letters from me. Adieu, my most amiable brother. Do not forget to remember me to your family.—  
Ever yours, CALVIN.

This messenger is a trustworthy person, and therefore I have requested him to go straight to you.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

#### XLVII.—TO PETER VIRET.

Excuses for his silence—sad news from France—repugnance of Calvin to return to Geneva—his comparative estimate of Capito, Zuingli, Luther, and Œcolampadius.

STRASBOURG, 19th May 1540.

At length somewhat has been gained by my expostulation, for I have in some measure broken that unkind silence of so many months; but I do not take it so well, that when you ought plainly to have sought pardon, you chose rather to make a return in kind; for you make out that we are equally to blame except in this one point, that when both had come short in duty, I seized the opportunity and was the first to write. You thought, forsooth, to get out of the scrape in this way, as if in the meanwhile I had not written a hundred times to Farel, on condition that he would communicate with you, during which period I neither received a single letter from you, nor did you send even a salutation, except that which you once wrote at the end of a letter to Bucer. Therefore, true it is and of verity, that I cannot acquit you until you shall have approved your diligence for the future, on condition that if, as you are wont, you begin to grow slack in your correspondence, I shall be entitled to lay a double fine upon you. But that I may not appear to press too severely, I do hereby freely remit whatever there is of failure on your part, provided, for the future, you

both perform your own share of duty, and pardon me if, perhaps, I shall have become too negligent.

Your letter was a very sad one to me, and all the more so because I can well imagine that cruel butchery to boil over without measure, as always happens whenever it has once burst forth, and there is no way of putting a stop to it. I wrote, however, to Farel, under the apprehension that what so long kept us in suspense would at length come to pass. Wherefore, unless the Lord open up some new outlet, there is no other way of helping our unhappy brethren than by our prayers and exhortations, which are, besides, so dangerous to their lives, that it is more discreet to abstain. The only remedy which almost alone remains, therefore, seems to be, that we commit their safety to the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

I read that passage of your letter, certainly not without a smile, where you shew so much concern about my health, and recommend Geneva on that ground. Why could you not have said at the cross? for it would have been far preferable to perish once for all than to be tormented again in that place of torture. Therefore, my dear Viret, if you wish well to me, make no mention of such a proposal. It was, however, most agreeable to me to understand that the brothers La Fontaines were so anxious concerning my safety, and that you also had turned your mind to it; for, indeed, I can scarcely persuade myself that I am worth so much trouble. It is impossible for me, however, not to be rejoiced by that kindness of good men towards me.

<sup>1</sup> While he sought the alliance of the Protestant princes of Germany, Francis I. persecuted the Protestants in his own dominions with an extreme rigour, under the odious designation of Sacramentaries. The year 1540 witnessed numerous burnings at the stake, in the provinces of Dauphiny, Vivarais, at Paris, and in the valleys of Provence. There dwelt for many centuries a pastoral population, which was only known to the world by simplicity of manners and the purity of its faith. De Thou, liv. v. c. 7; *Histoire des Martyrs*, liv. iii. pp. 133-146. The Vaudois of Cabrières and Merindol, hated by the Roman Catholic clergy on account of their being estranged from the superstitions of the time, were devoted to death by the fanatical fury of the parliament of Aix. The arrêt, which condemned in the mass an innocent and inoffensive people to extermination, was dated 18th November 1540. The intercession of the Senate of Strasbourg, of the Swiss Cantons, and of the German princes, suspended the execution of it until the year 1545.

Capito, in his lectures, has some things which may be of much use to you in the illustration of Isaiah. But as he does not dictate any part to his hearers, and has not yet reached beyond the fourteenth chapter, his assistance cannot at present much help you. Zuingli, although he is not wanting in a fit and ready exposition, yet, because he takes too much liberty, often wanders far from the meaning of the Prophet. Luther is not so particular as to propriety of expression or the historical accuracy; he is satisfied when he can draw from it some fruitful doctrine. No one, as I think, has hitherto more diligently applied himself to this pursuit than Œcolampadius, who has not always, however, reached the full scope or meaning. It is true that you may now and then find the need of having appliances at hand, nevertheless I feel confident that the Lord has not deserted you.

About our affairs I do not write, in order that there may be more material for writing to Farel. All here greet you in the most friendly manner, Capito, Bucer, Matthias, Sturm, Bedrot. Hedio I have not seen since your letter was delivered to me. In return, on my part, salute Conrad, Corneille, James, Isnard, and the others; your aunt also, and your wife, whom, one and all, I wish to see.

The mention of Conrad, which had occurred to me, brings to mind that Gaspar, who lived with him for some time, was lately here, and has complained much to Sturm that I had defamed him in an offensive manner among good people, at the instigation of Grynée. He said nought about it to me, and merely saluted when he left my lecture. I wished you to know this, that in future you may be more on your guard. Adieu, most excellent and kind brother.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

## XLVIII.—TO FAREL.

Preparations for the Assembly of Haguenau—symptoms of misunderstanding between Charles V. and Francis I.—severe judgment of Henry VIII.—evils produced in the Church by the absence of discipline—various details.

STRASBOURG, 21st June 1540.

After Ferdinand waited about twelve days at Haguenau<sup>1</sup> for the princes, a few of them came who either have the wish to reform matters, or to prove their submission to the Emperor. From among the Electors, he could not succeed in drawing forth a single one except the Elector-Palatine. He of Mayence, as I hear, excused himself more than once, that is, he stoutly refused. The Electors of Cologne and Treves stood in doubt. The Elector of Saxony wished to have it distinctly understood, that his coming should not prejudice the protest which he had put in at the election of the King. He sent letters, however, to the Emperor, in common with the Landgrave, in which both together signified, that they saw no other way of pacification that could be gone into than that which had been set forth at Frankfort. Therefore, if for that purpose the Emperor summons a free diet of the empire, that they would willingly attend; that at present they had scarcely time enough allowed them to announce it to their allies; that they had no other alternative than to send their ambassador with a few theologians, that they might not appear in any way to disparage the attempt; that they, on behalf of the theologians and the deputies, and the messengers, whoever they might be, sought the public protection, that they might receive no injury. To-day the deputies have set out; when Philip [Melanchthon] arrives the theologians will also follow. Blaurer<sup>2</sup> has already arrived; others are daily expected. The Zurichers and those of Berne were invited,

<sup>1</sup> A meeting was convoked for the month of July 1540, in the town of Haguenau, in order to prepare matters for a general conference between the Romap Catholic and reformed theologians. See following letter.

<sup>2</sup> Ambroise Blaurer, minister and reformer of the town of Constance.



but they sent back word that they would not come. This I mention, that you may not suppose that we omitted any part of our duty. It was written expressly to those of Basle not to send Carlostad.<sup>1</sup> The opposite faction are at present consulting by what kind of debate, or on what point to attack us. Our friends will shew that they are prepared for a friendly compromise, provided that no part of the truth be departed from. The Emperor will not be left so completely at his ease by our King as to be able to concentrate his forces against our side. As yet the state of war has not commenced, but the seeds begin to spring up; and that friend of ours is seeking those means of defence which, while he was in terms of friendship with his brother, he despised, and would yet continue to despise if things had remained the same. Baisius,<sup>2</sup> who discharges the office of envoy at the conference, has come hither to sound the depth of the ford, and to see what can be accomplished, as many conjecture. It can scarce be otherwise but that great movements may take place before many months are past. Our friends hope to obtain some advantage, since they perceive our king to be so very unlikely to give any assistance to the Emperor. The King of England is not represented here. I have no doubt, however, that he may be attempting somewhat elsewhere. In the cause of the Lord he does not deal very favourably of late; three men of the commonalty have been burnt, because they had ventured to express themselves on the subject of the Eucharist in other terms than the royal proclamation tolerated. But that which is worst of all is, that while he tries to arrogate to himself the sole authority, and without being scrupulous as to the means, he tolerates nothing which has not the sanction of his own authority. Thus it will come to pass that Christ shall avail them nothing except by the King's permission. The Lord will avenge this arrogance by some remarkable punishment.

The address of the princes I desire, with good reason, may still

<sup>1</sup> Carolstad, the friend, and, at a later period, the hot-headed adversary of Luther. At this time he had retired to Basle, where he was settled as minister of St. Peter's. He died in 1541.

<sup>2</sup> Lazarus Baisius, a distinguished and learned man, ambassador of the French king at the Diet of Hagenau.

be kept secret by you. We may shortly have a more convenient season when it can be brought to light, or at all events may be imparted to those who have an interest. Lately, in the same way, you have done me much mischief. For you cannot believe how much ill-will Erasmus has kindled against me in that very shallow publication of his, where he says, that a book was printed at Strasbourg, in which both Luther and the Strasburghers were treated with distinction, and that Luther, nevertheless, had sent him a kindly salutation, &c. . . . while he thus goes a-begging in all directions in order to procure adherents to his cause, he implicates along with himself others who do not deserve to be mixed up with the affair. And, really, I have very good reason to find fault with you, who have suffered a familiar and confidential letter to get abroad—which ought to have been kept close in your own bosom—and to fly away as far as Berne. Now I come to your letter. I could not take it ill that the bearer of my letter should be despatched by you without a reply, when he told me that you were engaged in a work of so great necessity. It is something, however, that you really do excuse yourself, provided that you understand that I am satisfied on the condition, that in future you may be more careful. Nor shall I be very easily appeased if you omit or trifle with me at any time. I had not properly understood that Francis had been dismissed, according to your former letter, on account of misconduct. I was rather inclined to be of opinion, that some fair pretence was sought for. At present, in so far as can be surmised from your expressions, I perceive that he is charged with that crime which I was certainly persuaded he abhors with his whole soul. I sometimes wish, however, that we could have you here, where Capito and Bucer might hear all these things from your own mouth. For Bucer seemed not very patiently to hear what I say; but I fear that if you intend to be with me on a certain event taking place, that you may have come too late. I have not yet found a wife, and frequently hesitate as to whether I ought any more to seek one. Claude and my brother had lately betrothed me to a demoiselle. Three days after they had returned, some things were told me which forced me to send away my brother, that he might discharge

us from that obligation. As yet, it is not very evident to me what the matter is about which the Genevese are either making a disturbance among themselves, or are disquieted by those of Berne. I foresee, however, that it will have the very worst consequences, unless the Lord comes to their help by some wonderful method of deliverance. You know, I believe, what Marcourt wrote in that letter which was delivered to me along with yours. He avers solemnly that it never entered his mind to say that the epistle of Sadolet had been tampered with, and, therefore, earnestly requests that I may not allow this impression to settle upon my mind. I shall so reply as that it may appear that I by no means seek for causes of complaint, and that there is nothing in which I take less delight than in strifes and variance.

I will take an opportunity of inquiring whether the Count is possessed of those territories in Burgundy which you have mentioned. In France, he certainly has nothing left. There you labour in vain about Pont de Veyle<sup>1</sup> and other places. If war shall take place, I know not whether it will be restored. I cannot enough express my astonishment where or when Cressonnière could have dreamed what he related to Guerin about my recantation, nor do I know what to say to it, unless either that he must have been drunk or out of his wits when he gave utterance to such an absurdity. To Guerin himself, who I see is somewhat disturbed about it, I will write satisfactorily by the first opportunity. Nicolas and Henry have excellent appetites; therefore, unless you make haste to come yourself, you must think of some way of sending them money. The case of our excellent friend Zebedec,<sup>2</sup> or rather the state of our own Church, where at present there is no discipline, grieves me beyond measure. Some method must be fallen upon by which we may restrain these furies from such an unwarrantable interference. Since, however, for the present we have nothing better, I advise that what he spoke about the very prevalent ignorance of Christ, he may confirm by the testimony of such persons whose

<sup>1</sup> Pont de Veyle, a small town of the Bresse, handed over at that time by the King of France to the Duke of Savoy.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Zebedec, minister at Orbe, deposed by the Senate of Berne for having set himself in opposition, on some points, to the theology of Bucer.

authority will have weight at Berne. Among the ancients he has many supporters; but he cannot do a greater despite unto his opponents, than when he puts forward Luther, Bucer, Brentz, and others, as authority. Above all, it is important that it be demonstrated how impertinent and unbecoming it is that a handful of unlearned and inexperienced men, in a dark corner of the land, should dare to accuse of heresy men who are actually of the highest distinction and authority in the Church; and it will be well to write to Konzen, and to assure him of the odium which he will inevitably draw down upon himself if the eminent persons above named shall come to know how and with what impunity their writings are cut and carved on. Take my word for it, he will kindle a fire about the ears of these rascals which shall not easily be extinguished, if he only applies himself to it with the talent which he possesses.

Adieu, my sound-hearted brother; for indeed I am obliged here to break off my discourse, since I have been too late in rising up. Will you remember me in the most friendly way to all the brethren—Chaponneau, Cordier, Thomas, Michael, Fatin, and the others. Blessed be the Lord, who was present in His strength for the subduing of that beast which had lifted up the horn against His glory. Salute also, for me, your brother Walter, with his wife. The Lord have you in His safe keeping. All our friends salute you.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

#### XLIX.—TO MONSIEUR DU TAILLY.<sup>1</sup>

Review of the Conferences of Haguenuau—the state of parties in Germany.

STRASBOURG, 28th July 1540.

MONSIEUR DU TAILLY,—Owing to my having put off writing to you my last letters until that we should have more certain

<sup>1</sup> M. Du Tally, a French gentleman, who had taken refuge at Geneva, a declared partisan of the Reformation and of Calvin, whose return he pressingly urged,

news of the Assembly of Hagenau to send you, I was unwilling to let this bearer depart without a letter, albeit the matter has not yet been brought to a conclusion. I shall, therefore, briefly report progress up to this present time. You are aware that King Ferdinand had summoned the princes of his party some time before those of our side, for the purpose of taking counsel with them as to the quarter in which it would be most advisable to attack us. After having held their consult, they have given it as their opinion to elect four suitable arbiters, to hear the controverted points on the one side and on the other, with the view of arriving at some settled determination. The commissioners were the Count Palatine, the Bishop of Treves, both electors; the Duke of Bavaria, and the Bishop of Strasbourg. Not one of our princes has yet appeared, for that they have been summoned on too short an intimation, and to that effect have excused themselves to the Emperor; but they have despatched with a safe conduct their ambassadors and councillors, along with learned men, to make all the needful arrangements. These same persons, although they might by rights have refused those whom they had presented to them as arbiters, or at least a part, they have nevertheless agreed to

as the following letter, taken from the MSS. of the Company of Neuchatel, sufficiently attests:—

MONSIEUR DU TAILLY TO FAREL.

VERY DEAR BROTHER,—At the suasion of the most of the good brethren hereaway, I have written to our good brother Calvin that there is a need of him to come to the help of his brethren of Geneva, without taking any heed to the injury which had been done to Jesus Christ in chasing him away, but that he will have to consider the desolation in which they are, and his own bounden duty; wherefore I have written to him to let me know his mind, before that they send away a deputation to him. I shall, besides, entreat of you on your part, that you do charge and persuade him what he ought to do. I say no more to you. Your letter has been very well taken by those hereabout, and I believe that it will greatly profit them, and they hold themselves specially bounden to you for having mind of them in their time of need, and by that shewing evidently that you are a true pastor, not of those who leave them exposed to danger. For the rest, the Lord has done his pleasure as concerning Sir Michel Balthazar. It is a great loss for the town so far as man can see. Nevertheless, His will must be done, and none other. May the Lord enable you to persevere as you have begun.—To the uttermost, your friend and brother,

DU TAILLY.

*From Geneva, this 3d October 1540.*

accept them, so as to let them understand that they did not wish on any account whatever to draw back. But it has come to pass, as indeed we always thought it would. Whenever there has been some stir about making a beginning, Messieurs the arbiters, not knowing where to commence, have asked our folk what they had to say. To which they have returned for answer, that they required, in terms of the Confession presented at Augsburg, the Churches might be reformed, offering, on their part, to clear up any difficulties which might lie in the way, and to explain more fully whatever might be obscure. Thereupon, Nausea<sup>1</sup> advised Ferdinand to yield to us at once the marriage of the clergy and the communion in both kinds; as to other matters in dispute, that it was not lawful to enter upon them without the leave of our holy father the Pope. That also met with the entire approval of Faber,<sup>2</sup> of Cochläus,<sup>3</sup> and their companions. So, in conclusion, answer is made by Ferdinand, and by those who were of a like mind with himself, that it depends on our princes, and it is their fault if no good method of agreement were fallen upon; that for his part, he was there to deliberate in friendly conference for that end, but that they had not deigned to give him a meeting. That notwithstanding all that, the Emperor will not oppose the assembling of another diet, in which the points in dispute may be discussed on both sides, but under such conditions that, after each debate, the definite decision must be referred to his Majesty [the Emperor] and his Holiness the Pope. That, in the meanwhile, our folk must not be strengthening themselves by new alliances, nor entice away any one to receive their religion, while, at the same time, the confederate alliances entered upon since the Assembly of Nuremberg<sup>4</sup> must be annulled.

<sup>1</sup> Frederic Nausea, theologian, known by some writings of a controversial kind against the Lutherans.

<sup>2</sup> John Faber, Vicar-General of the Church of Constance, a renowned theologian of the Roman Catholic Church. In recompense of his zeal in opposing the Protestants, he obtained the Bishopric of Vienna.

<sup>3</sup> John Cochläus of Nuremberg, one of the principal opponents and detractors of Luther, against whom he displayed more anger than skill in his warfare. He appeared at the Conferences of Worms and of Ratisbon, in 1541, and died in 1552. We have, of his writing, the "*Libri duo Hussitarum Historiæ*," Moguntiæ, 1549.

<sup>4</sup> The princes of the Empire, met at Nuremberg in 1524, had drawn up a list of

As to that objection, that our princes have hindered the progress of the treaty, it has been easy enough to meet it with a sufficient reply, for there was no need for their being present in person, when they sent their doctors and their councillors with full power. Moreover, they had promised to come if they saw that a settlement was contemplated in good earnest. As for the conference, *that* they received very willingly, but the whole of the conditions they utterly rejected as unbearable, not to say ridiculous; for it is the very reverse of what the Emperor had promised at Frankfort.

The intention of our opponents has been to extend their league and to contract ours; but we hope that God will order and dispose our lot far otherwise. However that may turn out, those of our side seek to advance and to extend the kingdom of Christ as much as possible, and hold on their course with inflexible resolution. We know not at present what the Lord will be pleased in His providence to send. There is one section of our adversaries who cry loudly for war. The Emperor is so embarrassed, that he dare not undertake it. The Pope, for his part, in good earnest is quite ready to set his hand to it, for he has made offer, by his ambassador, of three hundred thousand ducats to begin with. If all those who as yet have not received our religion would only agree among themselves to attack us, the Emperor would make no difficulty in lending his name, were it for no other motive than to break the strength of Germany, so that he might tame them all the more at his ease; but he has one great let and hindrance in his way, and that is, that the whole of the electors are of one mind as to this, that it is desirable to quench these civil broils without having recourse to arms. The Duke of Saxony and the Marquis of Brandenburg are confederate with us. Thus they have no choice but to follow out the cause they have taken up. The Archbishop of Cologne is no less to be counted on, for he goes so far as to admit that the Church needs to be reformed, and sees well enough that we

the abuses of the Court of Rome, proclaimed the necessity of a Reformation, and appealed to a general council, interdicting, at the same time, the publication of any opinion contrary to the dogmas of the Church, previous to the convocation of that assembly.

have truth on our side. The Count Palatine, also, is very desirous to have some reformation, which he cannot expect to see accomplished by any other than peaceful means. Mentz and Treves love the peace and liberty of the country, which they fear might be sacrificed should the Emperor have subdued us. These considerations induced them to resist any other course of proceeding against us but that of a peaceable conference, such as we have called for. The King of France lends no assistance, except on the condition that their proceedings are regulated by Christian feeling. His ambassador is Baysius, who knows nothing at all about the matter in dispute. Notwithstanding, he receives us kindly enough when we go to call for him, and has thought right to call here before returning to his lodging.

All the learned folks who have come hither on our behalf are well agreed with one another. Seeing that our opponents do nought but amuse themselves, they have thought good to consult apart how they might set up some sort of discipline in the Church; but as they could not come to any conclusion without communicating with the absent, as with Luther, Philip, and others, and far less carry their plan into execution without the consent of the princes, they have only got so far as that each has promised for himself to use his endeavour with the princes and towns to assemble a meeting of our friends in order to attend to that. It will be the most important affair which we shall have to deal with at present.

Melanchthon is not yet come hither, by reason of some sudden illness, and also because, perhaps, he thought that there was no need to be in any immediate hurry to come. For my part, my only object was recreation, as also that of Capito.

Your brother and good friend,

JOHN CALVIN.

[Fr. Copy—Archives of Geneva. No. 1250.]



L.—TO PETER CAROLI.<sup>1</sup>

Answer to the complaints of Caroli—refuses to grant to him the professorial chair unless he repents of his past offences.

STRASBOURG, 10th August 1540.

Grace to you and peace from the Lord, whose Spirit can give sound advice to you and a right will, and also to us.

I would rather have preferred that you had come hither to confer with us about reconciliation face to face, than that you should have tried it by writing, and especially such a letter as yours. You are very anxious to shew that you did not excite disturbance in the Church without good reason: as if indeed any honest cause could ever be advanced for disturbing the peace of the Church. Suppose we grant that the brethren did not treat you with that kindly consideration which they ought,—was it therefore right or becoming on that account, immediately, in the way you have done, to make so much noise about it? Will you assert that it was the Spirit of God that impelled you to challenge every one to the contest? I do not say these things for the sake of reproaching you: I wish that you had suffered me to remain entirely silent. But when you league in an alliance with Satan all those who at least, in your own opinion, have not conducted themselves with such fairness towards you as they ought, you would justly reckon us stupid indeed, if you think that such an imputation can pass over in silence. You say that you were struck with indignation to such a degree as to reproach both myself and Farel, because we had been the occasion, by our letters, why the brethren at Neuchatel would not receive you. In the first place, that has either been concocted by yourself, or falsely reported to you; for it never

<sup>1</sup> Repulsed at the same time in the requests which he had addressed to the Church of Neuchatel and to that of Strasbourg, Caroli had retired to Metz, from whence he wrote a letter to Calvin full of bravado and reproach, offering to be reconciled with him and Farel if they would procure him a benefice. The reply of Calvin, equally remarkable for power as well as charity, is a testimony of the moderation and of the wisdom of the writer.

entered into my mind so to write to the brethren at Neuchatel. In Farel's letters, so far as I hear, (for I have nought but hearsay,) Michael was far more severely dealt with than you were. As, therefore, I had never done you an injury, either by word or deed, when I had not pricked you with even the slightest puncture of offence, what sort of kindness was it to tear me to pieces in such a savage manner? If indeed I had stood in your way in any matter of private interest or advancement, even then how inconsistent would such conduct have been in the case of any Christian man, to be so inflamed with the desire of revenge, as that he should break forth into such a disorderly course of proceeding? Since I had always formerly been a brother to you without any distrust, how has it happened that all at once I should have become a heretic in your estimation, with whom you abhorred to have communion? Is not this knowingly to take the most sacred name of God in vain? You say that you had no other alternative but to proclaim us to be irreconcilable, (for this is your expression;) but consider, I beseech you, with yourself for a little, how ridiculous you make yourself, when it is clear you have sounded a blast of the trumpet in the midst of peace. But grant that on our part we have given you cause, what meaning do you attach to the expression you make use of? Most certainly he is to be considered irreconcilable, whom, when you have endeavoured, by every method in your power, to appease, you cannot, however, succeed in any measure or degree to content or satisfy. When have you ever found such fractious and obstinate inflexibility in us? You have nothing against me that you can complain of, while, on the other hand, I have most just cause why I may expostulate with you, not to speak of anything more severe. Neither have I ever entertained thoughts of revenge, so far have I been from planning any mischief against you. As for Farel, I would desire to know what injury he can have done you? He wrote, requesting that no one might be admitted to the office and work of the ministry who had deserted the churches committed to his superintendence. Ought he not to have done so? Nor is the breach of solemn obligation in any degree less, when a minister forsakes the church which he had once bound himself

by vow to take charge of, than if a father were to cast off his sons. But you will say, that he included you in that number, while you were entirely free from any such imputation. If you will read over his letter, you will discover that it is otherwise. For he required nothing more of the brethren than that they should diligently inquire; if on that inquiry having been made you were assolized, was not that what you ought to have desired? You went to Metz;—how very unsuitable was it for you to boast among the adversaries of Christ that you had come prepared and ready to convict us of heresy? And, notwithstanding, in the meanwhile, you would maintain for yourself that boast, that you are attempting nothing against the Gospel. But what kind of proof do you give us of this? If any one professedly wages war with the servant of Christ, and throws all sort of obstacles in his way, how can such a one promote the kingdom of Christ? You can scarcely say that such a man is on the side of the Gospel at all. Look to it, brother, again and again, whither you are going. We have a ministry in nowise separated from Christ: if you doubt it, we have the sufficiently sure and faithful testimony of conscience. You may flatter yourself as you will, you shall at length feel that by attacking us you are kicking against the pricks. In the meanwhile, what harm can you do to us? You will call us heretics. Wherefore? Among those, forsooth, who reckon you yourself to be a heretic, although for the present they apply your slander to a different purpose from what was intended. Among truly pious and learned men, I am not at all afraid of your being able to do me any harm by your detraction. All these things have a tendency in that direction, and so I wish them to be understood by you, that you may realize before God the course upon which you have entered, and do not think of defending yourself by the undeserved condemning of other persons, which not only is without the slightest foundation, but wants even a decent pretext. If I shall have so far succeeded, that is enough, I am satisfied. But I would not have you to lay aside hope and courage. For if you shall manifest to us the true and solid evidences of an upright heart, we are ready prepared immedi-

ately to return in perfectly good faith to terms of mutual benevolence and good-will with you, to forget all the past, to forgive, and to blot them entirely from the memory. I wish that you could look within my breast; for there is nothing I am more desirous of than first of all to reconcile you to God, that there may then be a firm and lasting agreement between us. But take my word for it, you will never usefully serve the Lord, unless you lay aside that superciliousness and bitterness of reproach. Therefore, if you wish to be reconciled to us, we are prepared to embrace you as a brother; nor shall you find us wanting in any friendly offices, so far as lies in our power. But with reference to that paction or agreement which you require of us, how is it possible for us to assent to it? That we may promise to settle you in a particular church,—how can we do so? In the first place, the churches are not at our disposal, as you are well aware; then, with what conscience could we promise that to you, before we are distinctly agreed upon the head of doctrine? You do not conceal that you still dissent from us; and yet you wish that a particular locality should be set apart for you to teach in. Weigh considerably with yourself how far that would be seemly. You would be well entitled to esteem us worse than blockheads were we to comply with you. That I may at length bring this matter to a conclusion, I beg of you, that with a calm and composed mind you may attentively consider this whole affair; that you would also ponder and well weigh this letter in no other balance than that of a judgment entirely devoid of anger. You will acknowledge, that certainly nothing can be better than to turn away from a course of conduct entered upon at first in the spirit of malice. If you will make trial of us, I undertake that no duty of friendship shall be wanting on my part towards you: this Farel also in earnest promises for himself. But do you also be mindful of that charity which you exact with so much severity, and give some evidence that it regulates your own conduct towards others. If you consider me more harsh than I ought to be, bethink yourself what your letter deserves; although I have in nowise had regard to that, but only that I might be of service to you,

which I did not see how to accomplish unless I could bring you to the acknowledgment of your sin. Adieu, my very dear brother in the Lord, if you will only suffer me to love you and to esteem you as a brother. May Christ the Lord guide you by the Spirit of counsel and prudence, so that you may quickly extricate yourself from among those dangerous rocks upon which you have been driven, and steer you from among the breakers safely into port. Farel desires to salute you, and wishes that you may seriously turn to the Lord, and then you will be prepared to return to that friendship and brotherly agreement with us with which He himself is ready to embrace you.—Cordially your friend,

CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 29.]

## LI.—TO VIRET.

Deputations sent to France and into England—the Edict of Fontainebleau.

STRASBOURG, 8th October 1540.

When your letter arrived the second post had already been despatched to our princes, by which our friends asked for that embassy about which they had formerly treated. Next, that another also be sent to the King of England, who keeps two of the bishops<sup>1</sup> and many of the brethren detained in prison, because they have refused to sign his insane decrees. You need not entertain any doubt, my dear Viret, that our Senate lays the matter thoroughly to heart. I speak not of my own anxiety and that of our friends, whose care, however, of the worthy brethren affects them more than you imagine. If you think we are only giving you good words as often as you do not see the success that you wish for, you do not make proper allowance for what we may have a right to expect, and that you ought not by any means to impute the delay to our negligence. Our Senate, also, is greatly surprised that no messenger has been sent back to them with at least an answer

<sup>1</sup> Hugh Latimer and Nicolas Saxton.

of some sort, and does not doubt that the present state of affairs prevents the princes from arriving at any settled determination. I have translated the Royal Edict,<sup>1</sup> and have taken care to keep a copy of it. We are by no means negligent, but we cannot by all our diligence uniformly accomplish what might be wished by all good men. A new hindrance has also of late arisen out of the quarrel of Count William with the Constable of France, which I wish in the long-run may come to good. Whenever the answer is brought to us, whatever it may be, I will let you know. Oh that the answer may meet our wishes! The letters which arrive from the different provinces of France say nothing about the Edict; and certainly, while occupied in translating it, the composition gave rise to some suspicion, for it has nought of the elegance of courtly diction about it. I keep it however beside me, that it might not be made use of to the hurt of the brethren. Upon what terms we have come to a settlement with Caroli you shall know by and by, when lecture is over. At present, also, I am writing to Farel, what he will be able to communicate also to you. As usual, I am obliged to bear the whole brunt of their spite and malice. But as the matter is at an end, you will also endeavour that all old offences may be done away with. Adieu, my brother.

All the brethren salute you, Capito, Bucer, Sturm, and the rest.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 106.]

<sup>1</sup> The Edict of Fontainbleau, put forth the 1st of June 1540, called on the inquisitors, the bishops, and the parliaments to repress the crime of heresy, and by which it was assimilated to the crime of treason. The number of victims increased greatly on the promulgation of this edict, and the punishment was rendered more cruel by the atrocious tortures which preceded.

## LII.—TO FAREL.

Sickness of Calvin—preparation for departure to the Diet at Worms—letter to the Queen of Navarre on behalf of the faithful persecuted in France.

STRASBOURG, *October 1540.*

When your letter was first brought to me I could scarcely lift a finger, on account of bodily weakness, and therefore reply to yours somewhat later than I ought. Since that time to the present such has been my state of doubt and hesitation, that it was impossible for me to write any thing for certain; it seemed, indeed, as if it had been so ordered on purpose that our wedlock<sup>1</sup> might not be over joyous, that we might not exceed all bounds, that the Lord thus thwarted our joy by moderating it. On the 3d of September I was seized with stuffing of the head, a malady so frequent with me that it gave me no great concern. Next day, being the Lord's-day, when I had got a little warm in the delivery of the forenoon sermon, I felt those humours which had gathered in the head begin to loosen and dissolve. Before I could leave the place the cough attacked me, and I was very much troubled with the continual defluxion until the Tuesday. On that day, when I was preaching, as usual, and found great difficulty in speaking, owing to the nostrils being blocked up with mucus and the fauces choked with hoarseness, all of a sudden I underwent a strange sensation; the cough, to be sure, ceased, but rather unseasonably, while the head continued to be crammed with evil humours. On the Monday a circumstance occurred which had provoked my anger; for when the housekeeper, as oft she does, spoke more freely than became her, and had addressed some rude expression to my brother, he could not brook her impertinence, not, however, that he made any stir about it, but he silently left the

<sup>1</sup> Calvin, in the month of August 1540, had married Idelette de Bure, the widow of an Anabaptist of Liege, John Stürder, whom he had brought back to the reformed faith. He lived nine years with her in the most entire union, and remained a widower in the month of April 1549.

house, and vowed solemnly that he would not return so long as she remained with me. Therefore, when she saw me so sad on account of my brother's departure she also went elsewhere. Her son, in the meanwhile, continued to live with me. I am wont, however, when heated by anger, or stirred up by some greater anxiety than usual, to eat to excess, and to devour my meat more eagerly than I ought, which so happened to me at that time. Whenever the stomach is oppressed overnight with too much, or with unsuitable food, I am tormented in the morning with severe indigestion. To correct that by fasting was a ready cure, and that was my usual practice; but in order that the son of our housekeeper might not interpret this abstinence to be an indirect way of getting rid of him, I rather chose, at the expense of health, not to incur that offence. On Tuesday thereafter, when the cough, as I have already mentioned, had ceased, about nine o'clock, after supper, I was seized with a fainting fit. I went to bed; then followed severe paroxysm, intense burning heat, a strange swimming of the head. When I got up on Wednesday, I felt so feeble in every limb and member, that I was at length forced to acknowledge that I was labouring under severe illness. I dined sparely. After dinner I had two fits, with frequent paroxysms afterwards, but at irregular intervals, so that it could not be ascertained what particular form of fever it was. There was such a degree of perspiration that nearly the whole mattress was moistened by it. While I was under this sort of treatment your letter arrived. So utterly unable was I to do what you required that it was with difficulty that I could make out the length of three paces. At length, whatever may have been the original nature of the disease, it turned into a tertian fever, which at first came on with acute shooting pains, but intermittent at every third paroxysm. There came on, to be sure, afterwards, an access of fever, more or less, but that was not so severe. When I began to recover, the time had already gone by, and my strength was not equal to the journey. This, however, by no means prevented me from deliberating with Capito and Bucer, as though I had been quite stout and well; and when the fit time arrived, and in the midst of my sickness, I never desisted from beseeching



Bucer rather even to set out by himself, that we might not disappoint the hope which we had given you reason to entertain.<sup>1</sup> Although he was himself very much inclined to accomplish the task he had undertaken, he rather preferred that I should accompany him, nor had the letter of Grynée at all prevailed with him, in which he dissuaded him, whatever might happen, from joining himself to us, if we should continue to differ in opinion. While I was still suffering under the weakness of which I have spoken, my wife took a fever, from which she is now beginning to get well, and that with a different kind of complaint; for since the last eight days she has been so exhausted by frequent vomitings and otherwise, that she can with difficulty sit up in bed. Albeit, to confess the truth, none of these things had stood in the way of my journey if there had not been a yet greater hindrance. About a fortnight ago a report was spread, which even now continues to prevail, that the Emperor was on the road to Worms, for the purpose of holding the Diet of the Empire which they had appointed to meet at Haguenau. He has not, indeed, hitherto put forth an edict to fix the day, but our friends are somewhat apprehensive of his wishing to make use of the same crafty devices which he put in practice in calling the conference at Haguenau. For he reduced them to such straits, that they had no opportunity of meeting together even for a previous private conference. It is on this account therefore, that at present they fear lest he comes upon them before they are prepared to deal with him. This state of matters detains Bucer here, so that he cannot move a step. He therefore particularly requests of you, that since you perceive it has happened by no fault on his part, that he cannot fulfil his promise, that you would consider him excused. This I can freely affirm to you for his exculpation, that never have I seen a man more ready to enter upon any enterprise than he was to undertake this journey, if he had not been bound up by this concurrence of circumstances. It will perhaps be evident, in a short time, that this anxiety was superfluous;

<sup>1</sup> Bucer was on the eve of setting out for the Conference of Worms, which he was to have attended, accompanied by Calvin.

but what could our friends do in the meantime, when they hear that lodgings had already been bespoke at Worms, that the Emperor was approaching, except that they should be very intensely on the outlook. During the interval, you must also know, that the Emperor in person, with the most unheard-of rapacity, has pillaged Flanders, Holland, Brabant, Luxembourg; it may even rather be said, that he has completely gutted these territories. But if nothing occurs to prevent, call us whensoever it shall seem good. Bucer promises solemnly that, without shrinking, he will come immediately on receiving the summons. As regards myself, there is no great occasion for a laboured excuse, for it was not possible to contend with God, who confined me to my bed at the very time when the journey was to be undertaken. For the willingness, I do not think you can entertain a doubt. Most certainly, those who were present at the time are aware that this was my continual complaint, "Now Farel will be disappointed in his expectation." But notwithstanding, we ought each of us patiently to submit, because the Lord has either removed the hope we entertained, or delayed the fulfilment until a more convenient season. We may well believe that He foresaw more clearly what would be best than we could possibly forecast, either by consultation or by our most reasonable conclusions in regard to this business. We have nothing new here, unless that the King and the Emperor while contending in cruel persecution of the godly, both endeavour to gain the favour of the Roman idol. There was a certain personage here lately, a native of Gascony, one of the magnates as appeared; he had an escort of five horsemen along with him, by whom I have written to the Queen of Navarre,<sup>1</sup> and have earnestly besought her that she would not desert us in a time of so great affliction. Publicly we can do nothing, matters continue in such a doubtful state. The Emperor, as you have heard, hastens his journey to Worms, but not at great speed. He has, however, shewn that he wishes to have a convention of the princes. Afterward to hold a diet

<sup>1</sup> Marguerite, sister of Francis I. The letter to which Calvin here refers is unfortunately lost.

of the whole Empire at Ratisbon, where deliberation may be had, and those points finally settled which had been discussed in the former diet, both concerning religion and the state of the Empire. That city, however, is very inconveniently situated, in regard that all those princes who are more desirous of peace, on account of the length and difficulty of the journey do not come thither; and our friends have the impression that the road is not very safe, because it is in the middle circle of Bavaria, where the princes are hostile to them, and combined with the Emperor in that wicked league. At Tübingen, sixty-seven houses have been burnt down. They say that the fire has been kindled by incendiaries, but no one knows who they are or by whom set on. . . .<sup>1</sup>

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

#### LIIII.—TO THE SEIGNEURY OF GENEVA.<sup>2</sup>

Excuses himself from returning to Geneva by the necessity of his attendance at the Diet of Worms.

STRASBOURG, Oct. 23, 1540.

MY VERY WORTHY, NOBLE, AND HONOURABLE LORDS,—Albeit that, besides the letters which you have been pleased to send me, you had given charge to the bearer to declare more fully by word of mouth your wish, and that he has not found me in the

<sup>1</sup> The end is wanting.

<sup>2</sup> Directed on the back,—To the Magnificent and Honourable Lords Messieurs the Syndics and Council of Geneva.

Two years had scarcely passed away since the banishment of Calvin, and already the victorious party, left to itself, had exhausted itself with its own excess and disorders. Of the four Syndics who pronounced the expulsion of the ministers two were exiled to Berne; the other two had perished by a violent death.—Spon, *Hist. de Genève*, liv. i. pp. 280-282. Anarchy produced its ordinary fruit, regret for the absence of authority. Taught by severe experience, the people of Geneva demanded to have Calvin brought back again, and the new Syndics,—organs of the popular sentiment, sought to recall him.—Arch. of Geneva, *Registres du Conseil*, ann. 1540, *passim*.

place where he thought to find me, so as to deliver his message,<sup>1</sup> I have, nevertheless, sufficiently understood by them the scope of your intention. In reply, I can testify before God that I hold your Church in such consideration that I would never be wanting in her time of need to do whatsoever I could for her help. Furthermore, I have no doubt whatever but that she must be very desolate, and also in danger of being broken up and scattered besides, if that has not happened already. And on this account I am in singular perplexity, having the desire to meet your wish, and to wrestle with all the grace that God has given me, to get her brought back into a better condition, while, on the other hand, I cannot slightly quit the charge or lay it down lightly, to which the Lord has called me, without being relieved of it by regular and lawful means; for so I have always believed and taught, and to the present moment cannot persuade myself to the contrary, that when our Lord appoints a man as pastor in a church to teach in His Word, that he ought to consider himself as engaged to take upon himself the government of it, so that he may not lightly withdraw from it without the settled assurance in his own heart, and the testimony of the faithful, that the Lord has discharged him. Moreover, it has been arranged by those of the council of the town of Strasbourg, that I should go with some of my brethren to the Assembly at Worms, not to serve one church solely, but for the common interest, in which number yours is included. I do not think myself to possess such knowledge, or prudence, or experience, that I can be of much use there, but when the object in view is a matter of so great importance, and that it has been appointed not only by the council of that town, but also by others, that I should proceed thither, to be present for whatsoever it shall please God to employ me in, I am constrained to follow, and cannot, with a sound conscience, neglect that call.

Seeing myself, therefore, involved in such trouble and uncertainty, I have communicated your letter to the chief pastors of this church, who have ever been singularly desirous of your

<sup>1</sup> The bearer of this letter was Amy Perrin, who sought anxiously to bring about the recall of the Reformer, whose most determined adversary he became some years afterwards at Geneva.—Spon, tom. i. p. 283. Note P.

wellbeing and edification, and would earnestly, with all their heart, assist you to the utmost of their power in this matter, as also in every other. We have consulted together, since I must undertake this journey, if it please you, in the meantime, to call our brother, Master Peter Viret, that your church may not be left destitute, for he will not be an entire stranger among you, and will have that sort of affection toward you as of one who has been occupied in promoting your edification, from the very commencement. In the interval our Lord will open up a way on the one hand and on the other, as we do hope, such as your present need requires, and as you may find expedient. I promise you that nothing shall be denied you on my part in all that is allowable, but that I will do my utmost to serve you so far as God permits, and those to whose counsels He has commanded me to hearken.

And now, right honourable, noble, and eminent Lords, after my humble commendation to your favourable entreaties, I pray the Lord God to have you always in His holy protection, increasing in you from day to day His gifts and graces, making them helpful for the advancement of the glory of His name, that you may ever prosper and be in peace.

Your humble servant,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Archives of Geneva.* No. 1250.]

#### LIV.—TO FAREL.

Exposition of the motives which prevent him from returning to Geneva.

STRASBOURG, <sup>21<sup>st</sup></sup> 27<sup>th</sup> October 1540.

I have no doubt whatever that you have taken good care to apologize for me to those brethren who advised that I should return to Geneva, that I have not replied to them. For you are well aware how on that account I was thrown for two days into such perplexity and trouble of mind that I was scarcely half myself. Some time after that, however, that I

might humour you, I made an attempt to write somewhat to them in common; but when I took into account what usually happens with these general letters addressed in common, I changed my mind. For what is sent only to a select few, flickers about hither and thither incessantly from hand to hand, until at length it is thoroughly well published. This, therefore, was my reason why I wrote only to you: it was that you may not take into your confidence any other readers than those from whom you know that you need be under no apprehension of any danger. Why, therefore, I did not wish what I intrust to your confidence to be more widely spread, you will understand when you have read to the end of this letter. Although I trust that you completely take up my meaning, and that you have also faithfully explained it to others, I shall briefly repeat now how I stand affected. Whenever I call to mind the state of wretchedness in which my life was spent when there, how can it be otherwise but that my very soul must shudder when any proposal is made for my return. I pass over entirely that disquietude by which we were perpetually tossed up and down, and driven from one side to another, from the time when I was appointed your colleague. I know indeed from experience, that wheresoever I might turn, all sorts of annoyances were strewn in my way; that if I would live to Christ, this world must be to me a scene of trial and vexation: the present life is appointed as the field of conflict. But, at the same time, while I call to mind by what torture my conscience was racked at that time, and with how much anxiety it was continually boiling over, pardon me if I dread that place as having about it somewhat of a fatality in my case. You yourself, along with God, are my best witness, that no lesser tie would have been sufficient to retain me there so long, had it not been that I dared not to throw off the yoke of my calling, which I was well assured had been laid upon me by the Lord. So long, therefore, as I was thus bound hand and foot, I preferred to suffer even to the uttermost extremity, than for one moment to entertain those thoughts that were apt to arise in my mind of changing my place of abode,—thoughts which often stole in

upon me unawares. But now that by the favour of God I am delivered, should I be unwilling to replunge myself once more into the gulf and whirlpool which I have already found to be so dangerous and destructive, who would not excuse me? Yea, forsooth, where shall you find any one who will not plainly accuse me of being over easily persuaded, when knowingly, and with free consent of will, I rashly surrender at discretion? But then, even supposing that I may be nowise alarmed at my danger, how can I have any reasonable expectation that my ministry can be of any use to them? For you know with what a quickness of apprehension the most of them thereaway are gifted. They will neither be bearable by me, nor shall I be endurable by them. Besides all this, take into your consideration that the battle which I shall have to fight will be fully stouter and more difficult with my colleagues than with those who are without. Of what avail will be the exertions of a single individual, hampered by so many lets and hindrances on every side? And in addition to all, to say truth, even although everything was laid ready very much to my hand, from disuse I have somehow become oblivious of those arts which are required for the guiding and the direction of the multitude. Here, at Strasbourg, I have only to take the oversight of a few, and the greater number hear me, not so much as a pastor, as with the attention and reverence due to an instructor. You allege that I am too nice and delicate, and after having been daubed with these flatteries, cannot now bear with patience to hear any harsher sound.

You will find yourself mistaken, however, if you allow yourself really to think so; but when I do find it an arduous work to superintend and oversee as I ought those few who in some sort may be called teachable, willing to be trained and disciplined, how shall I ever be able to restrain and keep within due bounds so great a multitude? Whatever may be their design in recalling me, I scarcely dare venture to contemplate; for if they are led to do so with a sincere and honest purpose, why do they recall me rather than the man whose ministry was not less needed for the renewal and upbuilding of their Church than even it was at the first for founding it? What if they only

recall me that they themselves may not become a laughing-stock to the other party, because they have been left destitute by those persons, trusting in whom for assistance they have ventured to banish us? And yet all these considerations are of no avail to prevent my acquiescence in the call; for the more that I feel disposed to turn away with abhorrence from that province of labour, on that very account I am the more inclined to suspect myself. Therefore I do not allow myself to deliberate on the matter at all; and I request of our friends that they would not take me at all into consultation along with them. That they may determine all the more freely and sincerely, I conceal for the most part from others these heart-burnings. What else could I do? For I much prefer to be entirely blind, that I may suffer myself to be guided by others, than to go astray by trusting to my own purblindness. If, in these circumstances, I shall ask your advice as to whose judgment I ought chiefly to defer to, you will reply, if I am not mistaken, that there are none more proper to be consulted than Capito and Bucer. What they think upon the matter you have heard from themselves. I wish that you would explain the whole case fully to the brethren, and that divesting themselves of prejudice on either side, they would seriously consider what ought to be done.

This is the sum of the whole: That I am not in this affair actuated by craft or cunning—the Lord is my witness; neither do I search about for loopholes whereby to make my escape. Certainly, indeed, it is my desire that the Church of Geneva may not be left destitute; therefore, I would rather venture my life a hundred times over than betray her by my desertion. But forasmuch as my mind does not induce me spontaneously to return, I am ready to follow those who, there is some good hope, will prove safe and trusty guides to me. There need, however, be no trouble taken about receiving me until the Diet of Worms is over, since they have sent no deputy. On next Lord's-day there will be public prayer in every church. On Monday we set out. Do you also pray for us in the Spirit, that we may be strengthened to sustain the contest. It is quite evident what it is that our adversaries are endeavour-



ing to bring about. They would have all the states of the empire leagued together and armed for our destruction. But what the artifices are by which they are resolved to attack us is less certain. By and by, however, they will unfold more clearly whatever craftiness there may be in this latter. Adieu ; salute all in the most friendly manner,—Cordier, Thomas, Fatin, Le Clerc, and the rest. All our friends here do kindly entreat you, both you and them.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 106.]

#### LV.—TO THE SEIGNEURY OF GENEVA.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin at Worms—he excuses himself to the magistrates of Geneva for his inability to comply with their request, on account of the mission with which he had been charged into Germany in the general interest of the Church.

WORMS, 12th November 1540.

MY VERY WORTHY, POTENT, AND HONOURABLE LORDS,—I have received the letters which you have been pleased to write me ; have heard, at the same time, the statement of your am-

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the desire expressed by the ministers of the Church at Strasbourg, Calvin had repaired to the Diet at Worms, to assist at the conferences which were about to take place between the theologians of the two modes of worship. It was in this town that he received the deputies of the Council of Geneva, bearers of the following letter :—

TO DOCTOR CALVIN, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

MONSIEUR, OUR GOOD BROTHER AND SPECIAL FRIEND,—We commend ourselves very affectionately unto you, for that we are thoroughly informed that you have no other desire than the growth and advancement of the glory and honour of God, and of His sacred and holy Word. On the part of our lesser, great, and general councils, (which hereupon have strongly admonished us,) we pray you very earnestly that you would transfer yourself hitherward to us, and return to your old place and former ministry ; and we hope, with the help of God, that this shall be a great benefit, and fruitful for the increase of the holy Evangel, seeing that our people greatly desire you among us, and will conduct themselves toward you in such sort, that you shall have occasion to rest content.—Your good friends,

THE SYNDICS AND COUNCIL OF GENEVA.

*This 22d October 1540.*

With the seal : Post tenebras spero lucem.

bassadors conformable thereto. Were it only on account of the courtesy and the consideration of every kind which you shew towards me, I could no otherwise discharge myself of my duty, except in striving to the utmost of my power to agree to your request. And besides, it is so reasonable, that it ought well to persuade me to accede to the wish expressed in it. Nevertheless, there is still a reason which constrains me to pay attention to the method and the means whereby duly to comply with your will. It is the special love which I bear to your Church, having always in remembrance that she has been formerly recommended to my care and intrusted to my oversight by God, and that on that account I am for ever obliged to seek her welfare and prosperity.

Howbeit I think I have so just and adequate an excuse for not immediately acquiescing in your wish and my own desire, that is to say, declaring the affection of my heart by doing what you wish, that you shall not be very much displeas'd with the answer which I have made to your ambassadors. I pray you then, as I wrote you not long ago, always to keep in mind that I am here at present on-waiting in case of need, according to the small ability which God has bestowed, in the service of all the Christian Churches, in which number yours is also comprised; and for that reason I can neither relinquish nor delegate such a vocation, but am constrained to await the issue, and to see what success the Lord will give. For although of myself I can do nothing, it ought to suffice me that I am set here in this place by the will of the Lord, on purpose to employ me in whatsoever He would have me to apply myself; and howsoever that we do not see the matters in hand disposed to go forward very expeditiously, so much the more must we take heed diligently and keep upon our guard, inasmuch as our enemies would desire nothing better than to surprise us unawares; and what is more, as they are full of guile and craftiness, we do not know what they are planning. Wherefore, we ought to be preparing to meet them in another new diet, should they succeed in obtaining the end and aim of their intrigues at present, which is, that nothing of real business may be despatched in the diet which is here met. Thus it happens, that for the present I

cannot come to serve you in the preaching of the Evangel, and in the ministry of your Church. For like reason, in so much uncertainty, I dare not fix upon any appointed time, on this account, as I have already said, that this assembly will probably occasion a second, to which I may be sent, and I cannot refuse.<sup>1</sup> While I entertain some doubt how far this reply will be agreeable to you, yet, were I in your place, I would take the same advice from you.

Over and above all this, the instant that God shall have vouchsafed me the leisure and opportunity, that is to say, when I shall be freed from this extraordinary employment, I assure you, that in every manner of way that it shall be possible to employ me to help your Church in her time of need, I will therein do my duty, just the same as if I had already accepted the charge to which you have called me—exactly as though I was already in the midst of you doing the office of pastor. This anxious wish that I entertain, that your Church may be rightly governed and held together, will not suffer me to rest without attempting, by every possible means, to assist in the time of her necessity.

True it is, indeed, that I cannot quit the call in which I am at present placed at Strasbourg without the advice and consent of those to whom our Lord has given the authority in that matter; for, that we may not confuse the order of the Church, as we ought not to undertake the administration and government of a well-regulated Church without some one presenting us, in the same manner we ought never to desert the Churches which are committed to us according to our mere fancy, but to wait until those who have the power have freed us from the charge in a right and lawful way. Thus, as not being free, I

<sup>1</sup> The Conferences of Worms, where Melancthon and Eck appeared as the principal actors, were in fact broken off at the request of the Emperor, and resumed with greater *éclat* the year following at the Diet of Ratisbon. Calvin went thither, and his wonderful intelligence procured for him, on the acknowledgment of Melancthon himself, the surname of *Theologian*. He retraced the picture of that Assembly in several of his Latin letters, and above all, in the following writing:—“The Proceedings of the Imperial Diet held in the City of Regensbourg, otherwise called Ratisbon, the year one thousand five hundred forty and one, about the differences which are at present concerning Religion.” Geneva, 1541.

desire always to regulate myself by the advice of my brethren who serve in the ministry of the Word along with me, but that shall not prevent me from a readiness to do you all the service which the Lord would graciously bestow upon you ; for themselves, indeed, are no otherwise inclined than to induce me, rather than to hinder me that I should come to the aid of your Church, inasmuch as they do acknowledge that it is expedient for her safety and preservation. Wherefore, I beseech you affectionately, that you would repose that confidence in me to believe, that heart and mind, my whole soul, is engaged to prove to you that I am thoroughly prepared to assist your Church in so far as shall be allowable, and to see that she be provided according to her consequence in regard to worldly goods and provision. Furthermore, I thank you very humbly for the good inclination which you have been pleased graciously to declare in my behalf, as I have understood by your letter, and more fully by the relation of your ambassadors.

And now, worthy, potent, and honourable Lords, after my humble commendation to your kindly favour and consideration, I pray the Lord that, from day to day, He would increase the grace already begun in you, and so keep you by His Holy Spirit that you may hold your dignity as subserving to the glory of His name, so that the state and government of your town may be daily prospered by His blessing. Above all things, I beseech you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to maintain peace and good agreement among yourselves, as far as shall be possible, and not only among yourselves, but also with those who are joined together with you in our Lord.

Your humble servant in the Lord,

JOHN CALVIN.

[Fr. copy—Archives of Geneva, No. 1250.]

## LVI.—TO FAREL.

Details of the interview of Calvin with the Deputies from Geneva.

AT WORMS, 13th November 1540.

Were you, my dear Farel, situated as I am, somewhat, perchance, of that hesitation which so intensely afflicts me would keep you also not a little anxious. For my perturbation is not confined to myself only; those also who labour with me, for many and good reasons, are not free from anxiety, while, at the same time, they are men who are not wont to be alarmed for nothing. You are the only persons who determine without any controversy what I ought to do. But since I waver somewhat myself, and I see every one else in a state of fluctuation and indecision, I am utterly unable to arrive at any settled determination, except that I am prepared to follow fully the calling of the Lord, so soon as He shall have opened it up before me. When the deputies from Geneva had presented their letter to the Council of Strasbourg, they were told that I was gone away, without whose consent they could promise nothing. To which the deputation replied, that they would willingly come hither that they might ascertain distinctly my inclination in regard to the application. A horseman was sent forward, post-haste, to intimate to us that they were on their way. The post preceded them by two days. To their deputies here, however, the Council gave direction, to do their endeavour so as to prevent my making any promise. Never had I believed that our Council set so much value by me. Nor did those who were present read their letter without astonishment at their being so anxious about retaining me, to whom I appeared to be so little known. But mayhap they did so because they were not well enough acquainted with me. For what is there in me to recommend me? Howsoever that may be, the deputies having first of all explained the purport of the letters, exhorted and advised that I would ponder and consider what I thought would be most for the glory of Christ; in the mean-

while, nevertheless, they declared distinctly enough what was their own opinion. Immediately, upon the spot, I requested the brethren to favour me with their advice. There was somewhat of a debate. We thought it better, upon the whole, that everything should remain as it stood until the arrival of the deputation from Geneva; so that having been informed correctly as to the state of that city, we might judge and determine more satisfactorily upon the whole matter. While all this was in progress, having laid before them your letter, and also that of Viret, again I requested their advice. There is no need of my repeating over again to you my address to them. I besought them, however, in every way that I could think of, not to make any account of me in their determination. Whether I was in earnest in making that declaration they understood from what happened, when tears flowed faster than words; so that even twice they so interrupted my discourse, that I was compelled for a season to withdraw. I may proceed no further. Only this you may be sure of, I am quite conscious that my perfect sincerity is unquestionable. The arrangement has at length proceeded so far, that for the present I could not bind myself, but could only hold out a good hope to the Genevese. I have, however, obtained of our friends thus much, that they would throw no impediment in the way to prevent my going thither when this Diet is concluded; provided only, that the Bernese give us to understand that they had no dislike to the arrangement. The Council, indeed, as I perceive, will let me away only with very great difficulty. The deputies who are here do scarcely give their assent. And Capito is of that opinion. But Bucer will do what he can that I may not be retained, provided that no adverse gale shall have arisen from the quarter of Strasbourg. Do you also confirm them in the hope they have entertained; and, in the meantime, will you state to me in detail whatsoever you shall think of importance for our affairs? When we shall have returned, should it then be thought fit, you may press my departure with greater urgency. You, however, will obtain more by your letters than any one else. But more as to these arrangements when the time arrives. What may be expected from the assembling of

this Diet, I have briefly stated in the paper which the brethren will show you, and a short while since I explained to yourself. I will write to you more at length when I have more leisure. Will you greet Viret most lovingly, and make my special excuse for not writing, requesting of him to be satisfied for the present with this letter? Adieu, my excellent and very dear brother; may the Lord preserve you all.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 259.]

### LVII.—TO NICOLAS PARENT.<sup>1</sup>

Testimony rendered to the French Church at Strasbourg and to the pastor in charge of it during the absence of Calvin—matters of advice.

WORMS, 26th November [1540.]

I congratulate myself, and rejoice for the Church's sake rather than on your account, that all attend so regularly and hear sermon reverently; for it was my chief desire and prayer, when I was about to leave, that none of our brethren whom Christ ruled by my ministry might fall off from attendance on account of my absence, that nothing of that order might be put in peril wherewith the entireness of the flock of Christ is kept together in a body; besides, that compact order is of more importance and benefit to them than to me. As, however, a well-ordered church is the pastor's glory and crown, even so he can neither exult nor rejoice in anything regarding it, except in so far as the salvation of souls is concerned. Blessed, therefore, be the Lord, who keeps the hearts and minds of all in the fear and reverence of His own Word, and also instructs and informs your spirit with the gifts which may give satisfaction to the hearers. I wish that some time or other He

<sup>1</sup> From the Assembly at Worms, where he sustained with Bucer and Melancthon the weighty interests of the Reformation, Calvin cast a look of attentive regard on the humble parish of which he was the pastor at Strasbourg, and addressed to the Deacon Nicolas Parent, who was charged with the duty of supplying his place while absent, several letters, animated with the most lively interest in the spiritual wellbeing of his parishioners.

may thus also provide the Genevese, that they may give over their solicitations;<sup>1</sup> for, indeed, it sorely grieves me, that while I earnestly desire them to be relieved, yet I see no method by which that can be brought about until we shall have returned thither, and Farel shall have written word how matters stand at present among them; for we have obtained this present breathing time on that condition, that we may take counsel and consider the state of the Church, such as it shall be at the time. Now, therefore, while everything remains in this suspense I begin to rest a little from that anxiety which the difficulty of this consultation has brought upon me, and to breathe more freely.

To return, however, to our Church: I am well content that it can endure my absence without any great longing for my return. You have done well in giving intimation about the celebrating of the Lord's-supper, that, indeed, had not occurred to me when I came away; but you have made the announcement too late, for the day has elapsed on which it ought to have been made, or will certainly have gone by before any letter from me can have reached you. And I fear lest, in laying aside the usual probation before receiving the sacrament, that this speckled examination may give us some disturbance hereafter. On the whole, I think it will be better if we defer for the present, since it was not thought of at the proper time, unless, perhaps, Claude<sup>2</sup> has returned; so that you can consult with him, for if he agree with you to proceed I would be unwilling to interpose delay; only I am afraid that it may prove hurtful to us hereafter if we innovate upon what has been already settled; else if it can be so arranged with a due regard to order I shall not delay it. Adieu, my dear Nicolas; greet most lovingly in my name Sebastian, Enard, and your other fellow-workers. May the Lord have you all in His keeping, and by His own Spirit direct you to every good work.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

<sup>1</sup> Calvin had received at Worms the letter of recall and of the ambassadors of the Senate of Geneva. See the preceding Letter.

<sup>2</sup> Claude was the other deacon of the French Church at Strasbourg.



LVIII.—TO NICOLAS PARENT.<sup>1</sup>

Instructions regarding the Supper, and on various points of Ecclesiastical Discipline.

WORMS, 14th December 1540.

I am well pleased that you have delayed the holy Supper for another month, for at the present time you could not administer it without neglecting that order which, for very sufficient reasons, I earnestly desire to be carefully attended to. I am greatly delighted, according to what I hear, that our church holds well together, so that no inconvenience is felt from my absence; in the midst of my annoyances, it is especially refreshing and consolatory. Although I only spoke incidentally and very briefly, before my departure, what appeared to me to be worth while, I nevertheless gave faithful counsel. I rejoice that you take it in good part, not because it was mine, but because I am confident that it will prove not unuseful to you and wholesome to others. I am not a little perplexed in the devising of a method by which to give assistance to the poor. But you see the extreme destitution of our church, nor have I ever been able so to arrange matters that some help might be sent to us from France. Sturm left the other key at his own house. If only so much shall be found in the poor-box from whence you can supply the present need until my return, we shall then deliberate together what better can be done. There is no reason why you should give yourself much concern about those flying reports, which you understand are spread with no evil intent, but from mere idle folly.

I am really grieved on account of Philip, that his complaint is of so long continuance. He is a pious young man; modest, upright, prudent, so far as appears to me. Therefore, if the Lord shall preserve him to us, I have conceived the best hopes of his excellent natural disposition and understanding. Will you greet him kindly in my name? The other person you men-

<sup>1</sup> See the note appended to the preceding French Letter. Nicolas Parent became, at a later period, minister of the Church of Neuchatel.

tion, the more he is destitute of help or comfort, the more carefully we ought to relieve him. What you tell me about the elderly woman, because there was something which looked so much out of the ordinary course of nature in the account, I could not at first be brought to the belief of it. Not that I thought you had done rashly that you had advertised me of it, since the story had been spread abroad by the discourses of many. Nor ought we feigningly to pass by scandals which are thus blown about upon the breath of rumour, even although they may be obscure, and not very well ascertained on good authority. For while it may be our duty to put down rashly-concocted slanders, we cannot duly distinguish between truth and falsehood, if we negligently pass over scandals which are in everybody's mouth. Now when Charles has given me certain information, that there are not only appearances of wantonness, which rather lead to a suspicion that there is something wrong, than enable us to deal with it, but has also announced the marriage, I have been utterly stupified. It is certainly a scandal, which all the saints ought to hold in abomination. For what appears even more fabulous than when we read in the poets that women of sixty years of age are still wantons? And, indeed, this silly old woman has already arrived at her seventieth year, and has a son of an age which generally puts an end to the love-passages of married women. Had she only joined herself in marriage to some man of already declining years, she might have pretended that she sought something else than the delights of matrimony. She has now taken away not only every defence, but also every appearance of excuse. They thought that they laid their plans very cleverly, when they took advantage of a clandestine benediction. But they find by experience, both of them, how dangerous a thing it is to trifle with God. If you now ask me what may be your duty in this matter, I can scarcely help you forward in it. For although I consider that they ought to be severely reprehended, (nor can we avoid that, unless we are willing to forego our duty,) because, however, it is not free of danger, there is need of great caution being had, lest, being exasperated by us, they may overleap the fences, and burst away from each other with the same rashness

by which they came together, and with greater scandal and more offensive profligacy. Therefore, unless some special occasion shall have been presented to you, I do not advise that you exchange a word with her upon the subject. But if a suitable occasion shall have presented itself, you may then shew her how greatly you were displeased that she had so little considered, in the conduct she had pursued, either her own character or the edification of the Church, and that there was not one serious or decent man who did not highly disapprove it. That you also did not entertain a doubt that this news will be both very bitter and very sad to me. At the same time, however, that she may not be utterly distracted or break out into insanity, you can soften the harshness of these expressions by kindly expressions, and exhort her to endeavour to make up for what has been so ill begun, by bringing the matter to a better ending. Lastly, you must use such discretion in the matter, that all shall be in order when I return.

I am so perplexed, or rather confused in my mind, as to the call from Geneva, that I can scarce venture to think what I ought to do,—that whenever I enter upon the consideration of this subject, I can perceive no outlet by which to escape. Wherefore, so long as I am constrained by this anxiety, I am suspicious of myself, and put myself into the hands of others, to be directed by them. In the meantime, let us beseech the Lord that He would point out the way to us. Adieu, dear brother. Greet for me, most lovingly, all our friends.—Yours,

CALVIN.

When I was about to send away this letter, your other letter reached me, in which you describe the nuptials. You have certainly proved yourself a man of courage in having dared to approach Mathias, who does not easily suffer the word of admonition, much less that of rebuke. I rejoice, however, that it has been so well taken. Let us, therefore, be satisfied with this friendly expostulation, without pursuing the interest of the Church any farther. This example admonishes us, that in future nothing of a disorderly kind ought to be passed by. In so far as regards the man and wife, I would have you observe such

moderation, that, foolish as they are already, they may not become insane altogether. I know the pride, bitterness, and arrogance, of the woman. As for the monk, I believe that the solitary winter nights seemed to him too long to be spent at home. It is therefore to be feared lest, for the sake of whiling away the time, he may betake himself elsewhere; for you are aware that this class of persons enjoy the privilege of gadding about. I have advertised Sturm, although, of his own accord, he was about to do what you ask. Therefore, that person whom you speak of, will receive a letter by Crato.

My very dear brother, adieu. In haste, as the messenger is wishing to get on horseback and away. Present my most friendly salutation to Sebastian and Enard, and all the others.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

#### LIX.—TO THE SEIGNEURY OF GENEVA.

Calvin sent to the Diet of Ratisbon—he excuses himself on that account from returning at that moment to Geneva—advice addressed to the magistrates of that town.

*From STRASBOURG, this 19th February 1541.*

NOBLES, HONOURABLE AND POTENT LORDS,—In furtherance of the answer made to your ambassadors by the members of the Council of this town, immediately upon our return from Worms, I have procured of them that they would take into their consideration the rendering assistance to your Church, as I ought to keep in mind that she must be duly provided. And if it had been thought good that I should go there, I would have set about my duty; for although the charge of administering the government of such a church would be very difficult for me, yet, notwithstanding, seeing that I am at the disposal of God, and not at my own, I am always ready to employ myself thereto in whatsoever it shall seem good to Him to call me. And, also, since you are pleased to have so much confidence in me, I feel myself bound to satisfy, in so far as shall depend upon me,

your desire, over and above the perpetual obligation which binds me to the church whereto our Lord has at the first appointed me. Howbeit, a hindrance has come in the way, which does not permit me to follow out the purpose further,—it is, that I have been chosen as a deputy to go to the Diet of Ratisbon, which call I could not avoid, seeing that therein I am serving your Church, as well as that of Strasbourg, inasmuch as it is a common cause. I have, however, been greatly delighted to hear that our brother, Master Peter Viret, had undertaken the charge of instructing you in the Word of God,<sup>1</sup> for he is of such faithfulness and prudence, that in having him you are not unprovided. Wherefore, Messieurs, you will please to have me excused, seeing that I cannot come, since our Lord draws me elsewhere, but yet to such a place as does in nowise withdraw me from you, seeing that I am always allied to you in heart and affection, and hope, besides, never more to be separated from you. I beseech you to well consider all the means of rightly ordering your Church, so that she may be ruled according to the scriptural method of our Lord. We hope on this side, from all we have heard, that the disputes which you have with the Messieurs of Berne will shortly be settled, for which we are thankful to God, acknowledging that there is nothing in this world which can be more to your advantage than to maintain the worthy friendship which God has ordained among you.

Noble, potent, and honourable lords, after that I have humbly commended me to your good favour, I beseech our God of his goodness to uphold you specially in the obedience of his holy word, and to confirm you more and more in his Spirit, to direct you in true prudence and justice for the well governing of your town, and causing you to prosper in every good thing.

Your humble servant and assured friend,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Portfolio 1.*]

<sup>1</sup> Viret had gone for six months to Geneva; where he was further detained at the request of the Seigneury, and was not restored to the church at Lausanne until the 12th July 1542.—Ruchat, tom. v. pp. 161, 162.

## LX.—TO FAREL.

Anxiety on account of the Swiss Churches—approaching departure for Ratisbon—disputes between Berne and Geneva—calumnies directed against the Vaudois of Provence.

STRASBOURG, 19th February 1541.

I was not a little delighted, my dear Farel, with your letter ; nor did Bucer derive less pleasure than myself, because both of us could perceive that you did not omit a single point which could tend in any way to the preservation of a good understanding and agreement, and that you had laid bare to them that singular fervency of spirit and of charity, as well as of your anxious care for the Church, by which she ought to be stirred up to serious concern. If nothing has been attained, as you observe, our condition is most wretched, who place our reliance upon hearts of stony hardness ; but I can scarcely be induced to believe that they are not in some little degree softened ; for themselves also, in a letter of their own to our friends, shew that they are possessed by the desire somehow or other, of helping that Church, and the cause itself does not admit of their doing otherwise. Therefore, we may hope well of them, even although the grounds of good hope may not distinctly appear to us all at once. You are aware, angry passions when once aroused must be allayed by degrees, and cannot be appeased in a single day. One consideration, however, made me singularly glad, that I see the Church of Geneva provided with a minister by the arrival of Viret ;<sup>1</sup> for I very much feared, that if that Church should remain destitute for a longer period, something else might happen than we would wish. Now, I trust, the matter is beyond the risk of danger. As for me, nothing must be done at present. Would that I had not that excuse which I am compelled to put forward to them ; for I am dragged most

<sup>1</sup> See the preceding letter.

✓ unwillingly to Ratisbon,<sup>1</sup> as well because I foresee that the journey will prove very troublesome to me, as because I much fear that there may be a prolonged delay, for they are wont, oftentimes, to lengthen out the Diets even for ten months; and, last of all, I am unwilling, because I see myself to be no way adapted for that kind of business, whatever others may think. But I shall follow wherever God leads, who knows best why He has laid this necessity upon me. I am much surprised that Sulzer has written to his correspondents, that I knew that it was approved of in the judgment of Melanchthon. Whence he had that information I cannot divine, since I had earnestly entreated that you would not say a syllable about it. I foresaw, indeed, that it would not be without envy; for, perchance, even that might be interpreted as if I had thrown out ambitiously what you had heard out of his own mouth. But this also I commit to the overruling direction of the Lord.

We rejoice that the lawsuit between the Bernese and the Genevese<sup>2</sup> has been referred to the arbitration of Basle, and may therefore entertain the hope, that in a short time it will be settled without any uproar. Do insist, with all your influence, that the Genevese may acquiesce in the judgment, whatever may be pronounced, for their obstinacy cannot be approved of if they insist any further. Do, therefore, take effectual measures that they may not attempt anything in opposition to the decree-arbitral; if the others reject it, there will not be one right-thinking person who will not condemn such a proceeding.

Concerning the brethren, I was very much alarmed when a report was spread, that they were not now to be accused of heresy, but of riot and sedition.<sup>3</sup> What I had sometime heard

<sup>1</sup> The Conferences at Worms had been transferred to Ratisbon by a decree of the Emperor.

<sup>2</sup> The Bernese Bailiffs of Gex and of Thonon had entered into possession of certain lordships belonging to the town of Geneva. The judges who were appointed to settle the dispute could not come to agreement among themselves, and the whole matter had been submitted to the arbitration of Basle.—Roset, *Chronique Manuscrite*, cited by Ruchat, *Hist. de la Réf.*, tom. v. p. 148.

<sup>3</sup> The enemies of the Waldenses did not spare any amount of calumny in order to compass their ruin. In a Confession of Faith, published 6th April 1541, the Waldenses eloquently declared their respect for constituted authority, strikingly

from the mouth of Jo. . . , came to mind ; so I was surmising that they had not been overwell advised in this respect. Lately, however, the Cardinal<sup>1</sup> has written to Morler, who had been sent to our friends by the King of France, that he was ready to grant pardon. We have heard from other quarters that this was obtained after very much and earnest discussion ; but, however that may be, we have to thank the Lord, that one way or other the cruel persecution is moderated, both there and throughout the whole kingdom.

We depart hence on Tuesday ; if anything shall occur, you will find Capito here, for I set out alone with Bucer. I beg and entreat of you that you would alleviate the irksomeness of my present situation with long and frequent letters ; for unless my weariness can be refreshed by the solace of friendship, I shall be utterly in darkness. Adieu, my very excellent and most kindly brother.—Yours,  
CALVIN.

Salute particularly all the brethren for me. May the Lord Jesus always confirm you with His own Spirit. All our friends greet you in a very special manner, and especially Claude, with his companions, who commend to you the care of your throat.

There is a certain theologian, named Becholo of Caen, who has made his escape almost, as it were, out of the flame of conflagration. For he was burnt in effigy ; as he had no means of livelihood, they say that he has retired either to Strasbourg or to Geneva. Our friend Claude, to whom he is well enough known, gives an excellent character of him, that he is a pious man, learned and upright. The more uncommon these endowments are, they ought all so much the more to be valued among ourselves. If he shall come to you,—we desire to

confirmed by their life and conversation. “As regards the magistrates,” said they, “such as princes, nobles, and judges, we look on them as ordained of God, and willingly obey their laws and ordinances, paying the tributes, taxes, and tithes which they impose, . . . rendering them honour and obedience in all matters not contrary to the will of God.”—Bèze, *Hist. Eccl.* vol. i. p. 41.

<sup>1</sup> The Cardinal de Tournon, who uniformly displayed sentiments of the utmost hostility against the Waldenses.



recommend him to you in the highest terms ; if, however, he has gone to Geneva, you can let Viret have timely notice, in order that he may not neglect him.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### LXI.—TO VIRET.<sup>1</sup>

New expression of the repugnances and terrors which Calvin feels in prospect of his returning to Geneva.

ULM, 1st March 1541.

When your letter was delivered to me we were then ready for the journey, and I do not remember ever in my life a more noisy and troublesome outsetting ; so, on that account, as I could not reply myself, I therefore left it in charge with Claude Feray, whom you have seen with me at Basle, and to my brother, to write to Farel and let him understand what were my thoughts. Having at length got an interval of leisure, though ever so small, I have felt desirous to write you while upon the journey ; you will, however, excuse that I reply to you so confusedly and so briefly, because I have not your letter beside me, so as to see at once the different heads of it in their right order, and so to consider them with attention ; neither is there time enough allowed to the wayfarer at the inn to enable him to commit to writing anything duly weighed, or, as it were, to fasten his thoughts well together ; but as well as I recollect there were two principal heads. In the first, you point out that I ought not to desert the Church of Geneva ; in the other, you also strongly enforce the desirableness of hastening my return,

<sup>1</sup> With consent of the nobles of Berne, and by request of Calvin, Viret had left the church at Lausanne to afford to that of Geneva the support of his talents and his zeal ; but the return of Calvin alone could avail to terminate the crisis which his banishment had occasioned, and Viret, therefore, joined the Seigneury in entreating that he would resume his charge as minister at Geneva.—Spon, tom. i. p. 283, Note P. Calvin, at that time on his way to Ratisbon, freely poured out to his friend his doubts and difficulties on the subject.

that Satan may not throw some hindrance in the way should we make a more lengthened sojourn. To the former I can make no other reply than what I have been always in the habit of returning, that there is no place under heaven of which I can have a greater dread, not because I have hated it, but because I see so many difficulties presented in that quarter which I do feel myself far from being equal to surmount. Whenever the recollection of former times recurs to my mind, I cannot but shudder throughout with heartfelt alarm at the thought, that I may be forced to expose myself a second time to these sort of contests. Had I merely to superintend that church I would feel more at ease upon the matter, certainly I would be much less alarmed at the prospect, but you must understand well enough that there is much more in this matter than I can describe. This much, however, I may say in one word, while from many tokens I wot very well that he whom you wot of, who can do the most mischief of all, entertains an implacable hatred towards me : when I call to mind how all around him there lie open to his hand so many inlets of approach on every side, ready for mischief-making, how many bellows may be set agoing for lighting up the fires of contention, how many opportunities presented which I can never be well provided against, it quite appalls me. In the city itself there are many other difficulties which cause me no little anxiety even now. The farther I proceed, the clearer do I perceive how arduous a charge it is to rule in the superintendence of a church ; albeit I would not flinch from doing my utmost to help that Church in her wretchedness, but would be most ready to do so whenever it shall be given me to understand that I can be of any service, for howsoever certain considerations may rather alarm me in this enterprise, though they do operate rather as a drawback while they hold my mind's resolve somewhat in suspense, they cannot, however, drive this out of me, that I must be adoring to my very uttermost whatsoever I shall have concluded to be most for her welfare and prosperity. Farel can vouch for me that I had never, even by a single word, shrunk back from that call, but only that I earnestly entreated, lest through unadvisedness the already forlorn Church should

suffer a second dispersion, and, in the meanwhile, I have shewn clearly enough that I desired nothing more wishfully than to spend even my very soul where there might be any need for it. By very clear and convincing arguments I could, were you present, make it quite plain to you, that I have here concealed nothing from you; but this, indeed, appeared most evidently to myself, for when the deputation from Geneva had arrived at Worms, with many tears I beseeched our friends, by everything sacred, that putting me entirely out of their thoughts, they would well and carefully consider, as in the sight of God, what might be most for the benefit of the Church, now imploring their present relief and further help. When we came home, although no one took up the matter, I never ceased to exhort that they would seriously advise about that spiritual charge; nor indeed were they themselves, I do assure you, at all wanting in their duty; but, as I in some measure anticipated, it was almost immediately thereupon resolved that I should be conjoined with Bucer. This did not appear to me to have been done upon any previous understanding or arrangement; as I have formerly written to Farel, so now do I also solemnly assure you; for indeed it almost looked as if it had been determined on before we returned from Worms, and that by the advisement of those who were thinking very little about Geneva. Indeed, were you even to ask me the reason why I was sent at all, I see no cause for it; but, nevertheless, however unfit I may be, it was no part of my duty to refuse. My going thither, therefore, was unavoidable, unless I would everywhere hear the worst of it. And thereupon, until the arrival of your letter, when there was no longer any room for deliberation, I thought that you would hold me even more than excusable, on a right understanding of the whole affair. You have now wherewithal to satisfy both your requirements, that up to this date I have never refused to come, nor could hitherto have done so. Further, this I promise you, that in time to come I will not think of changing my opinion upon the propriety of proceeding thither, except some far more overruling power had foreclosed the way against me; for I am so taken up about the

care of that church, as it is only reasonable to suppose I would be, that already somehow, I cannot tell how it happens, I begin to feel more of an inclination to take the helm in hand should circumstances so require. Thus, however, we agreed among ourselves, that immediately after our return I proceed thither along with Bucer, that we may take counsel in common, according to present circumstances, as to what may be most advisable, and not as to the settlement of a pastor merely, but that we may take some thought about the complete restoration of the Church. In this way a deliverance upon the whole matter will have greater weight of authority, and will be more fixed and certain for the future, since those also will have lent their sanction to it from whom afterwards the most would have to be feared. The head of discipline once settled they will be bound by their own judgment to make no further remonstrance: nor can they well set agoing any measure for disturbing the order of our discipline. In the meantime, my dear brother, I entreat of you, for Christ's sake, that you do not despair or lose courage. The more uncertain it may be how long we shall be here, the less on that account ought the thought of further delay to vex or annoy you. I am well aware, that there are very many annoyances which cannot but occasion you much trouble and anxiety; but bethink yourself that the charge is at present laid upon you by the Lord, of supporting and maintaining that Church, whose welfare you have at heart, until our arrival. The day before I received your letter, I had excused myself to your council, that for the present I could not come thither. I trust that my excuse has been accepted.

Farewell, my very kind brother and right-minded friend. Salute respectfully on my behalf all the godly. The Lord the Spirit, may He confirm you in every good work.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 14.]

LXII.—TO JAMES BERNARD.<sup>1</sup>

Protests his devotedness to the Church of Geneva—oblivion of past injury.

ULM, 1st March 1541.

Your letter was delivered to me when we were just prepared and making ready to start upon our journey.<sup>2</sup> You will therefore excuse my having replied somewhat later than you may have expected. For the same reason I would wish that you may excuse this epistle, if it shall appear rather brief and confusedly put together, since it has to be written by fits and starts upon the journey. That you advise me to take upon myself the administration of the Church of Geneva, in so far as you are concerned, I have no doubt that you have done so in sincerity and from the best motives; because you are of opinion that it cannot be restored to order unless those persons shall come to their help by whose departure it has come to pass that they are thus unhappily afflicted. Moreover, that argument by which you endeavour to prevail has always had great weight with me; for because I was afraid lest I might withstand God, I have never dared utterly to reject that call. On the other hand, my conscience holds me bound in that charge which I sustain at present; neither does it suffer me easily, as if that

<sup>1</sup> James Bernard, formerly a monk, converted to the Reform by the preaching of Farel and Viret, and a minister of the Church of Geneva during the exile of Calvin. Feeling his insufficiency and that of his colleagues, he had written a touching letter to the Reformer, to urge upon him to resume the direction of his former charge:—"Indeed," said he, "one Sunday lately, when I was preaching in the chapel of Rive, seeing our church desolate, and the people all in tears, I was impelled to exhort them earnestly to turn to God, and to entreat of Him humbly, in Christ's name, that He would send them a faithful pastor, such as is necessary for the interests of His Church. Two days thereafter the Council of Two Hundred was assembled, and unanimously called for Calvin; on the following day the General Council met, and all, without one dissenting voice, cried, 'We must have Calvin, that wise and holy man, that faithful minister of Jesus Christ.' . . . Come, then, most honoured father; come, for you are ours."—*Calvini Opera*, tom. ix. p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Calvin was setting out for the Diet at Ratisbon.

were a matter of no concern, at once to desert it. My own heart bears witness before God that it was a sacred and a lawful call, as many godly persons can also testify to the world. For, indeed, after that calamity, when my ministry appeared to me to be disastrous and unprosperous, I had determined in my own mind never again to enter upon any ecclesiastical charge whatever, unless the Lord himself, by a clear and manifest call, should summon me to it: I mean by this, that such a necessity had occurred as that it was not possible for me to strive against it. Standing upon this determination, the Strasburghers never ceased to employ many devices, and to set many engines in motion, until they overturned my resolution. At their first onset, however, they did not succeed. And when they saw that all was to little purpose, they threatened, by many arguments, that at the long-run I could no more escape the hand of God by flying from Him, than Jonah had escaped of old. It is nothing wonderful, therefore, if I do not lightly relinquish that outpost in which God has stationed me. Albeit, I am not so fixed or nailed to it, but that I am prepared at the same time to remove as often as it may be the mind of the Church that I should do so. I will not stir a step, however, except in the way of lawful procedure. This was the reason why I referred the hearing and entire disposal of this case to the judgment of our Church. Over and above all, my dear brethren and colleagues, whom, as they deserve, I esteem very highly in the Lord, and to whose authority I defer not less than to the parental, although they were most unwilling to let me away, yet themselves gave way so far as to agree that I should set out thither with Bucer, and taking into consideration the condition of the Church, might consult and advise together upon what we might conclude as likely to prove most beneficial. In order, however, that we might not accomplish this purpose forthwith on the instant, we have been hindered by this journey. But as soon as we shall have returned home, you may depend on our whole attention being given to the disposal of this matter. In what relates to yourself privately, you are well aware that the entrance of every one of you upon that ministry was with very good reason disap-

proved by me.<sup>1</sup> Nothing really good could be expected to come from so inauspicious a commencement, saving that, I always besought the Lord that He would make you apt to teach in the ministry, and sufficient for Himself. In the meantime, many things were reported which one could scarcely credit, neither was it possible utterly to disprove them. Most assuredly, it was not without the most intense heaviness of heart that I heard things which I foresaw must tend so greatly to the dishonour and disgrace of the sacred ministry; for as to what I heard of myself and the brethren having been treated in no very friendly style, that was a consideration that either did not at all affect my mind, or pricked me so slightly that it could inflict no sore. Although I acknowledge that I had such esteem to Farel and to Courault—as their piety, learning, and sanctity well deserved, that I could not bear patiently to hear anything spoken disparagingly of them. This, therefore, I neither conceal nor dissemble, that you may understand I deal with you candidly and in simplicity. And, therefore, as touching the present solicitation, I cannot do otherwise than return you my best thanks, for that by your letters you shew yourself so well disposed; and I trust that the inward affection will respond to your words. You may in turn securely depend on me; for of a truth I promise you, whatever may be expected from an individual who is a lover of peace, and averse from contention—who is, moreover, your friend, very desirous indeed of your salvation, and lastly, neither difficult nor implacable in forgiving offences. But at the same time, I beseech you, by the name of God and by His awful judgment, that *you* keep in mind with whom you have to do,—one who will exact a strict account in that day of eternity, by the most searching and fiery trial, who can no way be satisfied by mere words, or put off by some vain excuse. Above all, do you seriously consider that you are engaged in the discharge of an office, which, as it excels every other, so it is the most dangerous of all, if you do not apply yourself with the utmost

<sup>1</sup> James Bernard and his colleagues, appointed ministers of Geneva after the expulsion of Calvin, had, by their weakness and want of firmness, sanctioned the disorders against which Calvin, Farel, and Courault had opposed themselves in vain.

diligence and intensity to the duties which belong to it. If you care for my approval, I would forewarn you of this one thing, that I require no more of you than that you devote yourself sincerely and faithfully to the Lord. Adieu, my very dear brother; may the Lord Jesus, by His own Spirit, prepare and confirm you in every good work. Salute, I pray you, all the godly on my behalf.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 260.]

### LXIII.—TO FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin at Ratisbon—the plague at Strasbourg—grief of the Reformer—Preliminaries of the Diet—the German princes—the Italian prelates—Hungary—the Turk—Poland—state of opinion—inclinations of Charles V.—Stayedness upon God.

RATISBON, 28th March 1541.

From the time of my arrival here I had not written to you, but had commissioned my friend Claude, that whatever news he might receive from me he should take care to forward to you; nor was there, indeed, anything worth your reading; and I was myself in expectation, first of all, of receiving a letter from you, which I would then reward with a like communication. In the meantime, while I wait for your letter, a distressing event is announced to me, that our dear friend Claude,<sup>2</sup> whom I singularly esteemed, had been carried off by the plague. Louis, the brother of Charles,<sup>3</sup> followed three days afterwards. My house was in a state of sad desolation; my brother had gone with Charles to a neighbouring village, my wife had betaken

<sup>1</sup> While Calvin was present at the Diet of Ratisbon, the plague was raging in upper Germany and on the banks of the Rhine. It also visited Strasbourg, where the victims were numbered by thousands. Many of the friends of the Reformer fell under this scourge; Idelette de Bure, his wife, escaped by flight. Calvin, in writing to Farel, gives him some account of the ravages it had made at Strasbourg, and of the solemn conferences at which he assisted at Ratisbon.

<sup>2</sup> Claude Ferey, French refugee at Strasbourg. See *Calvini Opera*, tom. ix. p. 15, a letter of Claude Ferey to Farel.

<sup>3</sup> Louis and Charles de Richebourg, sons of M. de Richebourg, to whom the next letter is addressed.



herself to my brother's, and the youngest of Claude's scholars was lying sick in bed. To the bitterness of grief, therefore, there was added a very anxious concern for those who survived. Day and night my wife was constantly present to my thoughts, in need of advice, seeing that she was deprived of her husband. The bereaved condition of the very estimable Charles, who, within the space of four days, has been deprived of his only brother, and of his instructor, whom he revered as a father, grievously distressed me. I was aware, besides, that he was most tender in his affection. I could not think about Malherbe, but, at the same time, the excellent youths who took care of him came into my mind. Although, however, these events have produced in me so much sadness, that it seems as if they could utterly upset the mind and depress the spirit, you cannot believe the grief which consumes me on account of the death of my dear friend Claude. Nor need this surprise you. For these two years bygone, you can well conceive how much I stood in need of an assured and faithful friend, who might help to uphold me in the midst of so many and such varied troubles and causes of disquiet; he not only proved himself most faithful, but in every way so dutiful, and withal so kindly, that I could use almost the same familiarity in my intercourse with him as if he were my brother. When of late I left this place, as you know, in a state of suspense and irresolution, he promised, in the most sacred manner, that he would come wherever I wished, and that his friendship should never fail me. The more I consider with myself how much I stood in need of a good counsellor always at my side, and, on the other hand, how rare, in these times, is such an instance of affectionate good-will and faithfulness, I cannot arrive at any other conclusion, than that the Lord, in taking him away, has meant to chastise me severely for my sins. But while I only intended to touch upon the subject of my misery in a passing way, I am already running to excess. That is to be accounted for, however, as well by the recollection of a most excellent man, (which I wish may some time be as sweet to me as it shall ever be sacred,) as from a pious regard to those who are left.

The Emperor has been waiting hitherto for the arrival of the princes; the two Bavarians have been here from the commencement,<sup>1</sup> and the highwayman of Brunswick,<sup>2</sup> at once the dishonour and the very pest of Germany; from time to time the deputies are arriving, one after the other. At length some of the princes make their appearance, Frederic the Palatine, brother of the Elector, Otho his nephew, the young Duke of Wurtemberg,<sup>3</sup> the Landgrave, the Archbishop of Mentz, Albert of Baden, the Prince of Anhalt, the Saxon ambassador; the Elector of Brandenburg is expected shortly. The Emperor does not cease from urging attendance upon the others, while, in the meantime, he spins out the time for their appearance. The Elector of Saxony has excused his absence upon very satisfactory grounds, by his ambassadors. There are two of the cities belonging to the League, Goslar and Brunswick, which Henry, under cover of the bann, has annoyed by his depredations and robberies. Our friends have lately resolved, that they shall be defended by the army of the League. The Emperor, in the meantime, that the meetings of the Diet may not be hindered, has suspended all the judicial proceedings which he had instituted against us, and has been pleased also to annul all the sentences which have been passed against us, until the whole matter shall be definitely ascertained. That Edict having been promulgated, the Duke of Brunswick was ordered to make restitution of what he had plundered, and to abstain in future from all violence. Although he undertook that he would do so, he proceeds, however, as he had begun. One may almost be of opinion that he acts in collusion with the Emperor. However that may be, assuredly the Elector of Saxony cannot desert his allies; he continues, therefore, upon the out-look, that should there be any commotion he may immediately oppose himself to the attack of the enemy. Moreover, from the time that these

<sup>1</sup> The two brothers, William and Louis of Bavaria, reigned in common in that country.

<sup>2</sup> Henry, Duke of Brunswick, unhappily distinguished throughout the whole of Germany by his turbulent spirit and disorderly conduct. He was deprived of his states in 1542 by the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher of Wurtemberg, who succeeded Duke Ulrich his father in 1550.

suspensions were intimated he has been cited to hear the proclamation of the bann, that is, the sentence of denunciation and proscription. A similar intimation was made to us some few days afterwards. The Emperor, how conscientiously I know not, but with strong asseveration nevertheless, declares that these proceedings are very unpleasant to him, and that he would endeavour that they may pass away in smoke. These proceedings, however, are allowed to go forward, not without our being put in very great jeopardy of our lives; for what if they should pronounce sentence upon us to-morrow? We could not stir a single foot without risking the loss of our heads. The Duke of Savoy had escaped my recollection, who has come hither for the purpose of taking the oath of fealty to the empire, in order that he may recover, with our assistance, those possessions which, while he had them, did not incline him to join the alliance of the empire. When it was, therefore, somewhat too late, the advocate Raimond has been sent ambassador by the King of France, to request that he might be received, as the representative of the duchy of Savoy, to the allegiance and protection of the empire. The embassies from foreign nations are many and magnificent. The Cardinal Contarini<sup>1</sup> is legate from the Pope, who has distributed so many crosses for us at his first entrance, that for two days afterwards his arm, I think, must have felt the fatigue of it. The Bishop of Modena, son of Jerome Morone, has been sent separately, under the title and designation of Nuncio. Contarini is desirous of bringing us under the yoke of subjection without bloodshed; on that account he tries all methods of settling the business on the ground of expediency, without having recourse to arms. He of Modena<sup>2</sup> is altogether sanguinary, and talks of nothing but war. Both of them are entirely bent on cutting off all friendly treaty; but of this afterwards. The Venetians have an ambassador here—a magni-

<sup>1</sup> Gaspar Contarini, a prelate as remarkable for his moderation as for his enlightened mind and understanding. Legate of Pope Paul III. at the Diet of Ratisbon, he in vain attempted to bring the two parties to agreement, and died the year following, not without suspicion of poison.

<sup>2</sup> The Cardinal Morone, Archbishop of Modena, one of the most merciless persecutors of the Reformed in Italy.

ficient personage. The King of England, besides the ordinary embassy to the Diet, has sent the Bishop of Winchester, with a numerous suite, who is a man over-sharp in malice. I pass by the Portuguese and others. From the French King, also, there is one, Du Veil, a busy blockhead. When I mentioned the Princes I passed over the whole fry of the Pfaffery, excepting one, the Elector of Mentz. There are present, however, a good many bishops, the Bishop of Ratisbon, of Augsburg, Spire, Bremen, Saltzburg, Brixen, Worms, Bamberg, Heidelshain, and some others.

I must now inform you what we suppose will come to pass, if, indeed, we can anyhow forecast what is likely to happen, for I can scarcely perceive sufficient data on which to found even probable conjecture. The temper of the whole of our friends has been very much exasperated against Henry, [of Brunswick,] for he has attacked them with the utmost ferocity in the most virulent and libellous terms,<sup>1</sup> and, therefore, they have requested of the Emperor that he may be branded as a calumniator, if it shall have been established that he had aspersed their reputation by the most barefaced falsehoods. Neither do I perceive how this affair can be settled, unless it may be referred to the States of the empire to decide upon it; for the Landgrave has refused the Emperor to agree that the controversy may be ended by transaction or arbitration, adding that he would not even accept the Emperor himself as umpire. This obstacle, although it seems to have but little connexion with the main business about which they were assembled, formed an element of disturbance at their very entrance upon it, and, it is to be feared, will operate very much as a hindrance to their proceedings. At present the great concern of religion stands thus: The Emperor, because he perceives his own affairs to be very much entangled, is not at all inclined to heap up new troubles for himself; he fears an attack on the side of Turkey; on the part of the King of France, either an

<sup>1</sup> Henry of Brunswick maintained a very lively paper war against the Protestant princes of Germany before attacking them more openly. Luther replied to these attacks by one of his most virulent pamphlets, *Hans Wurst*, a name which the Germans use to designate their harlequin.—See Seckendorf, lib. iii. par. 93.

uncertain peace or the risk of open war ; although, as regards the Turk, various rumours are spread about. Since that Hungarian monk<sup>1</sup> having, on the decease of King John, taken upon himself the guardianship of the young King,<sup>2</sup> could not withstand the power of Ferdinand, he has sought assistance from the Turk. The latter has sent only a very small body of troops to help him, who have laid siege to Pesth, a city belonging to Ferdinand. The city is situated on the bank of the Danube, opposite to Buda ; for the raising of that siege, troops are to be collected. Already other accounts relate that the Turk himself was on his way with a great army and camp equipage, while others assert that his expedition had been interrupted by some disturbance in his own country, I cannot tell what. We shall see, however, in a short time, of what kind it is, for there can be no doubt that he is very much hindered by reasons near home, if he does not lay hold upon Wallachia. Upon their revolt from the rule of their own tyrants, they delivered themselves over, you are aware, in subjection to his authority. He set over them a Palatine of their own race, but dependent upon himself. I know not how it has happened that, having experienced his cruelty, they have been driven to extreme measures rather than remain under his dominion. This winter, therefore, having assassinated the Palatine, they at the same time rid themselves of all the Turks who were among them. They chose a new leader for themselves, whom they bound by oath to promise eternal enmity against Turkey: they have also taken possession of a very strong fortress which the Turks had built with wonderful despatch upon the Polish frontier. If he does not punish this affront, we shall then know that he is otherwise engaged ; and would that it may turn out to be so, that, while he is healing his own wounds, we may have some time allowed us for taking measures to oppose

<sup>1</sup> George Martinuzzi, tutor of the young King of Hungary, John Sigismund.

<sup>2</sup> After the death of King Louis II the crown of Hungary was long disputed between Ferdinand, the brother of Charles V., and John Zapoli. The treaty of Great Waradin (24th February 1538) guaranteed the throne to the latter, but without reversion to his descendants. He died in 1541, leaving an infant in the cradle as his heir. His widow, yielding to the advice of George Martinuzzi, refused to cede the crown to Ferdinand, and called the Turks into Hungary.

him, and for collecting our resources. The King of Poland<sup>1</sup> could render very effectual assistance to his Wallachian neighbours, if the Tartars were not so troublesome to his kingdom. During the past winter, they carried off great booty during a sudden incursion, and seemed not without a will to proceed farther in the same direction. Howsoever that may be, the Emperor is desirous to have Germany in a state of quiet until he shall have extricated himself from these difficulties; nor will he stir up any commotions at this time, unless, by the incessant importunity of our enemies, he is unwillingly dragged into it by some necessity. Our friends wish to procure an audience for themselves; thereupon, as they do not expect there will be any secure or lasting peace, unless there is a settled agreement in religion, and the churches restored to order and right discipline, they will strongly urge that the states of the Empire may seriously set about this undertaking. In other respects, there is nothing they more desire than to pacify all these dissensions without riotous disorder, and they entertain a just horror of war, as the certain destruction of their country. Therefore, as far as they are able, they will make it appear, by their conduct, how much they are opposed to violent and factious counsels. Of the opposite party there are three classes: there are those, especially, who sound the trumpet, and openly rave like madmen because we are not attacked as soon as possible. The chiefs of this class are, the Archbishop of Mentz, the Dukes of Bavaria, Henry of Brunswick, and his brother, the Bishop of Bremen. The others, who wish to consult the welfare of their country, (whose ruin, or very severe calamity and devastation, they foresee would be the consequence of a war,) contribute all their endeavours to this point, that without troubling their heads about the establishment of an agreement in religion, a peace of any kind may be agreed upon. The third class would willingly admit some considerable correction of doctrine and ecclesiastical discipline, but either because they are not yet advanced to that degree of growth as to understand

<sup>1</sup> Sigismund I., King of Poland, (1506-1548.) This prince was continually engaged in strife with the Tartars of the Crimea, the Moldavians, and the Russians.

thoroughly the matters in dispute to be entirely settled, or because they are of a more lowly and gentle disposition than to dare to profess themselves the active promoters of that opinion, they so conduct themselves as that they may appear to seek nothing but the public tranquillity. To that class belong the Archbishop of Cologne, the Bishop of Augsburg, among the clergy; the two brothers Palatine among the princes, Otho their nephew, and perchance the Duke of Cleves. Those who plot disturbance, as they are fewer in number, and have all good men opposed to them, are not very likely to see the fulfilment of their devices. Finally, the mind of the Emperor, as I have mentioned, is altogether turned to peace, if he can obtain it, so that, putting off the consideration of religion to another time, he may direct all his energies to this object; but our friends do not readily acquiesce in this, and they will have their aiders and abettors in stirring up to the reformation of the Church. Thus you see, although scant, there is, however, the hope of doing somewhat. The Papal legates, according to their usual method, are strongly opposed to our proceeding to take any practical measures; for they consider that it is all over with their kingdom, if any discussion in matter of religion, if any consultation about the reformation of the Church, should be entertained or set on foot without the authority of their idol. Openly, they pretend that they promote the conference which we desire; but underhand, they oppose us not only by great promises, but also by threats. They are ready to assist the Emperor with a large sum of money, if he wishes at once to have recourse to arms; or what Contarini rather wishes, if he can put us down without bloodshed. Should the Emperor make any concession distasteful to the tyranny of the See of Rome, they threaten to fulminate those excommunications with which they are wont to set the whole world a trembling with terror. The Emperor at present is not acting freely, on account of the state of affairs in Italy. Therefore, should he find it at all practicable, he will retire thither, that either by a temporary peace, or truce of a few years, he may afterwards settle the disputes of Germany, leaving that whole field of discussion untouched for the present:

which he will obtain with difficulty. You see now, as I said at first, the conjectures are so obscure, that there is scarcely any room for divination. What, therefore, are we to do? Let us call upon the name of the Lord, and beseech Him that He will rule by His direction this greatest and most weighty of all causes, in which both His own glory and the safety of the Church are bound up together, and also that, in so critical a conjuncture of affairs, in His own set time He would shew, that nothing is more precious to Him than that heavenly wisdom which He has revealed to us in the Gospel, and those souls which He has redeemed with the sacred blood of His own Son. On that account, therefore, we must both seek and knock with frequent importunity, and with our whole heart and mind, to ascertain His will, the more uncertain everything on all hands appears to us. When we weigh and consider carefully the whole course and progress of this work of Reformation, we shall find that Himself had overruled, by wonderful methods, all the events in providence, without the advice or help of man, even contrary to all expectation. Upon this strength, therefore, which He has so often put forth in our behalf, let us, in the midst of so much perplexity, place our whole and entire dependence. There is one thing which alarms me, that I see so great security prevails in the midst of us. And that, indeed, not only alarms me, but it is altogether overwhelming, when we see new causes of offence daily arising, such as that sad affair of the double marriage:<sup>1</sup> nevertheless, I am not cast down on that account.

I have lately received a letter from Viret, to which I replied briefly, because there is no room now for our deliberating about that matter. I would with my whole heart go thither, my dear Farel, on the earliest fitting opportunity; but what would you have me do? I am here held bound, and very much fear that I may consume away with the irksomeness of my situation. Adieu, my excellent and most kindly brother. Greet most lov-

<sup>1</sup> An allusion to the state of bigamy in which the Landgrave of Hesse was then living, with the *authorization* of Luther, of Melancthon, and of Bucer. The explanations given by Seckendorf (lib. iii. par. 79, addit. 3) are altogether ineffectual to clear up this affair—one of the scandals of the Reformation in Germany.



ingly, in my own expressions, all the brethren ; Thomas, Michael, to whom these lines will impart much sadness ; Cordier, my preceptor, and the rest.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 15.]

#### LXIV.—TO MONSIEUR DE RICHEBOURG.<sup>1</sup>

Consolatory letter on the death of his son.

RATISBON, [*Month of April 1541.*]

When I first received the intelligence of the death of Claude and of your son Louis I was so utterly overpowered that for many days I was fit for nothing but to grieve ; and albeit I was somehow upheld before the Lord by those aids wherewith He sustains our souls in affliction, among men, however, I was almost a nonentity ; so far at least as regards my discharge of duty, I appeared to myself quite as unfit for it as if I had been half dead. On the one hand, I was sadly grieved that a most excellent and faithful friend had been snatched away from me, a friend with whom I was so familiar, that none could be more closely united than we were ;<sup>2</sup> on the other hand, there arose another cause of grief, when I saw the young man, your son, taken away in the very flower of his age, a youth of most excellent promise, whom I loved as a son, because, on his part, he shewed that respectful affection toward me as he would to another father. To this grievous sorrow was still added the heavy and distressing anxiety we experienced about those whom the Lord had spared to us. I heard that the whole household were scattered here and there. The danger of Malherbe caused

<sup>1</sup> There is little known concerning M. de Richebourg. It appears from the letter of the Reformer that he had been for some years separated from his sons Charles and Louis, who had repaired to Strasbourg, probably to finish their education. The plague, which raged in Alsace, carried off Louis, the younger of the two brothers, and his preceptor, both tenderly beloved by Calvin, who, from Ratisbon, where the sad intelligence had reached him, wrote this letter of Christian consolation to M. de Richebourg.

<sup>2</sup> Claude Ferey, so much regretted by Calvin, was tutor to the sons of M. de Richebourg.

me very great misery, as well as the cause of it, and warned me also as to the rest. I considered that it could not be otherwise but that my wife<sup>1</sup> must be very much dismayed. Your Charles, I assure you, was continually recurring to my thoughts; for in proportion as he was endowed with that goodness of disposition which had always appeared in him towards his brother as well as his preceptor, it never occurred to me to doubt but that he would be steeped in sorrow and soaked in tears. One single consideration somewhat relieved me, that he had my brother along with him, who, I hoped, would prove no small comfort in this calamity; even that, however, I could not reckon upon, when, at the same time, I recollected that both were in jeopardy, and neither of them were yet beyond the reach of danger. Thus, until the letter arrived which informed me that Malherbe was out of danger, and that Charles, my brother, wife, and the others were safe, I would have been all but utterly cast down, unless, as I have already mentioned, my heart was refreshed in prayer and private meditations, which are suggested by His Word. These circumstances I mention on this account, lest those exhortations may seem to you of less value, by which I now desire that you may take comfort, because you will consider it to be an easy matter to shew one's-self valiant in contending against another person's grief. I do not, however, boast here of firmness or fortitude in dealing with another's sorrow, but since it has been granted me, by the special goodness of God, that I should be in some degree either delivered or relieved by Him, who, in the communication of his benefits, is alike common to me as to you: in so far as that is possible in a short letter, I desire to communicate to you the remedies I took advantage of, and those which were of greatest benefit. In this endeavour, however, the consideration of your sadness is so to be kept in view by me, that, at the same time, I shall remember that I have to do with a person of a very serious mind and of very constant and determined character; nor do I conceal from myself those refuges of defence by which you are regulated, and

<sup>1</sup> Idelette de Bure, the wife of Calvin, Antony his brother, and Marie, his sister, had quitted Strasbourg, to avoid the infection of the plague.

kept on all occasions within the limits of patience and moderation. Neither shall I take advantage of those common topics of consolation which are customary among men, such as that you should not weep for your dead whom you had begotten subject to mortality, that you should shew forth in this sorrowful occurrence that firmness of mind which your excellent nature and disposition, expanded by the most elegant accomplishments, which your mature age, your varied experience, and which, to sum up all, your reputation and esteem among men requires, that, after the fashion of the world, you may take consolation in the remembrance of your past life. In your case I set aside all exhortations of this kind, and others of the same description, and leave them to your own consideration. There is, most assuredly, one sure and certain, a never-failing source of consolation, in which you, and men like you, ought to acquiesce, because it flows from that inward feeling of piety which I know to abound in you ; therefore, take special care to call to mind those thoughts which are taught us by the most excellent Master of all, and suggested to our understanding in the school of piety. It is not necessary at present that I should state these truths, which are all as familiar to you as to myself. Yet, notwithstanding, because of your singular piety, and that good-will which you express toward me, you will not, perhaps, be unwilling to recognise in my letter thoughts which have spontaneously occurred to your own mind at some other time. The son whom the Lord had lent you for a season He has taken away. There is no ground, therefore, for those silly and wicked complaints of foolish men ; O blind death ! O hard fate ! O implacable daughters of destiny ! O cruel fortune ! The Lord who had lodged him here for a season, at this stage of his career has called him away. What the Lord has done, we must, at the same time, consider has not been done rashly, nor by chance, neither from having been impelled from without, but by that determinate counsel, whereby he not only foresees, decrees, and executes nothing but what is just and upright in itself, but also nothing but what is good and wholesome for us. Where justice and good judgment reign paramount, there it is impious to remonstrate. When, however, our own advantage

is bound up with that goodness, how great would be the degree of ingratitude not to acquiesce, with a calm and well-ordered temper of mind, in whatever is the wish of our Father? Nevertheless, the faithful have a sufficient alleviation of their sorrows in the special providence of God, and the all-sufficiency of His provision, whatsoever may happen. For there is nothing which is more dispiriting to us than while we vex and annoy ourselves with those sort of questions—Why is it not otherwise with us? Why has it so happened that we came to this place? These questions would be well and suitably put, if there was somewhat in ourselves that needed reproof. But where there is no fault on our part, there is no room for this sort of complaints. It is God, therefore, who has sought back from you your son, whom he had committed to you to be educated, on the condition, that he might always be His own. And, therefore, He took him away, because it was both of advantage to him to leave this world, and by this bereavement to humble you, or to make trial of your patience. If you do not understand the advantage of this, without delay, first of all, setting aside every other object of consideration, ask of God that He may show you. Should it be His will to exercise you still farther, by concealing it from you, submit to that will, that you may become wiser than the weakness of thine own understanding can ever attain to. In what regards your son, if you bethink yourself how difficult it is, in this most deplorable age, to maintain an upright course through life, you will judge him to be blessed, who, before encountering so many coming dangers which already were hovering over him, and to be encountered in his day and generation, was so early delivered from them all. He is like one who has set sail upon a stormy and tempestuous sea, and before he has been carried out into the deeps, gets in safety to the secure haven. Nor, indeed, is long life to be reckoned so great a benefit of God, that we can lose anything, when separated only for the space of a few years, we are introduced to a life which is far better. Now, certainly, because the Lord himself, who is the Father of us all, had willed that Louis should be put among the children as a son of his adoption, He bestowed this benefit upon you, out of the multitude

of His mercies, that you might reap the excellent fruit of your careful education before his death ; whence also you might know your interest in the blessing that belonged to you, " I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed." From his earliest boyhood, so far as his years allowed, he was grounded in the best studies, and had already made such a competent proficiency and progress, that we entertained great hope of him for the future. His manners and behaviour had met with the approval of all good men. If at any time he fell into error, he not only patiently suffered the word of admonition, but also that of reproof, and proved himself teachable and obedient, and willing to hearken to advice. <sup>At times</sup> While, indeed, he was rather unruly, but never so far as to be obstinate or sulky. Those sallies, therefore, wherein he exceeded due bounds, were repressed with little trouble. That, however, which we rate most highly in him was, that he had drunk so largely into the principles of piety, that he had not merely a correct and true understanding of religion, but had also been faithfully imbued with the unfeigned fear and reverence of God. This so exceeding kindness of God toward your offspring, ought with good reason to prevail more effectually with you in soothing the bitterness of death, than death itself have power to inflict grief upon you. With reference to my own feelings, if your sons had never come hither at all, I should never have been grieved on account of the death of Claude and Louis. Never, however, shall this most crushing sorrow, which I suffer on account of both, so overcome me, as to reflect with grief upon that day on which they were driven hither by the hand of God to us, rather than led by any settled purpose of their own, when that friendship commenced which has not only continued undiminished to the last, but which, from day to day, was rather increased and confirmed. Whatever, therefore, may have been the kind or model of education they were in search of, I rejoice that they lived under the same roof with me. And since it was appointed them to die, I rejoice also that they died under my roof, where they rendered back their souls to God more composedly, and in greater circumstances of quiet, than if they had happened to die in those places where they would have experienced greater annoyance from the importunity of those by

whom they ought to have been assisted, than from death itself. On the contrary, it was in the midst of pious exhortations, and while calling upon the name of the Lord, that these sainted spirits fled from the communion of their brethren here to the bosom of Christ. Nor would I desire now to be free from all sorrow at the cost of never having known them. Their memory will ever be sacred to me to the end of my days, and I am persuaded that it will also be sweet and comforting. But what advantage, you will say, is it to me to have had a son of so much promise, since he has been torn away from me in the first flower of his youth? As if, forsooth, Christ had not merited, by His death, the supreme dominion over the living and the dead! And if we belong to Him, (as we ought,) why may He not exercise over us the power of life and of death? However brief, therefore, either in your opinion or in mine, the life of your son may have been, it ought to satisfy us that he has finished the course which the Lord had marked out for him. Moreover, we may not reckon him to have perished in the flower of his age, who had grown ripe in the sight of the Lord. For I consider all to have arrived at maturity who are summoned away by death; unless, perhaps, one would contend with Him, as if He can snatch away any one before his time. This, indeed, holds true of every one; but in regard to Louis, it is yet more certain on another and more peculiar ground. For he had arrived at that age when, by true evidences, he could prove himself a member of the body of Christ: having put forth this fruit, he was taken from us and transplanted. Yes, instead of this transient and vanishing shadow of life, he has regained the real immortality of being. Nor can you consider yourself to have lost him, whom you will recover in the blessed resurrection in the Kingdom of God. For they had both so lived and so died, that I cannot doubt but they are now with the Lord; let us, therefore, press forward toward this goal which they have reached. There can be no doubt but that Christ will bind together both them and us in the same inseparable society, in that incomparable participation of His own glory. Beware, therefore, that you do not lament your son as lost, whom you acknowledge to be preserved by the Lord,

that he may remain yours for ever, who, at the pleasure of His own will, lent him to you only for a season. Nor will you derive small consolation from this consideration, if you only weigh carefully what is left to you. Charles survives to you, of whom we all entertain this sentiment, that there is not one of us who does not desire that he might have such a son. Do not suppose that these expressions are only intended for your hearing, or that there is exaggeration here, in order to bespeak your favour. This is no more my habit than it is my disposition. I therefore express what are my real sentiments, and what I would say among strangers, that the young man excels, in the first place, in singular piety and in the true fear of God, which is the beginning and the end of all wisdom; then in the kindness of his disposition, in gentleness of manner, and in rare modesty and continence. Nor do I assign these virtues to him upon mere rumour or hearsay; for I have always been anxious upon this head, and kept close observation of his particular disposition. During the lifetime of both the brothers, I have remarked this distinction between them: Louis excelled in quickness of apprehension, but Charles, in solid judgment and intelligence, was much in advance of his brother. The deceased brother was more ready in bringing into play what he had read or heard; the other is slower, but also surer. The one was more ready and quick in mastering the various arts as well as in the active business of life; the other more considerate and more steady: his constitution of body, also, indicated as much. Louis, however, as he was of a more sanguine temperament, was also more lively and cheerful. Charles, who has somewhat of melancholy in his disposition, is not so easily drawn out of himself. He was always the more modest and courteous of the two, which distinguished him to such a degree, that he could subdue his brother's impetuosity by the forbearance which he exercised. In moderation, in gravity like that of manhood, and in a certain equability of demeanour, in these points he was far the superior. You will, therefore, yourself be judge how far the possessing such a son ought to avail for taking off the pain of the bereavement wherewith the Lord has now afflicted you, and you will then conclude, that

even on this account you must not be ungrateful to God. It is difficult, notwithstanding, you will say, so to shake off or suppress the love of a father, as not to experience grief on occasion of the loss of a son. Neither do I insist upon your laying aside all grief. Nor, in the school of Christ, do we learn any such philosophy as requires us to put off that common humanity with which God has endowed us, that, being men, we should be turned into stones. These considerations reach only so far as this, that you do set bounds, and, as it were, temper even your most reasonable sadness; that, having shed those tears which were due to nature and to fatherly affection, you by no means give way to senseless wailing. Nor do I by any means interfere because I am distrustful of your prudence, firmness, or high-mindedness; but only lest I might here be wanting and come short in my duty to you. Although, however, this letter shall be superfluous, (which I can suppose,) you will nevertheless take in good part, because of your distinguished and kindly courtesy, this my perhaps over-anxious importunity,—pardonable, however, notwithstanding, because it proceeds from my unbounded affection towards you. Moreover, I have requested Melancthon and Bucer that they would also add their letters to mine, because I entertained the hope that it would not be unacceptable that they too should afford some evidence of their good-will toward you. Adieu, most distinguished sir, and my much-respected in the Lord. May Christ the Lord keep you and your family, and direct you all with His own Spirit, until you may arrive where Louis and Claude have gone before.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 175.]

#### LXV.—TO FAREL.

Affliction of Calvin—news of the Diet of Ratisbon—appointment of the theologians charged with the representation of the two parties—their reception by the Emperor—portrait of Julius Pflug, of Gropper, and of Eck.

RATISBON, 24th April 1541.

My last letter will have given you to understand clearly enough the state of affliction in which I then was. If on that



account it has appeared somewhat fretful, you will impute it to my grief, which had made me more peevish than usual. Even yet, although I am recovering my composure by degrees, I still feel nothing more than a slight abatement of the pressure. Nay even, what one ought to feel shame in confessing, there is some such sort of consolation in grief, as that it may be somewhat pleasing in itself not to be entirely delivered from sorrow. Meanwhile, I have received a letter from Du Tailly, dated on the 30th, in which he informed me that there was a messenger on the way from you, who would give more particular information as to your present state. He has delayed so long, however, in making his appearance, that I have given over expecting his arrival. If you have anything which you can communicate in writing, and sure I am that there are many things, they might be forwarded to me within the compass of a letter, if Mirabeau<sup>1</sup> will send it to the King's ambassador, addressed under cover to Ulrich;<sup>2</sup> for his messengers go pretty frequently to and fro. I earnestly desire that you may explain to us clearly and faithfully how that dispute between the two cities<sup>3</sup> has been settled; how our Genevese friends are disposed; in what manner that church holds itself together; what Viret is doing; what are the hopes and what the pursuits of all, provided that you do not begin to grow warm on the subject. For myself, I am also already too much disordered and put out; and by your vehemency you produce this effect, that those persons place less reliance upon you whom it had been of importance to have influenced. Neither ought you to be surprised at this, when you cannot escape this imputation of over vehemency even from myself. I would, however, specially recommend, that you would a second time press upon them and seriously entreat them not to forget what they may have promised. It would be delightful to me to be informed of that

<sup>1</sup> One of the numerous French refugees, whom persecution had driven into Switzerland. He was a member of the Church at Neuchatel.

<sup>2</sup> Ulrich Chelius. See Note 2, p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> The process between Geneva and Berne, submitted to the arbitration of the town of Basle.

when I return, as I have intimated by former letters; nor is it difficult to accomplish, if you will only assist.

In the meetings of this Diet nothing memorable has yet been begun. The Emperor was allowed to choose a few pious and experienced men of weight and authority, who, upon examining and well considering the points in controversy, might deliberate upon the means of agreement, and afterwards submit to the approval of the states the heads of agreement which they had settled among themselves. On the 20th of this month he appointed, on the part of our adversaries, Julius Pflug,<sup>1</sup> John Gropper<sup>2</sup> of Cologne, and John Eck;<sup>3</sup> on our side, Philip Melanchthon, Martin Bucer, and John Pistorius.<sup>4</sup> He also mentioned publicly that he would fix upon one of the princes, who might preside over their business. Our friends having consulted together, at my request they desired that a greater number of witnesses might be present. It is not yet known what may be obtained, except that there is some hope entertained that the Emperor takes an interest in the matter. In the meanwhile, these six who were appointed were summoned; they were kindly received by the Emperor, who gave them his hand on their first meeting, and when they took their leave. By an interpreter the Emperor addressed to them a very solemn exhortation; that as he had committed such important interests to them, trusting in their piety, learning, and integrity, he doubted not they would answer his expectation. That, therefore, they should have the glory of God, the public peace, the salvation of all nations as their aim; that they should not be influenced by ambition; that they should

<sup>1</sup> Julius Pflug, Canon, and afterwards Bishop of Numburg in Saxony, a learned man, and of conciliatory and moderate temper.

<sup>2</sup> John Gropper, Canon of Cologne. He was so far enlightened as to see and acknowledge the abuses of the Roman Church, but had not courage to go forward in the reform of them. He obtained the Cardinal's dignity, and was put to death in a strange and unusual manner, having been strangled with the strings of his Cardinal's hat. See *Bezæ Icones*.

<sup>3</sup> John Mayer, better known under the name of Eck, Doctor in Theology, celebrated on account of his controversies with Carlostadt and Luther.

<sup>4</sup> John Pistorius, superintendent of the province of Nidau. He was called to the Diet of Augsburg in 1529, and died, in 1583, at a very advanced age.

yield nothing to the obstinacy or to any regard to the favour of men. Each answered separately for himself. Therefore,—and may the Lord grant success,—something will forthwith be attempted. Further, if we may forecast what is likely to be the issue, receive in few words what are the sentiments of many. First of all, it is worth while to ascertain the distinguishing characteristics of the men. That same Julius (Pflug) is an eloquent man, and thoroughly accomplished in human learning, but by no means well versed in theology; besides, he is ambitious and fond of applause; in other respects by no means of an impure life. Since, therefore, he has neither sound knowledge, nor a sufficiently settled determination, while he is trammelled by his ambition, you may consider how little is to be expected from him. Gropper sometimes reaches farther; but he also is of that large class of men who attempt to figure to themselves I know not what—some sort of middle path between Christ and the world. He is, however, such a man, that one may deliberate with him not without benefit. You know Eck<sup>1</sup> well enough already. No one entertains a doubt but that this Davus<sup>2</sup> will throw all into confusion by his forward impertinence. I do not indeed altogether despair; but when I begin to hope, then I remember what took place at Worms. Certainly, if anything very desirable shall be attained, it will so fall out beyond all my expectation. When they have made a beginning you shall hear more satisfactorily from me. Farewell, my very excellent and right-hearted brother; may the Lord preserve you to His Church, and confirm you along with all our holy brethren, all of whom will you greet kindly in my name? I cannot enumerate them; do you consider them as men-

<sup>1</sup> See the portrait of Eck which Mosellanus has sketched, cited by Seckendorf: "Big-bodied, broad-shouldered, stout-hearted, even to impudence, and more like the town-crier than a theologian—one whom you might rather expect to find figuring in the theatre than in a Council;"—such was the principal adversary of the Protestants at the Diet of Ratisbon.

<sup>2</sup> Davus, the type of all insolent slaves in the ancient drama. Melancthon writes, in speaking of Eck, "I do not think that any pious person could listen without horror to the sophisms and vain subtleties of that talking mountebank."—Seckendorf, iii. parag. 80, addit. 1.

tioned specially by name. You must keep up the spirits of Viret, by frequent encouragement, that he may not be too much cast down. Nevertheless, I was very glad when lately I heard that he had removed his wife and household furniture to Geneva. On receiving this intelligence I became less anxious.—Yours,

CALVIN.

It has been lately written hither that many Asiatic tribes have revolted from the Turk, and that he is on that account to be occupied for the present with the war in Persia, so that he will be less likely to trouble Hungary. As this news has been written out of Hungary, I scarcely venture to put faith in it. I rather desire to think it to be true than believe it to be as reported. To-day also we have learned that the monk who had undertaken the government of the kingdom during the minority of his pupil, has been made a prisoner by his own countrymen.<sup>1</sup> There is, therefore, no doubt but that on occasion of such a favourable opportunity, Buda may have fallen under the power of Ferdinand.<sup>2</sup> Many soldiers are said to collect in the territory of the Bishop of Bremen, although themselves do not tell under whose command they are. Many, however, have a suspicion that our friend Henry of Brunswick is the contriver of the plot;<sup>2</sup> for they have the same generals whom formerly he had armed against us. Should there be any disturbance there is danger of the war spreading.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

<sup>1</sup> The Bishop George Martinuzzi, Waywode of Transylvania. He was feebly supported by the Turks, whom he had called into Hungary from hatred to King Ferdinand.

<sup>2</sup> Henry of Brunswick endeavoured to have himself appointed head of the Romanist League concluded at Nuremberg in 1538, in opposition to the Protestant League of Smalkald. Incited by a blind hatred of the Gospel, he is accused of having hired mercenary troops to lay waste the dominions of the Elector of Saxony.—Seckendorf, iii. parag. 86.

## LXVI.—TO FAREL.

Request addressed by the ministers of the Church of Zurich to those of  
Strasbourg—Calvin promises to return to Geneva—message to Viret.

FROM RATISBON, 4th May 1541.

Although I think that my former letters must have abundantly satisfied you, yet because a convenient opportunity was presented of writing to you by Frelon,<sup>1</sup> I was unwilling to forego it, especially since a new subject had occurred; for the Zurichers lately, as I hear, have earnestly requested the magistrates of Strasbourg to throw no obstacles in the way of my setting out, and have also solemnly conjured me in another letter, although I am only a private individual, that I would not refuse the calling of the Lord. That this has happened by your suggestion our friends can easily perceive. When I see, however, that you busy yourself so much, without intermission, about it, no other conclusion can be arrived at in my mind than that you entertain less favourable thoughts of me and others than you ought. It had been my wish to free you from such surmises when I wrote that at the request of Philip I had been sent hither for the second time. What if I, according to your practice, were to indulge in conjectures,—my mind would incline me otherwise. It would have made little difference had I remained at home in presence of the Council. Who do you think can have been the advisers of this journey? But I am unwilling to torture myself to no purpose with cogitations such as these. My choice would have been to excuse myself if my conscience had suffered me, although I have sought to be excused when it was too late; but at last it was not possible to decline. Certainly I have not dared to do so lest I should seem to set myself in opposition to God as well as men. Hither, therefore, have I been either driven out or sent. At present I am bound fast, as it were, with fetters, which even, if I wished ever so much, I cannot

<sup>1</sup> John Frelon, a printer of Lyons.

break asunder before the time. I shall, however, attempt to unloosen them by degrees. When I perceived, however, that my speed was all too tardy to meet your desires, I formed the determination at which I have hinted in former letters, that, having once finished what we had to do here, we should straightway depart thither; but many reasons compel me first of all to return home. I will endeavour, if it be possible, to return to Strasbourg before the fair time, where during the time of the fair I shall preach; afterwards I shall make my escape thither. I do not see what more you can require of me, unless, perhaps, you take a pleasure in wearying me out with your complaints, and only not to kill me outright. I will bear it, indeed, if I cannot successfully entreat that you would shew yourself more equitable towards me; but I would prefer to obtain of you that you would not scourge without deserving. As soon as I receive a message from the Zurichers I shall return a very friendly answer. They could not have written in more friendly or more respectful terms. But I assure you, all that was superfluous on my account, for our friends gave no evidence whatever that they had the slightest desire to retain me. These letters, however, have produced this good, that—what is every way desirable—they have a tendency to cherish agreement between these two Churches. On that account Bucer was certainly greatly rejoiced. Do you, in the meanwhile, confirm and strengthen Viret by frequent exhortations, that he may not be worn down by the weariness of delay; and communicate this letter. My anxiety is very great to know whether all my letters have reached you; for by the same messenger I wrote about my departure to you, to Viret, and to the Senate of Geneva; after that I wrote another letter from Ulm, three from hence—these make four. The first and second I sent to Strasbourg, the third to Soleure. You will also oblige me if you will let me understand how many copies you have yet remaining of the *Institution*. It will also be a most acceptable kindness, if you will undertake it, carefully and faithfully to explain the present state of things at Geneva. Adieu, most excellent and worthy brother; greet for me reverently all the brethren, Chaponneau, Thomas, Cordier, Michael,

and the rest. I am tired with writing. This is the third messenger whom I charge with letters.—Yours,

CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### LXVII.—TO FAREL.

Results of the Diet of Ratisbon—conferences of the theologians—original sin—free-will—justification—impossibility of agreement in the sacrament of the Supper.

RATISBON, 11th May 1541.

Though I find my prolonged stay here to be irksome, yet never shall I regret having come. Do you think me to be not in a sound state of mind when I say so? I am quite conscious of what I am saying; and that I do not speak unreasonably you shall understand when we meet. For the present, you can pick up a few crumbs, as much as you can, by way of narrative. Our friends in the commission have come to agreement on the doctrine of original sin without any difficulty; a discussion followed on that of free-will, which was drawn together out of the writings of Augustine; they departed in neither of these points from ourselves. The debate in controversy was more keen upon the doctrine of justification. At length a formula was drawn up, which, on receiving certain corrections, was accepted on both sides. You will be astonished, I am sure, that our opponents have yielded so much, when you read the extracted copy, as it stood when the last correction was made upon it, which you will find enclosed in the letter. Our friends have thus retained also the substance of the true doctrine, so that nothing can be comprehended within it which is not to be found in our writings; you will desire, I know, a more distinct explication and statement of the doctrine, and, in that respect, you shall find me in complete agreement with yourself. However, if you consider with what kind of men we have to agree upon this doctrine, you will acknowledge that much has been accomplished. Next came the subject of the Church: as

to the definition they agreed in opinion ; on the question of the power of the Church they began to differ. When at length they could not anyhow be reconciled, it seemed best to omit that article. With regard to the sacraments, there was some jarring of opinion ; but when those of our side conceded to them their ceremonies as things indifferent, they advanced then to the consideration of the sacrament of the Supper. There stood the impassable rock which barred the way to farther progress. Transubstantiation, reposition, circumgesation, and other superstitious forms of worship, were utterly rejected. This our opponents would by no means allow. My colleague,<sup>1</sup> who is full of enthusiasm in the desire for agreement, began to murmur, and to become indignant, because such unseasonable questions were entertained. Melancthon rather tended to the opposite opinion, that so, the gangrene being brought to a height, he might cut off all hope of pacification. Our friends having consulted, they called us together. We were requested, each in succession, to state our opinions ; it was the unanimous voice of all, that transubstantiation was a mere fiction or figment, the reposition of the consecrated wafer a piece of superstition, that the adoration of the wafer was idolatrous, or at the least dangerous, since it had no authority from the Word of God. I had also to explain in Latin what were my sentiments. Although I had not understood any one of the others, deliberately, without fear of offence, I condemned that peculiar local presence ; the act of adoration I declared to be altogether insufferable. Believe me, in matters of this kind, boldness is absolutely necessary for strengthening and confirming others. Do you, therefore, earnestly supplicate the Lord that he may uphold us with that spirit of fortitude. A document in writing was then drawn up by Philip, which, when it was presented to Granvelle, was rejected with harsh expressions, because those three commissioners had made us aware of them. When such things happen, at the very threshold, you may conceive how much difficulty remains in regard to private masses, the sacrifice of the mass, and the cup in the communion. What if it should come to a consideration of the open confession of

<sup>1</sup> Martin Bucer.



the spiritual presence? How much disturbance would be ready to burst forth out of it? Your letters, by the quill merchant, were delivered to me a month after they were written; I shall be surprised if, in the course of a day or two, others do not make their appearance. The safety of the brethren has been recommended to me to attend to it as I ought, but we stick as yet at that obstruction which you are aware of. Maurus,<sup>1</sup> who was sent about that business, is actively engaged in untying that knot. Greater hope than usual breaks forth: for the Landgrave begins to perceive some failure in the quarter from which he expected most; therefore he will incline to that which we propose. If that shall so fall out, they will, I doubt not, have a particular consideration of the brethren; and Maury will do his utmost, as he is a pious and right-hearted man. Believe me, he has hitherto been faithful in attending to that which he undertook. Nothing more, however, has been obtained, than that they might have permission to return home with impunity, provided they abjured in presence of the bishop. N. is most troublesome to us; may the Lord either take him away or amend him. Greet all the brethren in the most friendly manner. May the Lord Jesus keep you. Philip and Bucer salute you. When we dined with the Landgrave the day before yesterday, kindly mention was made of you.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 17.]

#### LXVIII.—TO FAREL.

Efforts of Bucer and of Melancthon to effect a connexion between the two Churches—formula of concord—feeling of Calvin on the subject.

12th May 1541.

The messenger left a day later than I supposed. This day has brought forth somewhat for us. Granvelle, when he had cut

<sup>1</sup> This was doubtless that gentleman of the chamber of King Francis I., to whom Ecolampadius wrote in 1524, to congratulate him on his sincere attachment to the Gospel. This gentleman is known only under the pseudonyme of Maurus Museus, a *secretis et cubiculo Regis Galliarum*. See the letter of Ecolampadius in the Life of Gerard Roussel, by M. Schmidt. Strasbourg, 1845, in 8vo, App. No. 3, p. 179.

off all hope on the part of our friends by his reply, after he heard of Eck's apoplexy, since, perhaps, he saw that the forward importunity of that personage put a stop to the progress toward agreement, requested (Pistorius also being left out) the four remaining theologians to consult together of themselves without any presiding arbiters. So far as I could understand, if we could be content with only a half Christ we might easily come to understand one another. Philip and Bucer have drawn up ambiguous and insincere formulas concerning transubstantiation, to try whether they could satisfy the opposite party by yielding nothing. I could not agree to this device, although they have, as they conceive, reasonable grounds for doing so, for they hope that in a short time it would so happen that they would begin to see more clearly if the matter of doctrine shall be left an open question for the present; therefore they rather wish to skip over it, and do not dread that equivocation in matters of conscience, than which nothing can possibly be more hurtful. I can promise, however, both to yourself and to all the pious, that both are animated with the best intentions, and have no other object in view than promoting the kingdom of Christ. Nor can you desire anything on the part of either of them which they do not faithfully and steadily perform, except that in their method of proceeding they accommodate themselves too much to the time. But I cannot well endure to see that Bucer so loads himself with the hatred of many on account of it. He is conscious of his own good intentions, and, on this account, is more careless than is desirable. But we ought not to be so content with the integrity of our own conscience as to have no consideration or regard of our brethren. But these are things which I deplore in private to yourself, my dear Farel; see, therefore, that you keep them to yourself. One thing alone, as usually happens in the midst of evils, I am thankful for, that there is no one who is fighting now more earnestly against the wafer god than Brentz,<sup>1</sup> for so he calls it. I will not write more at present, in order that you may the more eagerly desire my arrival

<sup>1</sup> John Brentz, a celebrated German theologian, much attached to the Lutheran dogma of the Supper. He assisted at the Conferences of Haguenau, of Worms, and of Ratisbon, and seemed, in the latter, to go over to the interpretation of Calvin, against which, at a later period, he maintained a very sharp controversy. J

among you, that I may stuff your ears full of these stories. Adieu, my very dear brother. Freithus, Musculus, Brentz, greet you, indeed, almost all do so. Eck, as they say, is getting better. The world does not deserve to be yet delivered from that *bête*.<sup>1</sup> There has lately occurred a circumstance which I must not omit to mention. Maurus has an attendant, who was for some time a servant with Louis<sup>2</sup> and myself at Basle, a decent honest young man, trustworthy, and modest. About five years ago, when he was but yet a boy, without the knowledge of his father, he promised in his cups to marry a young woman. His father having been informed of the affair had remonstrated with the son upon the subject. The youth told him that he had been imposed upon. The case not having been fully gone into, not being well understood, and still less well weighed and maturely considered, the judges of your Consistory have pronounced, under the directions of Marcourt, that the marriage ought to be held good. The young man, that he might avoid this connexion, left his country. He has now received the intelligence of the death of his father; but his relations advise him, at the same time, to take the young woman to wife; and Mirabeau has also advised him to the same purpose. I have probed him to the uttermost, and almost worn him out by my entreaties, yet he is so averse to it that I cannot prevail on myself to urge him any farther; and all the while he acknowledges that the girl is an honest woman, only he affirms positively that he never had any inclination to marry her. Because I wish him well I would like if it can be brought about to have the affair settled by friendly agreement, and a mutual understanding between the parties. This will also be for the advantage of the girl herself. I have written to Mirabeau about the business. On my account, however, I do not wish you to do anything except what you shall judge just and right in the circumstances. Nor would I do more myself if the case were referred to my decision.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 17.]

<sup>1</sup> Eck died two years later, the 16th February 1543, in consequence of a second attack of apoplexy, brought on by his intemperance.—Seckendorf, iii. parag. 112.

<sup>2</sup> Louis du Tillet; he had made a long stay at Basle with Calvin, before accompanying him into Italy.

LXIX.—TO THE PASTORS OF THE CHURCH OF ZURICH.<sup>1</sup>

The expression of his sentiments in reference to the Church of Geneva—ready to return to that town if the magistrates of Strasbourg consent to it, and if the Seigneury of Berne promise their support—testimony of respect for the Church of Zurich.

RATISBON, 31st May 1541.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Men and brethren, most dear to me and very highly respected,—Your letter was most acceptable to me on a two-fold account, chiefly because, according to that close tie of spiritual relation which, according to the will of God, subsists between us, you faithfully and prudently admonish me as to my duty; as also, because I perceive you are seriously anxious in behalf of the Church of Geneva, whose administration, as a sacred charge, has been entrusted to me. Not merely on my own behalf, therefore, but in name of the Church herself, do I feel grateful, and now express my singular thankfulness, not only for that you have resolved to countenance her by your protection, but also to aid me by your counsel. Although, at the same time, however, I must take the freedom to say, I stood not so greatly in need of that very earnest exhortation, who am of my own accord well enough disposed to carry out in practice what you advise. It was also very delightful to be confirmed by your judgment in a matter of such difficult and perplexing deliberation. But because I perceive you are somewhat doubtful as to my mind upon the matter, I will at once explain to you briefly what has stood in the way to prevent my proceeding thither more speedily, and

<sup>1</sup> At the request of Farel and the magistrates of Geneva, the pastors of the Church of Zurich had written to Calvin, then deputed to the Diet at Ratisbón, exhorting him to resume the office of the ministry in his earliest charge. Calvin, in his reply, freely unburdens himself of the sentiments of terror and repugnance which he felt at the thought of returning to Geneva.

also what, upon the advice of my brethren, I have at length agreed to do. When the first letter arrived, by which the Council tried to sound my wishes, I was not a little staggered on perceiving that I might be drawn back again into those straits and difficulties from whence I have always concluded that I have been delivered by the singular kindness of God. While I sustained the charge in that church along with my excellent and most faithful friend and colleague Farel, I tried every method by which it could be preserved. And although it was a very troublesome province to me, yet the thought of deserting it never entered into my thoughts. For I considered myself placed in that station by God, like a sentinel at his post, from which it would be impiety on my part were I to stir a single foot; yet I am aware that it will be scarcely credible were I to relate to you even a very small part of those annoyances, or rather miseries, which we had for a whole year to endure. This I can truly testify, that not a day passed away in which I did not ten times over long for death; but as for leaving the Church to remove elsewhere, such a thought never once came into my mind. When matters, therefore, had come to the worst, when we saw that the safety of the Church stood very much in our not being cast out of the government of it, we strove hard for the retaining of our ministry, not less than if the contest had been a matter of life or death. And, moreover, if they had attended to my advice, although not a very acute individual, it would have been far easier, then, rather to have relieved the Church in her pangs, or even, when partially collapsed and downcast, to raise her up again, than it can be to restore her now that she is almost utterly ruined. It would have proved an excellent remedy, by which the danger might have been got over, if we had been summoned to your Synod. That, however, could not be obtained. There was indeed another, if the churches had in earnest taken up our cause in common. To most people I appeared to rave when I foretold what afterwards has occurred. When at length, however, it was quite apparent to me that I had discharged my duty to the uttermost, I withdrew along with Farel into retirement with a quiet conscience. He was immediately called away elsewhere. As for

me, I had determined for the future to keep away from all public employment; and I would have done so, had not certain causes compelled me to undertake the calling with which I am at present charged. Therefore, that I may acknowledge the truth, that messenger was noways pleasant who brought to me the intimation that I had been recalled to Geneva. Nor, indeed, do I dwell on all the circumstances which, as you suppose, stood in the way of my return,—the ignominy to which I was subjected, the savage treatment, and the like. Whether I am wont to avenge my own wrongs, I refer to the judgment of God, and to those individuals who can speak from their experience. But had I besides, in any degree, been very desirous of revenge, there is no reason why I should seek for vengeance on the Genevese. Whatever has happened has been done in name of the city, but so that the parties implicated in the offence are not many, and the blame rests with a few. Hurried along by sedition, these very persons were themselves the agitators who have stirred up the whole of these disturbances. And the citizens of Strasbourg themselves, although in respect of that fatherly kindness which they have for me, they desire to keep me among them, yet will throw no hindrance in the way of my acquiescing in this call, provided only that it shall be clearly seen to be for the advantage and prosperity of the Genevese. How faithfully they have always promoted the welfare of that Church, I myself am the best witness. I see indeed, by experience, every day more and more how eminently great is their anxiety on behalf of all the Churches. What then, you will ask, is the reason of this delay? When that letter arrived, it had already been resolved by your Council that I was to set out for the Diet at Worms. This I offered as my excuse why I could fix nothing certain as to Geneva. At the same time, I wrote in the most friendly terms to intimate, that I by no means undertook to come, pledging myself, however, to the performance of every kind office they might require of one who was bound to them by the closest of all ties. Without waiting for a reply, they had, in the meanwhile, sent a deputation, who were to press my setting out. We were already at Worms ;

the deputation followed all the way thither. Having, on my part, advised with those friends by whose opinion I had agreed to be guided, I relieved the deputation with this promise,— That as soon as we returned home, we would set about in earnest whatever was likely to prove most for their advantage. I explained, also, our view of the whole affair, that it appeared to us that no better method of setting matters right in their Church could be devised, than for the neighbouring Churches to send some of their number to look into the state of matters, and who might both give and take counsel on the spot. That for such a purpose Bucer would come along with me, should no unforeseen event occur to hinder him; and that we likewise entertained a reasonable hope that the rest of the Churches would consent to send some of their members. But before we could take our departure from Worms, we had begun to fear a new journey [to Ratisbon:] a few days, indeed, after our return, it was announced to me that I must make ready to travel. The expectation of going thither being, therefore, laid aside, the delay had to be excused a second time. But it will appear, perhaps, that these pretexts have been caught at, or at all events, willingly laid hold of, that I might relieve myself from that call, to which, on other accounts, my mind was extremely averse. That I may here free myself from this suspicion, I shall briefly open my mind to you without any reserve. Because I feel myself quite unequal to such contentions as those by which I was formerly all but worn out and exhausted by every sort of annoyance, I confess that the dread of this burden filled me with alarm. Whenever, indeed, I recall to memory those contests by which we were sorely exercised on the part of those whom it so little became to treat us in such a manner, I seem to lose all spirit. Were I, therefore, to give way to my own feeling, I would rather go beyond sea than return thither. As, however, in this respect I stand somewhat in doubt of my own judgment, I avail myself of the guidance and counsel of others, and wish to be directed by those who are sound in judgment and sincerely well-disposed. And that I may not seem to take this course out of craft or cunning, in the name of Christ I pro-

test against any one harbouring such an opinion or thought of me, as though here I felt no difficulty. You know, however, that in an affair of so great moment, I can take no step whatever without the authority of the Church of which I am a member; but it is their unanimous opinion, that as soon as these meetings of the Diet are over, we should proceed to Geneva. For they think it is desirable that Bucer should accompany me thither, where we may consult together on the spot what is best to be done. I wish that we could obtain, besides, some one from your presbytery to be present with us. However that may turn out, we need be under no apprehension that the Church at Strasbourg, in taking care for its own provision, will neglect that other. Nor, indeed, has it any cause to do so, even if it were inclined. During my residence there, that I might have something to do, they set me to lecture on theology. I am not greatly concerned, however, about the value of my labours, as if that school would incur great loss on my departure.<sup>1</sup> One consideration alone keeps Capito, and Bucer, and the rest, in a state of anxiety, because they expect but little edification from my ministry, unless the Bernese join in good earnest along with me, and, as it were, hold out a helping hand. Neither do I conceal that my especial hope is placed in their coming to agreement with us, if they choose so far to help us. That they might be brought to that determination, we have thought it right to communicate with them beforehand, and previously to our entering upon the matters in dispute. They shew themselves well disposed, if only it shall be clear that that Church can be restored and preserved under my ministry. You see now, therefore, the state of this whole affair. Not only have I never refused the administration of this province, however unpleasant that may have been to me, but I have not even

<sup>1</sup> The peculiar modesty of Calvin is the more remarkable, when we consider the éclat which attended his preaching and teaching at Strasbourg. During the two years which he passed in that city, the French Church continually increased, and the name of Calvin was alone sufficient to attract, from all parts of France, young persons desirous of learning, and even men already distinguished as learned.—See Sturm's *Antipappi*, iv. p. 21.



endeavoured to escape by flying away from it. Somewhile ago, overcome, or rather drilled into it, by the constant entreaties of many godly brethren, I consented at least to go there, that, judging for myself of the present aspect of affairs, I might consider what I ought to do. It has been to me a source of great delight, as I have formerly stated in the outset, that I have come to the same conclusion with yourselves; for, as I have always deservedly entertained a very high respect for you, there is nothing more desirable can happen to me, than, whatever I do, to proceed in agreement with your authority, and that of men like you. That expression, therefore, in the conclusion of your epistle, was most agreeable to me, where you declare that you have no doubt your exhortation will have weight with me. As, indeed, I have always entertained a singular regard and reverence for that Church, and have also, at all times, very highly esteemed you, I rejoice that you have come to form the opinion of me, that in respectful regard toward you there is scarcely any thing you may not venture to promise yourselves. You may certainly do so, for I will not disappoint your expectation.

The state in which affairs are here I dare not write to you. All has been hitherto partly so much in suspense, and partly in such a state of entanglement, that we would need the spirit of divination if we are to attain any certain knowledge; besides, whatever there is I have no doubt that those of Constance give you a faithful report; I therefore conclude. Adieu, my dear brethren in the Lord, most beloved and longed for. All those who are here salute you, Philip, [Melanchthon,] Bucer, and the rest. May the Lord Jesus confirm you by His own Spirit for the edifying of His Church.—Your very loving and affectionate,

JOHN CALVIN.

Our princes and the free cities have urgently recommended the safety of the brethren<sup>1</sup> to the King of France. The letter having been delivered to the ambassador, I have not ventured to add mine, informing Farel of what had been done. I beseech you, however, for Christ's sake, that you will

<sup>1</sup> The Waldenses of Provence.

take care your Senate writes also as soon as possible. I hear, indeed, that the cruelty of the wicked persecutors rages in many parts of the kingdom with great fury. I expect, however, this time, that some abatement of severity may possibly be obtained.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Archives of Zurich. Vol. i. Gest. vi. 105, p. 334.*]

### LXX.—TO FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Return of Calvin to Strasbourg—news of the Diet of Ratisbon—contradictory formulæ presented to the Emperor—reply of Charles V.—Letter to the King of France in favour of his persecuted Protestant subjects.

STRASBOURG, *July* 1541.

When I had ground to think that there was no further use for me at the Diet, by a great amount of brazen importunity, I extorted rather than obtained my discharge; for not only was Bucer very sorrowful at the idea of my going away, but Philip also, who had undertaken to assist me in that matter, when the time drew near requested that I would remain. I found means, however, one way or other, to disentangle myself. It was not so much reasons of a private kind, as those of a public nature, that urged me to hasten my departure. From the time that Capito had been indisposed, I saw our school in difficulties. I was apprehensive that, during the fair-time, the Church might require my presence. Our friends were so far induced by these considerations as at length to yield to my wish. But I will explain briefly the state of matters when I came away. From the time when we split upon that question of the Eucharist, we could no more agree together upon any other. You are aware that we were all agreed in the opinion, that transubstantiation was a mere figment of the imagination, that it was not only opposed to the Word of the Lord, but also to the nature of a sacrament; that the adoration of the host was

<sup>1</sup> The conferences at Ratisbon were prolonged without any result. Calvin solicited and obtained leave of departure. He took the route of Strasbourg, where he no doubt arrived toward the end of June 1541.

either idolatrous or extremely dangerous ; that the exposition itself savoured of superstition. When the three commissioners stood firm to this reply without finching, Granvelle bitterly upbraided Philip, upon whose submission he hoped there might not be so much difficulty in bringing round the other two. Whereupon, seeing that he could extort nothing, he told them to proceed to the other heads. Meanwhile, the Marquis of Brandenburg,<sup>1</sup> clandestinely, not, however, without the knowledge of the Emperor, despatches one of the princes of Anhalt<sup>2</sup> on an embassy to Luther, expecting that, on account of the old controversy regarding the Sacrament, he would be more favourable than any of us to the Papists. What answer he has brought away with him, I have not yet ascertained. I have no doubt that Luther would return a not unsatisfactory reply. There still remained over three questions, in reference to the Eucharist, to be discussed, that concerning the sacrifice of the mass, that about private masses, and the distribution of the wine as well as the bread. Our opponents having abandoned the traffic in the buying and selling of masses, as well as the great variety and multitude of them, retained but one daily mass in each church, and that only on condition that there was an assembly of worshippers to whom the mystery might be expounded, and that they might thereafter be exhorted to communion. They wished the giving of the cup to be free, that those might partake who wished it. They disguised the sacrifice by a sophistical interpretation, and where they got that do you conjecture. All those views are rejected which Philip proposed in writing, against the sense or meaning of the article. They afterwards proceeded to take into consideration the subject of confession, in which the opposite party shewed some modera-

<sup>1</sup> Albert, Margrave of Brandenburg, a bold and perfidious adventurer, entirely devoted to the cause of the Emperor. He is reported to have said : "If the Devil will but pay me well, I will serve him." He maintained in 1553 a long struggle with Maurice of Saxony, and was vanquished, the year following, at the battle of Sievershausen, where his adversary perished.

<sup>2</sup> Without doubt, George of Anhalt, the scholar of Luther, and who, notwithstanding his high birth, wished to be ordained minister and ecclesiastical inspector of the diocese of Mersebourg. He died in 1553.—Melch. Adam. *Vitæ Theologorum Germanorum*, p. 245.

tion, remitting the scrupulous enumeration of every sin ; but they enforced the necessity of confession and absolution. Our friends submitted a contrary formula. In the same manner the invocation of the saints, the primacy of the Pope, and the authority of the Church, were separately discoursed and treated of ; but we could come to no agreement. All our articles are appended to the book. The Emperor returned liberal acknowledgment and thanks to the commissioners for having faithfully performed their duty. He then referred the consideration of the whole to the States. And because nothing could be determined satisfactorily, except upon a written document, the book was offered along with the articles. The Emperor was afterwards dissatisfied with what he had done : but the States ratified what had already been decreed. While this was going forward, the Diet gave audience to the ambassadors of Hungary and Austria, who were suppliants for aid against the Turk.<sup>1</sup> Thereupon the Emperor proposed an adjournment of the debate on the subject of religion, and that the States should turn their attention to consult upon that business. When I saw that this afforded some respite, I was unwilling to forego the opportunity ; and thus I have made my escape. I have briefly glanced over the progress of the proceedings. What belongs to councils : of a more secret kind, you shall hear somewhat on my arrival. I wish, however, that you would be persuaded to wait for the arrival of Bucer, that we may consult together in common. In what concerns the brethren who suffer in behalf of the Gospel, I have not accomplished what I wished. For the occasion demanded some more weighty embassy, which the times will scarcely admit of, because of the vicious inclinations and corrupt nature of mankind. I have therefore obtained a letter<sup>2</sup> in the

<sup>1</sup> The Sultan Soliman had entered into Hungary, and had already taken possession of the town of Buda, under pretext that the young King John Sigismond was incapable of defending it against his enemies.

<sup>2</sup> That letter was an urgent and pressing appeal to the justice and to the clemency of Francis I., by the whole Church of Christ : " We have been very much grieved, because, when it could not be denied that many abuses of long standing clung to the Churches, nevertheless, so greatly has the heat of anger been inflamed everywhere, that not only private individuals, but also whole nations, may be brought into jeopardy : which, when they become suppliants to

name of the princes ; which, indeed, must have been procured before the Diet would hear of it. But I have taken care that some things have been changed and inserted which you requested. The paper will hold no more. You will communicate, if you think proper, all these matters to Viret, and excuse me to him for not having written ; for I am harassed by frequent calls and interruptions, that I have scarcely breathing time. Adieu, my very dear brother. Salute all the brethren. May the Lord preserve you all.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp. Opera*, tom. ix. p. 18.]

### LXXI.—TO FAREL AND VIRET.<sup>1</sup>

Communication of a letter received from Bucer—news of Germany—Church of Metz—assurance given to Viret of his approaching departure for Geneva—recommendation of two young men.

STRASBOURG, 25th July 1541.

We have lately received a letter in common from Bucer, in which he informed us that no considerable progress had been made in the great concern of religion, except that the princes of the adverse party had presented a very violent reply, directed against ourselves, to the Electors. He adds, however, notwithstanding, that there were some who stoutly refused their consent to it, and shewed a disposition in no way hostile to us, among whom he mentions Otho Henri,<sup>2</sup> the Bishop of Augs-

your royal highness, you may consider that it is not we only, but the very Church of Christ that lies mourning at the feet of the greatest kings, and implores and entreats their help, that the light of the dawning Gospel may not be extinguished, and that quiet modest men and members of Christ may be let alone." This earnest prayer remained unanswered in the corrupt court of Valois. Policy alone brought about the adoption of measures which humanity demanded, and the ruin of the Vaudois, and the retribution upon the persecutors, were adjourned to another time.

<sup>1</sup> Such is the address : To the excellent and very faithful Servants of Christ, William Farel and Peter Viret, my very dear Brethren.

<sup>2</sup> Otho Henri, brother of Frederic, Count Palatine.

bourg and Constance, the Abbot of Kempten. It is the custom in the diets of the Empire, that the Counts and Abbots who are of the Council submit their resolutions to the Princes, they also to the Electors, then their decisions are propounded in common to the Cities, who are at liberty to agree or dissent. They are waiting at present for the reply of the Electors, which we expect will be somewhat gentler in its tone. For the Elector-Palatine, Brandenburg, and the Archbishop of Cologne, give out that they are not ill-disposed toward us. The Archbishop of Mentz alone is hostile. He of Treves will steer his course with a view to his own convenience, and he will be favourable to us as far as that goes. There is no doubt about the Cities, for there is not one of them who does not wish well to our tranquillity, and most of them long to hear the Gospel preached among them. Our friends also, on their part, were about to present their final answer; but what the import of it is to be, he does not say. He relates, moreover, that assistance had been promised against the Turks, but on what terms he does not explain. The Emperor, however, as he says, was about to leave for Italy, as if the principal matters were despatched. That preacher of Metz who brought the letter, of whom you have heard, brought back word that it was constantly reported there that the Emperor would depart before the end of this month. Lest, however, he should seem to break off without bringing the business to some conclusion, he will leave a deputy who can transact the rest. In a short time, if I am not mistaken, we may receive more ample details, or Bucer himself will be here; for after they have given in their final reply, what is there further to delay him there?

I hear nothing about the business of the brethren.<sup>1</sup> I have written, however, to Raymond, earnestly requesting of him that he would sincerely tell me what we may expect. The preacher of Metz,<sup>2</sup> of whom I have spoken, a pious young man, learned

<sup>1</sup> See note 1, p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> The young preacher who is spoken of here, seems to have been Peter Du Breuil, who succeeded Calvin in the direction of the French Church of Strasbourg, and was a martyr at Tournay in 1545.—See Sleidan, lib. xii. et xvi., and Crespin, *Histoire des Martyrs*.

and modest, is at present living with me until the return of Doctor Bruno, deputy of this city, who has promised to plead his cause energetically before the Diet. So far as I could understand from him, and also from all the citizens, who are here in great number at the fair, not a year will pass away without some tumult or disturbance, unless the nobility of their own accord shall apply some remedy. As to Geneva, whatever shall happen, it is easy for me to be informed betimes. For if the dispute shall be settled, our friends here will let me away all the more willingly. If, however, it shall turn out otherwise, we shall at least think about a remedy. The danger which we formerly feared on account of Caroli will now be at an end; for he has broken his promise in such a way, that he can never be received by us, and already, as I hear, is treating about a reconciliation with his Sorbonne friends.<sup>1</sup> Thereupon my guest, as I think, will succeed me as pastor.<sup>2</sup> In providing a successor in the office of professor, they are more at a loss, nor do they find a suitable person; but they shall not succeed in retaining me here, if the welfare of the Church of Geneva shall require otherwise. Certainly the leave of any one will not prevent me, if the Lord shall have granted it.

As for the rest, the two youths who deliver my letter to you have lived here rather more than a month. I am credibly informed that they come of respectable families, but as they came hither unknown to their relations, they arrived ill supplied with money. Seeing that the expense of living here is great, board and lodging not very easy to be found, and situations difficult to be procured, they have thought it better to repair to you, where they expect there will be more convenience for them. They desire to engage in any literary employment which may present itself in the meantime, until they can try whether anything can be got from their relations. But if not, their living there will be the less expensive while waiting for the answer, whatever it shall be. I request of you, therefore, that you may consider them as recommended to your good offices. They have

<sup>1</sup> Caroli effected his reconciliation with the Sorbonne, but it was in vain that he solicited a benefice in the Church of Rome.

<sup>2</sup> See note 2, p. 251.

appeared to me not unworthy of the aid of well-disposed persons ; nor are they at all deficient either in ability or learning, and their modesty speaks for itself. If there is, therefore, a situation or employment among you suitable for them, I beg that you would help them in obtaining it, wherewith they may support themselves either at a moderate expense or at none at all, until they shall have an answer from their relations ; for then they will arrange their matters better. However that shall be, take care that they may experience your kindness.—Adieu, most excellent and much honoured Brethren.

TO VIRET.

STRASBOURG, 25th July 1541.

To-day I have written hurriedly to you and Farel ; but because this youth thought that it would not be in his favour if I did not give him a line in writing addressed to yourself, he made me promise that I would do so. I write, therefore, but without having anything to write about. You may pretend, however, that you have received something serious, that you may humour the joke. You will see in the other letter what delays me here. As soon as Bucer returns we shall both hasten to Geneva with all speed, or without any further delay I will start alone. Salute all good men. Yourself will patiently await my arrival. Excuse my writing in such a hurried manner ; for I am as busily engaged in receiving those who constantly flock to me, as our Canons of the cathedral when they are about to elect the Bishop. Adieu, most excellent and kindly brother. Once more, salute all the godly.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]



## LXXII.—TO VIRET.

Excuses for his delay in leaving Strasbourg—conclusion of the  
Diet at Ratisbon.

STRASBOURG, 3d August 1541.

Bucer has returned five days ago. I have not ventured as yet, however, to press our setting out upon our journey, as well because I knew that I could not easily induce him to come until matters there were settled,<sup>1</sup> lest his going thither might prove to no purpose, as because hitherto he has been employed partly in writing what was exceedingly necessary, partly by private business, which has occupied him from the first until to-day. That writing on which he has been engaged will be finished, as I suppose, in a short time, and then we wait every hour in expectation until those of Basle send back word concerning the state of the process. On my part, I have repented more than a hundred times that I did not proceed to that town immediately on my return from Ratisbon; for even although my presence had not been of much avail in that quarter, it would, at least, have delivered me from much anxiety, because I have never ceased to be restless about the issue of the affair, and, at the same time, feared lest I might seem wanting to our friends in these difficulties; while, on the other hand, a different apprehension seized me lest those ancient friends of ours, who are wont to take every thing by the wrong handle, should suspect something else. As soon, however, as some certain intelligence is brought to us, I will not give him any rest until I bring off Bucer along with me; but if he shall still put me off I will come away notwithstanding, that I may advise with you and with others according to the present aspect of affairs; for the interest and requirements of the Church would bear no further delay, nor could I have any peace of mind while kept in this state of uncertainty, nor will my own private reasons and domestic arrangements admit of my remaining longer in this

<sup>1</sup> He refers to the process pending between Berne and Geneva, which had been submitted to the arbitration of Basle.

suspense ; therefore I have publicly announced in the Academy, that I would not lecture any more until something was settled one way or other.

The Diet concluded very much as I had always foretold that it would ; for the whole plan of pacification passed off in smoke, while all has been referred to an Universal Council, or, at least, to a National one, if the former cannot be soon obtained. But what else is this than to be frustrated ?<sup>1</sup> for it is afterwards added that a new Diet is to be held eighteen months hence, if no progress is made in the Council. In the first place, that is too great an interval ; and, in the next, the fate of former attempts does not afford much hope of success ; lastly, it is very likely that the Emperor will then be so entirely taken up with other matters that he will have a just exemption from attending the meetings of the Diet. However that may be, the adverse party will feel that they have received no slight wound, and time will make this more evident. I am unwilling, however, to follow this subject further, because I shall be better able to do so when we meet, which I hope will be shortly, if the Lord will.

This matron has been about fifteen months with us ; but as it is very troublesome to her to live in a country where she does not understand the language, and as she fears that after my going away she may be more at a loss than before, she has determined on removing to Geneva. She possesses enough to live upon ; you will only help her to find a house : her venerable age entitles her to assistance ; and she has most respectable sons. Take care, therefore, that she may find my recommendation of some use to her. These civilities which I request of you,—the duties of benevolence, you can shew her without much trouble. I do not advise, however, that you take her to live in your house, but only that you provide a home for her by means of your friends, at a reasonable rent, that she may not be forced to loiter long in the public hostelry. Adieu, my excellent brother ; may the Lord preserve and direct you in His work.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.*—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 106.]

<sup>1</sup> See Sleidan, lib. xiv. p. 387.

LXXIII.—TO FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Prepares to depart for Geneva—self-denial of Calvin—absolute submission to the will of God.

STRASBOURG, [*August 1541.*]

When your letter was brought to me mine was already written; and although you will find that it does not agree in all points to what you require of me, I have thought it best to forward it to you, that you may be aware what my feelings were at the time when it arrived. Now, however, after that I have seen you press the matter farther, and that our former guests associate openly in the same cause, I have again had recourse to our magistracy. Having read over your letter and those of the Genevese, I asked what in their opinion was now to be done. They answered, that there could be no doubt that, without calling any previous meeting, I ought immediately to set out thither; for that the question was not now open or doubtful, although it had not been formally settled. Therefore we prepare to start on the journey. In order, however, that the present supply of that Church may be provided for, which we are not willing should continue destitute, they are of opinion that Viret should by all means be sent for thither, in the meantime, while I am for the present distracted between two charges. When we come back our friends here will not refuse their consent to my return to Geneva. Moreover, Bucer has pledged himself that he will accompany me. I have written to them to that effect; and in order to make the promise all the more certain, Bucer has accompanied my letter by one from himself. As to my intended course of proceeding, this is my present feeling: had I the choice at my own disposal, nothing would be less agreeable to me than to follow your advice. But when I remember

<sup>1</sup> Letter without date, but written most probably in the month of August 1541. It informs us as to the last inward struggles of the Reformer on the eve of quitting Strasbourg to return to Geneva.

that I am not my own, I offer up my heart, presented as a sacrifice to the Lord. Therefore there is no ground for your apprehension that you will only get fine words. Our friends are in earnest, and promise sincerely. And for myself, I protest that I have no other desire than that, setting aside all consideration of me, they may look only to what is most for the glory of God and the advantage of the Church. Although I am not very ingenious, I would not want pretexts by which I might adroitly slip away, so that I should easily excuse myself in the sight of men, and shew that it was no fault of mine. I am well aware, however, that it is God with whom I have to do, from whose sight such crafty imaginations cannot be withheld. Therefore I submit my will and my affections, subdued and held-fast, to the obedience of God; and whenever I am at a loss for counsel of my own, I submit myself to those by whom I hope that the Lord himself will speak to me. When Capito wrote, he supposed, as I perceive, that I would, in a lengthy and tiresome narrative, relate to you the whole course of our deliberation; but it is enough that you have the sum of it; although I would have done that also had there been time. But the whole day was taken up in various avocations. At this present, after supper, I am not much inclined to trifle, by longer sitting up, with my health, which is at best in a doubtful state. This messenger has promised to return here at Christmas with the carriage, in which he can bring along with him to Wendelin, of the books which belong to him, ten copies of the Institution, six of the Commentaries on Jeremiah: these you will give to be brought away with him.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. pp. 17, 18.]

LXXIV.—TO THE SEIGNEURY OF GENEVA.<sup>1</sup>

Arrival of Calvin at Neuchatel—purpose of his going to that town.

NEUCHATEL, *this 7th September, in the evening*, [1541.]

ILLUSTRIOUS AND HONOURABLE LORDS,—When I shall have come hither I will explain to you the reasons wherefore I have been delayed, and hope that I shall easily satisfy you. The present shall only be to signify, that having heard at Soleure that there was some trouble in this Church,<sup>2</sup> I have been constrained, in brotherly love, to go out of my way to see whether, on my part, I could do anything to remedy it. Having acquitted myself of this duty, I have determined, please God, to leave this to-morrow morning by break of day to go to Berne, to present to messieurs of the town the letters which those of Strasbourg and Basle have sent them. When I shall have done that, I will pursue my route without stopping anywhere; for the desire which I have to present myself before you, according to my promise, will not allow me to shroud myself anywhere soever. I have retained the herald whom you have been pleased to send, to keep me company, thinking that such would not be contrary to your intention; but I leave that excuse, and all others, until my arrival.

And now, illustrious and honourable Lords, after humbly commending me to your good favour, I beseech our Lord to lead you always by His Spirit, to guide well and holily your town, upholding the state and rank thereof, and your seigneuries in full prosperity.—Your humble servant,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Archives of Geneva.* 1250.]

<sup>1</sup> After having overcome the last scruples, and taken leave of the members of his Church, “avec tristesse, larmes, grande sollicitude, et détresse,” as he himself tells us in the preface to the Psalms, Calvin left Strasbourg towards the end of August 1541. He stopped a little at Basle; and being called to Neuchatel by unforeseen circumstances, he wrote to the Seignery of Geneva to excuse himself for this delay.

<sup>2</sup> See Calvin's letter to the Seignery of Neuchatel, p. 262.

LXXV.—TO FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin at Berne—his interview with one of the principal magistrates, and with the ministers of that town.

MORAT, *September 1541.*

As soon as I arrived at Berne, I presented my letter to the Vice-Consul. On reading it, he said, those of Strasbourg and Basle request that safe-conduct be granted you. I replied, that such a requirement was superfluous, because I was neither an evil-doer, nor was I in an enemy's territory. Then I explained what they might easily have understood. The Council, however, through gross ignorance, so understood it, as if it had been written in reference to a convoy. The state of my health prevented my waiting upon the Senate personally; nor did it appear to me that that would be worth the trouble. I afterwards excused myself to the Vice-Consul, when he asked, why I had not come myself? The Senate returned for answer, that I had no need of the public protection in a peaceful canton, and that in other respects they were most ready to assist me. You see what a mockery it is. I have met with many proofs of kindness among the brethren. Konzen was absent. Erasmus, and Sulzer in his own name and that of the other, have approved of my declaration, and have freely enough promised their aid and countenance. Sulzer, apart from the other, conversed with me familiarly upon many points. It appears to me, that we ought to do all we can to secure his co-operation; this will be of great use, and he shews himself well disposed. I did not forget, as you may suppose, to plead the cause in which you are interested. A deputation has been sent.<sup>2</sup> I could obtain no more; and Giron has declared, that it would be to no purpose to urge that business any further. The Lord,

<sup>1</sup> After a short visit at Berne, Calvin, being at Morat, wrote to Farel, to inform him as to some of the incidents of his journey.

<sup>2</sup> That deputation had gone to solicit the favour of the King, Francis I., for the Waldenses of Provence.

however, stands in need of no such counsel or protection. Adieu, with all the brethren.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### LXXVI.—TO FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Arrival of Calvin at Geneva—his interview with the magistrates—draws up a form of Ecclesiastical discipline—advises Farel to moderation.

GENEVA, 16th September 1541.

As you wished, I am settled here ; may the Lord overrule it for good. For the present, I must retain Viret also, whom I shall not suffer on any account to be dragged away from me. Do you, besides, and all the brethren, exert yourselves to help me here to the utmost, unless you would have me tortured to no purpose, and made utterly wretched, without having any benefit to be gained by it. Immediately after I had offered my services to the Senate, I declared that a Church could not hold together unless a settled government should be agreed on, such as is prescribed to us in the Word of God, and such as was in use in the ancient Church. Then I touched gently on certain points from whence they might understand what my wish was. But because the whole question of discipline was too large to be discussed in that form, I requested that they would appoint certain of their number, who might confer with us on the subject. Six were thereupon appointed. Articles concerning the whole ecclesiastical polity

<sup>1</sup> Calvin had arrived at Geneva the 13th September 1541. We find under that date, in the Extracts from the Council *Registers* :—“ Calvin having arrived at Geneva, presented himself to the Council, to whom he brought letters from the Magistrates and Ministers of Strasbourg. He excused himself on account of his journey having been delayed. He represented that it would be necessary to set about the work of ecclesiastical ordinances. Resolved, that they would apply themselves to it immediately, and for that purpose appointed, along with Calvin, Claude Pertemps, Amy Perrin, Claude Roset, Jean Lambert, Poralis, and Jean Balard. Resolved also to retain Calvin here always.—October 1541. The stipend of Calvin assigned at five hundred florins, twelve measures of corn, and two tuns of wine.” For a dwelling they offered the mansion *Fregneville*, purchased at the price of two hundred and sixty crowns, with an ell of velvet for clothing.

will be drawn up, which we shall thereafter present to the Senate. The three colleagues make some show of agreement with us two. Somewhat, at least, will be obtained. We earnestly desire to know how matters are proceeding with your Church.<sup>1</sup> We hope, however, that, influenced by the authority of those of Berne and Bienne, these troubles have been entirely put to rest, or at least somewhat calmed. When you have Satan to combat, and you fight under Christ's banner, He who girds on your armour and has drawn you into the battle, will give you the victory. But since a good cause requires also a good instrument, have a care that you do not make so much allowance for yourself, as to think that there has been nothing wanting on your part which good men may reasonably expect of you. We do not exhort you to keep a good and pure conscience, as to which, we entertain no doubt whatever; we only desire earnestly that, in so far as your duty will admit, you will accommodate yourself more to the people. There are, as you know, two kinds of popularity; the one, when we hunt after favour from motives of ambition and the desire of pleasing; the other, when, by fairness and moderation, we gain upon their esteem, so as to make them willing to be taught by us. You must forgive us if we deal rather freely with you. With reference to this particular point, we perceive that you do not give satisfaction even to some good men. Even were there nothing else to complain of, you sin to this extent, because you do not satisfy those to whom the Lord has made you a debtor. You are aware how much we love, how much we revere you. This very affection, yea truly, this respect impels us to a more exact and strict censoriousness, because we desire earnestly that in those remarkable endowments which the Lord has conferred upon you, no spot or blemish may be found for the malevolent to find fault with, or even to carp at. This I have written by advice of Viret, and on that account have used the plural number. Adieu, most excellent and friendly brother.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

<sup>1</sup> That Church was at this time in a state of great disorder, which Calvin had in vain tried to tranquillize, at Neuchatel. See the following Letter.



LXXVII.—TO THE SEIGNEURY OF NEUCHATEL.<sup>1</sup>

Efforts to pacify the Church of Neuchatel—instructions given to Viret.

FROM GENEVA, *this 29th of September 1541.*

ILLUSTRIOUS AND HONOURABLE LORDS,—Having understood that your Church is not yet freed from the troubles and annoyances which have of late occurred, we have considered that it would only be our duty to send some of our company to you, to offer themselves, should the occasion present itself wherein we might be of service to you in that matter, in so far as our calling and office engage, to extinguish this scandal which the Devil has stirred up among you. Wherefore, we have been advised to send unto you our good brother and faithful minister of Jesus Christ, and former pastor of your Church, to let you understand the desire we have to serve you in the Lord, and the earnest desire we entertain for the welfare of your Church, beseeching you, Right Honourable Lords, of your good pleasure, that you will hearken to what he shall say to you in the name of our Assembly, to satisfy our conscience, according to the duty of our ministry, which constrains and obliges us to intromit in that case, seeing that it is ecclesiastical, and so it concerns us, inasmuch as we are members of the same body. And now, Illustrious and Honourable Lords, after our humble commendations to your kind favour, we beseech the Lord Jesus, the alone good Shepherd and Governor of His Church, well to counsel and

<sup>1</sup> On the back, in the handwriting of Viret:—"Letters sent to those of Neuchatel, when they wished to drive away Farel, their minister, brought by Viret, sent on the part of the ministers of Geneva, with the following instructions to inform them of their opinion."

Inflexible in the exercise of the duties of his ministry, Farel had publicly censured, in one of his discourses, a lady of rank, whose conduct had been a matter of scandal in the Church of Neuchatel. Irritated by that censure, the relatives of that lady roused a party of the towns-people against that courageous minister, and obtained a sentence of deposition against him, which was not annulled but upon the interference of the Seignery of Berne and of the principal Swiss Churches.—Ruchat, *Hist. de la Réf.*, tom. v. p. 164, and following pages.

advise you in this cause, as it is of the utmost importance ; and after having quite calmed these troubles which the Devil sets himself continually to sow in your Church to ruin the work and upbuilding of the heavenly Father, we pray Him also that He would ever uphold you in sound prosperity.—Your humble servants in our Lord,

JOHN CALVIN.  
 AYME CHAMPEREAU.  
 JAMES BERNARD.

Summary of those things as to which we desire that our brother, Master Peter Viret, would warn and admonish the Seignery of Neuchatel in our name, requesting of him that he would follow what is here plainly set forth as his instruction.

In the first place, he will have to make our excuse for that we intermeddle in that affair, explaining to them, and declaring that it is according to the duty of our office, for unto the communion of saints it is highly important, that neighbouring Churches may have a mutual care to confirm one another, and that whenever an emergency calls for it that the one come to the help of the other ; besides, that over and above all that, we hold their Church in peculiar estimation, and that it touches us, moreover, very nearly, for many other causes which he can state.

After that, he shall have clearly set before them, what order we consider should be observed in the Church upon the deposition of a minister, that is to say, that the formal procedure must be according to the command of Scripture, by form of trial, and that spiritual, and not by way of tumult nor sedition. And, so far as happens otherwise, what is it but to dishonour God and to disturb the polity of the holy city.

That if we deprive a man of his station without cause and good reason, constrain him to abandon the Church which he has served faithfully, and by this means, withdraw him unjustly from the calling whereto he has been appointed of God, not only the individual has been outraged by this means, but God also, seeing that his lawful call is violated and made of none effect.

Also, such is the opinion which we have of Farel, and of the

esteem in which he is held by all faithful men, as that we hold him to have been always well and loyally engaged in the work of our Lord, and that, therefore, they could not deprive him of the ministry until somewhat appeared proved to the contrary, except against all right and reason.

To warn them against the inconveniences which may happen as well in the town as without, especially of the scandals which must follow. What will it be but to defame the Evangel of our Lord among the wicked, offend all the good, trouble the weak-minded, so that in proportion as their Church has been greatly renowned, it will now be as much cried down.

That within their town the embers may be blown up besides, into mutinous assault and battery; that even among the ministers it may engender schism. If it seem good and advisable to you, cite some of the ancient examples, without touching upon present circumstances.

Finally, admonish them that it is what the wrath of God usually brings along with it, when we provoke it, as we should do in committing such a scandal.

Then, in his own name, he can add whatsoever shall seem good, after having explained and set before them these things for us.

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 145.*]

### LXXVIII.—TO BUCER.<sup>1</sup>

New details regarding the troubles in the Church of Neuchatel—proceedings of Viret—sentence pronounced by the Bernese—the ecclesiastical Statutes of Geneva—request for prolongation of leave for Viret—testimony of respect and affection for Bucer—approach of the pestilence.

GENEVA, 15th October 1541.

Calvin to Bucer greeting.

When my wife arrived, Viret had not yet returned from Neuchatel, where a short time previously we had sent him, that,

<sup>1</sup> The mission of Viret, and his endeavours to pacify the Church of Neuchatel, had been without the desired result. A violent party, opposed to the Reformation,

if he could do no more, he might at least make known to them<sup>1</sup> on our behalf, how contrary it was to pious and Christian conduct, that the commonalty on the slightest grounds, and also, sometimes, without having any cause at all, should wax insolent against their minister.<sup>2</sup> Word was brought back to us, that a day had been fixed for friendly conference and agreement; that on the day appointed, those of Berne would be present. De Watteville and Auspurger were present. Immediately on his arrival, Viret advised with them as to the course he ought to pursue: He produced a copy of our letter; explained the nature of his commission; he even read aloud what was contained in the written instructions, that he might do nothing without their authority. For this he plainly gave them to understand, that he would not take a single step if they should so require.

De Watteville, in his usual style, answered our friend in a jesting and equivocal manner, saying, that it was not his business to prescribe to him his duty; that he himself was a subject under the government of Berne, but lent for the present, though only for a short time, as a loan to the Genevese; that he would therefore do what seemed best. There were present some of the brethren belonging to the classes. These he addressed indirectly in a figurative discourse to the effect, that they had not acted very prudently in taking so much upon them. "You are subjects," said he; they continued, however, at last to signify that they would interpose their assent. Before any business could be entered on, Viret was heard, who, in the course of his speech, encountered the evil-disposed and broke them up, successfully animated the good and well-disposed with fresh courage, stirred up the weak and wavering, so that

and impatient of all order as of all authority in the Church, demanded the expulsion of Farel. In these circumstances, Calvin had recourse to the credit and trust reposed in Bucer, and the intervention of the Church of Strasbourg to appease these unhappy differences.

<sup>1</sup> Calvin had left at Strasbourg his wife, Idelette de Bure, who rejoined him some time afterwards at Geneva. In the Council *Registers* we have the following entry, 13th September 1541:—"Resolved, . . . to bring hither the wife of Calvin and his household furniture."

<sup>2</sup> See the preceding Letter and Memorial.

the business seemed almost in a manner brought to a conclusion. Certainly, had they come to an arrangement among themselves it was easy to be seen that the adverse party must have yielded of their own accord. At this stage of the proceedings, however, the Bernese requested that the matter might be referred to their decision. Out of a written formula, which they had brought from home with them, they pronounced as their deliverance and award, that if the dissensions among them were not quieted in the course of two months, Farel should depart. Upon hearing this decree read, Farel was so indignant as to threaten De Watteville, that the Lord would take severe methods of judgment upon him who had inflicted such a heavy blow upon the Church, and on the sacred office of the ministry. So he who was before nowise friendly to Farel, has now become more than ever his enemy. And truly it had then been better for Farel to have so far controlled himself, and that without dissembling what he felt, he had treated the man with greater mildness and with more gentle address in the expression of his mind. It becomes us, however, in the case of so eminent an instrument of Christ, in some degree to pass by his over-ardent spirit and vehemency of manner. Two days afterwards, Viret endeavoured to soothe or palliate the offence, but was less successful than he wished, the wound being as yet too tender to be handled. Farel had indeed a sufficient cause to kindle his anger against the man. But yet he ought to have weighed more carefully what was the most expedient course, lest, while he gave free scope to his wrath, he should only irritate to no purpose a man who is strong for good as well as for mischief. Inasmuch, however, as he cannot be corrected, if he has sinned in any way, God is to be entreated that he may blot it out of his remembrance, although I fear that this denunciation of Farel's will turn out in the end to be a prophecy. For that personage is indeed wonderfully altered. You would say, almost, that his understanding had been taken away from the time when, on secular and worldly grounds, he laid hands upon the ecclesiastical property. He is a very great scoffer; so much so, that he can scarce speak a word without some cavil, or taunt, or sarcasm. In the affair in question, when Farel remarked to him how the calling of the

Lord ought to be honoured and cherished, he turned the whole discourse into ridicule. "As if," said he, "any one could compel me to keep a servant in my house who did not please me." And he made use of this comparison more than once. If my servant does not please me, am I not at liberty to pay him his wages and order him to go about his business? Why am I not at liberty to do so with a minister? This indignity constrained Farel to deal more severely with him, and I am afraid, as already said, he will prove too true a prophet; because thus, after so great light, after such distinguishing grace received, that individual has become estranged from God who ought to have been an example to all the rest. These things, however, ought to be entirely confined to ourselves. The affair stands thus at present, because the better portion, that is, every God-fearing person in the city, earnestly desires to have Farel; he has himself determined not to yield, unless compelled by the law and civil government. Nor does any other motive detain him there, than because he dare not venture to desert the situation appointed him by God. Now, some method must be tried, if that can be accomplished so as to give no offence, or at least as little as possible, to the Bernese. In so perplexing an affair, nothing seems to me more suitable than for your Church, and the others who have most authority, before these two months shall have elapsed, firmly to establish Farel in his ministry by a decision of their own. In this way, there need be no occasion for Farel giving any opposition to the sentence of the arbiters. You will also easily excuse the matter to the Bernese,—that your advice was asked for the purpose of avoiding the danger of his being forced to oppose in a matter *rei judicate*. There will be no need to make any mention of the judgment in your reply. A letter will have to be written to the magistracy, the ministers, and the people.<sup>1</sup> We have no doubt whatever, but that you will at once succeed in restoring peace to the Church, however she has hitherto been overwhelmed with factions. There are very many among the

<sup>1</sup> The Church of Strasbourg acted in conjunction with the Churches of Constance, of Zurich, and of Basle, to decide the inhabitants of Neuchatel to retain Farel.

bad who, upon the faith of that judgment, had resumed courage, who, on the hearing of your name being mentioned, will lose heart and fall off entirely. I will not urge more strongly upon you the duty of aiding the wretched Church, lest I may seem to distrust you. I only admonish you; I know that you do not require to be exhorted, and this brother, who is your scholar and disciple, will supplement by his speech whatever shall be wanting in my letter.

To the other heads of your letter I cannot at present reply so fully as I could wish, and as the subject itself might seem to require. That which is the most important, the formula of the ecclesiastical order and government, cannot now be sent. We presented that document to the Senate in about a fortnight from the time when it was committed to us,<sup>1</sup> and have not yet received an answer. Nor am I much concerned that they are somewhat dilatory; we expect more certainly on that account that they will yield to us. That they might entertain no suspicion on the occasion, we advised, that should it appear desirable, they might communicate previously with the German churches, and determine nothing without having their opinion. We earnestly desire that they may do so. We shall send it therefore in a short time.

Concerning Viret, as you look forward to obtain a letter from the Senate, I beg that you will get that accomplished without delay.<sup>2</sup> For we know by experience how little disposed those of Berne are to help us, were it on no other account but only that they might not seem to be too kind to us. Perhaps, however, they will suffer themselves to be entreated by your Senate.

<sup>1</sup> The ecclesiastical ordinances, drawn up by Calvin and approved by the magistrates, were solemnly accepted by the citizens of Geneva, met in general assembly in St. Peter's Church, the 20th November 1541.—See *History of the Church of Geneva*, by the Pastor Gaberel, tom. i. p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> He endeavoured to procure from the Seignery of Berne a prolongation of leave for the minister Viret, which they had already granted for the period of six months to the Church of Geneva. On the representation of Calvin, the magistrates of Strasbourg wrote on two occasions to those of Berne to ask that favour. In the second of these letters they render most honourable testimony to Calvin. "M. Calvin," they say, "has comported himself among us with so much uprightness and constancy, and has become so acceptable by his skill and ability, that not only

I will leave no stone unturned to prevent Viret being taken from me. I will press it with Sulzer—as a suppliant I will entreat it as a favour from Konzen. In short, I will omit nothing; but at the same time we must take care to make due provision for Lausanne. This will be done, if you will request of Konzen and Sulzer, that they would set no one over that charge except with the concurrence of Viret and Le Comte, who is the other minister. The same Le Comte, even though in other respects he may not be the best, has, however, this good quality, that he wishes to have a good colleague, and when he has obtained such a one, not only bears with, but warmly seconds and supports him. But if Viret be not heard in the matter, there is danger lest some pest may be introduced there which may infect the whole neighbourhood.

The whole of that part of your letter wherein you excuse my not having been entertained at Strasbourg, according to my desert, is quite superfluous; for I am not unmindful, and shall always acknowledge, that you have conferred more honour upon me than I had any right to expect.<sup>1</sup> That safe-conduct, and other things which happened on my coming away, have, I confess, somewhat wounded my feelings. But I am the more disposed to make the acknowledgment to you, that there may be nothing of suppressed anger concealed within. Be assured, therefore, that it has all evaporated. I will endeavour to cultivate agreement and good understanding with my neighbours, and also brotherly good-will, if they will allow me, with as much faithfulness and diligence as I am able.

In so far as depends on me, I shall give ground of offence to

we would have retained him among us with pleasure, but more especially, for the sake of our Church, we would not easily have yielded him up, if we had not believed that he would be more useful at Geneva. . . . On that account we perceive with grief that he cannot complete the work which he has commenced, and with which he had burdened himself beyond his strength, &c. . . .”—*MS. of the Archives of Berne*, cited by Ruchat, *Hist. de la Réf.*, tom. v. p. 162.

<sup>1</sup> The magistrates of Strasbourg, desirous of testifying to Calvin their satisfaction on account of his services, and at the same time their esteem for his character, before his departure for Geneva bestowed on him the honorary distinction of citizenship by making him a burghess. They offered also a year's pension; but the latter present he refused.



no one. I must ask, however, that you will not form any estimate from my letters to you either of my sayings or doings here. Until I shall have declared that I could bear no more, you need not question my faithful performance of what I have promised you. And if in any way I do not answer your expectation, you know that I am under your power, and subject to your authority. Admonish, chastise, and exercise all the powers of a father over his son. Pardon my haste, for you cannot believe in what a hurry of confusion I am writing; for our brother here urges me, in accordance with the instructions of his colleagues; and I am entangled in so many employments, that I am almost beside myself.

When I hear that the plague is raging to such an extent,<sup>1</sup> I know not what to think, except that God contends against our perversity with the strong arm of His power, seeing that we are worse than stupid and insensible in the midst of so many chastenings under the rod of correction. While the hand of God lies so heavy upon you, it already hovers over us. The plague creeps toward us; if it has spared us for this winter we shall scarcely escape in the spring.

What, therefore, can we do but betake ourselves to prayer, and to seek for the spirit of godly sorrow and confession of sin in the sight of God, which certainly we go about very remissly. So much the more have we reason to fear, lest by so great indisposedness we shall provoke the displeasure of our Judge. We are anxious, as we ought to be, about you; for we may form some indistinct notion from the calamity which has befallen the Church of Basle,<sup>2</sup> what will be our lot should the Lord take you away from us. Certainly, I do not wish to be the survivor; nor could I sustain the loss, unless the Lord should wonderfully support me under it. Adieu, my much

<sup>1</sup> The plague continued its ravages at Strasbourg, where it carried away this year the children of the two first Reformers of Switzerland, William, the son of Zuingli, and Euzèbe, the son of Ocolampadius. It soon spread to Basle and to Zurich, where it found many victims. It broke out towards the end of the following year at Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> The Church of Basle had lost Simon Grynée, and the pious Iurgomaster, Jacob Meyer, who had so powerfully contributed to the reformation of the town.

honoured father in the Lord. Salute most fervently—Capito, Hedio, Matthias, Bedrot, and the others; also Conrad;<sup>1</sup> and you will excuse my not writing. From time to time while writing, many noisy interruptions have so hindered me, that I am forced abruptly to conclude. Salute also your wife, who is very dear to me. May the Lord preserve you all, rule, and protect you. Amen.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

My wife salutes yours most lovingly, and all the family.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Protestant Seminary of Strasbourg.*]

### LXXIX.—TO MADAME THE DUCHESS OF FERRARA.<sup>2</sup>

Instructions on the subject of the Mass, and on the necessity of avoiding scandal.

GENEVA, [October] 1541.

MADAME,—I humbly beseech you that you would take in good part my boldness in writing these present, deeming that,

<sup>1</sup> Conrad Hubert, secretary of Bucer.

<sup>2</sup> Renée of France, daughter of Louis XII. and of Anne of Brittany, born at the Castle of Blois the 29th October 1510, and died at the chateau of Montargis the 12th June 1575. United, from views of political expediency, to one of the smaller princes of Italy, a vassal of the Bishop of Rome, this princess, endowed with a strong mind and an excellent spirit, quitted France, in 1528, to follow her husband, Hercules of Esté, to Ferrara; and she brought along with her to that court a taste for literature, with free and generous sentiments of belief, which she had inhaled from her intimate association with Marguerite of Navarre. She received at Ferrara Clement Marot, who dedicated some of his verses to her, and also Calvin, who initiated her in the faith of the Reformed, for which she was honoured to suffer, and which she professed courageously till her death. This was the origin of the long correspondence which she maintained with the Reformer, whose letters recurred from time to time to encourage and confirm her. The letter which we insert here is, doubtless, one of the earliest in that series. On the last leaf we have the following words written in another hand:—

“Against a certain almoner, Master François, who made (Madame) go to mass, and set her against those who would not go, as against scandalous persons. It treats very fully about things lawful and not lawful, and how scandals must be avoided.”

should you find therein a too great plainness, it proceeds not so much from rashness, or from overweening self-conceit, as from pure and true affection for your service in our Lord. For albeit that I do acknowledge myself a very unprofitable servant of the Church, it hath, notwithstanding, been found expedient to employ me in that station, according to the grace which the Lord has imparted to me ; and it has even occurred to me that there was a need-be for my doing so, if I wished to acquit myself of my duty, not merely because I feel myself obliged, in regard to you, to seek, in so far as is possible for me, and in the way of duty, your welfare and advantage, howbeit that such motive is alone sufficient to stir me up to action, but rather that, considering the state and pre-eminence in which the Lord has set you, it seems to us all, we whom the Lord by His goodness has called to be ministers of His holy Word, ought to keep in special remembrance, to apply ourselves to the bestowal of some pains for you, and the more so because, more than most princely persons, you are able to promote and advance the kingdom of Christ. I have, besides, observed in you such fear of God and such disposed faithfulness of obedience, that independently of the high rank which He has vouchsafed you among men, I do so value the graces which He hath put upon you, even to such a degree, that I would think myself accursed should I have omitted the occasions of any profitable service, in so far as they might be presented to me. This is certainly what I can say without any feigning or flattery, but in sincerity of heart, and speaking as in His presence who knows all our secret thoughts.

Madame, by other worthy persons who have passed through here at different times, I have been given to understand how Master François, whom you have appointed preacher to your household, after having acquitted himself well in preaching, as well at least as could be expected of him, had persuaded you that it would not be a bad thing, after having heard mass, to hold some sort of communion, which must be somehow the Supper of our Lord ; this proceeding, which was not approved of by one of your ladies, who, according to the knowledge which she had received of God, did not wish against her conscience to meddle with what she considered to be wrong in

itself, and has been the occasion, on the representation of the said Master François, to have some way or other turned away from her the good-will which you have been wont to bear her ; so that matters have reached such a height, that you have intimated that all those who do as she does, ought not to be supported, inasmuch as, by their importunity, they give birth to scandals to no purpose among the faithful. Wherefore, concluding that a thing of so much importance must not be concealed, seeing that you had been given to understand that matters were otherwise than they are, according as it has pleased the Lord to reveal Himself to me in Scripture, I have thought it right to communicate to you what the Lord has given me of understanding in that matter. But while I have been in some doubt and hesitation about doing so, I have been given to understand, on the part of Madame de Pons,<sup>1</sup> that you wished very much to be more fully instructed, the more so that, besides the many difficulties which you see, on the other hand, it is very difficult to come to a satisfactory solution of them. This message has all the more confirmed me in my purpose to venture to essay the giving you a faithful exposition so far as I know, in order that afterward you may judge for yourself, and in so far as you shall have fully understood God's truth, that you may follow in all obedience, seeing that your zeal is not of the kind that rebels against it, but receives the truth in love and with all benign affection. Yet all this notwithstanding, Madame, before that I begin, I beseech you not to take up any suspicion of me, as though I did this, having been put up to it by some persons of your household, or to favour any one in particular ; for I can assure you, before God, that I do so without having been requested by any one, and only on the advertisement, as I have already assured you, of persons passing through this way,

<sup>1</sup> Anne de Parthenay, daughter of John de Parthenay, Lord of Soubise, and of Michelle de Saubonne, governess of Renée of France. She married Antony de Pons, Comte de Marennés, was instructed by Calvin himself in the Reformed doctrine, and remained a long time attached, as dame d'honneur, to the Duchess of Ferrara, to whose court she was an ornament, both by her virtues and her ability. Clement Marot addresses her in several of his poems, and the learned author, Lilio Gregorio Gyraldi, dedicates to her the second book of his *History of the Gods*.

who never thought that I could have the means of any direct communication. On the other hand, I would rather desire to be cast down into the lowest depths of the abyss, than to twist about or wrest the truth of God, to make it suit the hatred or to procure the favour of any creature whatsoever. But what makes me speak out is, that I cannot bear that the Word of God should be thus to you concealed, perverted, depraved, and corrupted in such essential things, by those in whom you have some confidence, to whom you have given authority.

Touching Master François, to speak soberly, I would to a certainty put you upon your guard not to confide too unreservedly in his doctrine. Should I do so, I need have no reason to fear, that mayhap you may entertain some bad opinion of me, as though I might speak from hatred or envy of this personage. For I have neither matter nor occasion of envy in any way toward him; and the hatred which, up to the present hour, I have felt toward him, is such, that I have at all times, to the utmost of my power, made it my business to edify him in well-doing. But when I perceive that any one, owing to an ill-informed conscience, sets himself to overthrow the Word of the Lord, and to extinguish the light of Truth, I could by no means pardon him, even were he my own father a hundred times over. As for this same individual, I have been aware, from having long known him, that whatsoever small understanding of the Scripture God has vouchsafed him, he has always made subserve his own profit and ambition, preaching wherever he saw that it would be a help to gratify his avarice, forbearing to preach wherever he found that it began to be troublesome to him; and then for all that, as often as he could procure hearers, persons of credit to countenance him, and the wealthy to fill his wallet or his purse, who required him to give glory to God, he has taken the trouble to satisfy them by almost always selling them His Word. On the other hand, again, wherever he met with any trouble or persecution, he had always his denial ready to escape from it, to such a degree, that one could not know in regard to him whether the holy and sacred Word of God was but a sport and mockery; insomuch that he turned it into a farce, playing at one time one character, and at

another the part of another, according to the pastime he finds in it. As to his life, I do not touch upon that, except that one could desire that it were better in a minister of the Word. I know, Madame, that the duty of a Christian man is not to detract from his neighbour; and that is what I have not wished to do, for had I been desirous to speak ill of him, I have plenty of other material concerning him which I conceal. But our Lord does not mean, when we see a wolf, under the colour and appearance of a pastor, scattering his flock, that we should quail in silence through fear of speaking evil of him. He rather commands us to discover the perversity of those who, like the pestilence, corrupt by their infection, and mar the face of the Church. And as for myself, neither would I have taken that method here if I saw any better remedy, taking into account the mortal fury of that sort of people which I do thereby provoke against myself. For I have not at this day so fierce warfare with any as with those who, under the shadow of the Gospel, wear a rough garment outwardly toward princes, amazing and entertaining them by their finesse and subtilty, enshrouded in some cloud, as it were, without ever leading them to the right object. But how could I do otherwise? If I do not address myself to them, it is because I see their heart to be so divested of all fear of God, that speaking of His judgment to them, is but a mere fable or a pleasant tale. But when I describe them such as they are, to make them aware that they could carry their abuse no farther, I find that by this method they are more restrained from further seduction and abuse. This very person I have oftentimes set about trying to bring back into the good way, so far even as to make him confess his iniquity; albeit, that impudently he would excuse himself before men, being convicted in his own conscience before God. Notwithstanding, with a horrible obstinacy and hardness of heart, he would persist in saying, that he could not desist from doing that which he knew to be bad, except that on one occasion, after having seen some treatise of mine, with grievous imprecations on himself he protested that he would never assist at the mass, because it was such a gross abomination. But I know my man so well, that I scarcely

count more on his oath than upon the chattering of a magpie. Howsoever, Madame, as I would not that he did persevere in ill-doing, to the great detriment of yourself and of the people of God, I feel constrained to warn you by my intimation, seeing that as regarded him, he would not profit by taking advantage of it. What I have told you about him is so certain, that I do not wish you to give credit to it until you have first of all found out by experience that it is true; for if you pay attention, you will see at a glance that he preaches the Word of God only in so far as he wishes to gratify you, in order to catch benefices or other prey, and in the meantime not to displease any one who can do him hurt.

Now, Madame, having done with this personage, I come to the present matter. He gives you to understand that the mass is neither so wicked nor abominable, but that it is allowable to say it, and to the faithful to hear it, so that those who make this a matter of conscience are the disturbers of the Church, stirring up scandals among the weak, whom we are commanded to strengthen. As regards the first point, I doubt whether I ought to stop to argue it, inasmuch as I reckon that you are so fully resolved already, that the mass is a sacrilege, the most execrable that one can imagine, that I fear to make myself appear ridiculous to you in taking the pains to prove to you a thing about which you can be nowise in doubt. And, besides, the small compass of a letter cannot comprise that which is enough to fill a large book. Yet, notwithstanding, I will touch briefly upon it, and, as it were, in a cursory way, in order that you may not have any doubt. In so far as the mass is a sacrifice, appointed by men for the redemption and salvation of the living and the dead, as their canon bears, it is an unbearable blasphemy by which the passion of Jesus Christ is quite overthrown and set aside, as if it were of no effect whatever. For that we say, the faithful have been purchased by the blood of Jesus, have obtained thereby the remission of their sins, righteousness, and the hope of eternal life, that belief must imply so far that the blessed Saviour, in offering up Himself to the Father, and presenting Himself to be sacrificed, has offered Himself an eternal sacrifice by which our iniquities have been

purged and cleansed, ourselves received into the grace of the Father, and made partakers of the heavenly inheritance, as the Apostle declares very fully in the Epistle to the Hebrews. If, then, the death of Jesus be not acknowledged as the only sacrifice which has been once made for all, in order that it might have an eternal efficacy, what more remains except that it be effaced entirely, as being altogether ineffectual? I know well, that these liars, to cover their abomination, say, that they make the same sacrifice which Jesus has made; but from that statement there arise several blasphemies. For that sacrifice could be made by no one except by Himself. And the Apostle says,<sup>1</sup> that if He is now sacrificed, it follows, that He must suffer still. Therefore, you can see, that one of two things must here take place, either to acknowledge the horrible blasphemy of the mass, and to detest it, or in approving it, to trample under foot the cross of Jesus. How much it is contrary to the Supper of Christ, I leave you to consider with yourself, after that you have read in Scripture the words of institution.<sup>2</sup> But the crowning desecration which they commit, is the idolatry which they perpetrate by adoring a creature instead of God, a thing which is altogether inexcusable. Taking these considerations into view, let us look well to it, since we can neither speak nor hear such things without grievously offending God by communicating in such abominations. For how can we pretend that we are not justly reprov'd for having consented to such iniquities, since we do receive them with greater honour and reverence than we do the Word of God? If you wish to know how far that is pleasing to the Lord God, He declares by his prophet Ezekiel, in the 20th chapter, where he tells the people of Israel, that they love to practise open idolatry like the Gentiles, that they made mention of His name along with the name of their idols, as wishing to compass their own ends contrary to His statutes, by which he was to be served in worship, and by setting up their own foolish inventions, by which they were made to fall away from His Word; on the other hand, the Prophet telling them that He will scatter all those who swear by His name, avouching Him.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ix. 25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 23-26.



as their God, while, at the same time, they witness against themselves in adoring some other than Him alone. Should some one object, that externals in religion are quite indifferent, that what is required is only that the heart within should be upright, to that our Lord answers, that He will be glorified in our body, which He has purchased with His blood, that He requires the confession of the mouth, and that all our prayers should be consecrated to His honour, without being any way contaminated or defiled by anything displeasing to him. But, because this would be too long to treat of here, as it ought to be, you can have recourse, for your more full information, to the treatise, where I hope that you will find reasons enough to satisfy you. The scandal still remains, which your almoner says troubles the consciences of the weak, when any one esteemed a believer holds the mass in such horror that he would not in any way come in contact with it, that he neither wished to find it here nor to meet with it elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> But he does not consider that, in reference to those things which are either commanded or forbidden of God, although it might offend the whole world, we must not go beyond His ordinances. That which is commanded us, to support and strengthen our weak brethren, by doing nothing which may wound or offend them, refers to lesser things of no great consequence, which are of themselves indifferent and permitted of our Christian liberty, as the whole of Scripture bears. Besides, all those commands about not scandalizing our neighbour, tend to his edification in well-doing, as St. Paul points out in the 15th of the Romans. It follows, therefore, that we must not seek to please him in those things which do not tend to edification, but to destruction. And thence we have the doctrine of St. Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, chapters viii. and x., where he says, that if by any external action of ours our neighbour is built up in wrong-doing, albeit on our part there may have been no violation of conscience, yet that we sin against God and destroy our brother. As is here the case: we know the mass to be cursed and execrable; we assist thereat to content the igno-

<sup>1</sup> *In the margin*, handwriting of Calvin,—“After having understood the will of God, give advice.”

rant ; those who see us assisting at it conclude that we approve by so doing, and they then follow our example. St. Paul counts that a great crime, although we make no difficulty about it. Wherefore, Madame, I do beseech you not to permit that under the name of scandal any one should beguile you ; for there is not a more pernicious scandal in this world than when our Christian brother, by our example, is entrapped in ruin and driven forward into error. If we would avoid all scandal we must cast Jesus Christ behind us, who is the stone of offence at which the most part of the world trips and stumbles. And even thus has He been a scandal to the Jews and Israelites to whom He was sent, as always a large portion of that nation has been offended and stumbled in the worship of their God. We must, therefore, hold fast by this rule, that, in reference to things which are either commanded or forbidden of God, it is mainly requisite in the doing or forbearing that he may not be baulked of His due obedience, though we should offend the whole world. But since it is so, that Christ and His Evangel are a scandal to the evil-disposed and malignant, we must expect, if we would follow Him, that they must always be a scandal to us. As for things which are free and indifferent, that is to say, which, according to our opportunity, we can either do or omit the doing of, we ought to suit ourselves to the convenience of our Christian brethren, in order that our liberty may be subject to choice ; and even in doing so, regard must be had so to support their infirmity as that they may be built up in God ; for if, by our example, we lead them on and draw them in to do what they consider to be wrong, we are the means of their destruction. There are few, indeed, who have had experience of the truth of God who do not know in some measure the iniquity of the mass. When they well wot what sort of a thing it is, it is impossible that they should not desire to flee from it. While they scruple and are in doubt about it, whenever they perceive that we communicate, they follow our example, without caring for being further resolved in the matter. Here is the worst scandal that can happen them, seeing that their consciences are wrung unto death. If what I hear is true, that he would have you to believe that affair to be

of so small importance that German Churches make no question at all about it, that is, that those of one persuasion let alone and permit the other to have the mass, in this he inflicts a great damage and injury upon the Churches of God, in charging them with a practice which you will acknowledge to be false whenever you shall be pleased to make inquiry for yourself. For not only among all the Churches which have received the Evangel, but in the judgment of private individuals, this article is quite agreed on, that the abomination of the mass must not continue. And to that effect Capito, who is one of those who set themselves to moderate the zeal of others in these matters, has written a book of late, which he has dedicated<sup>1</sup> to the King of England, wherein he teaches that it is the duty of Christian princes to abolish in their country such execrable idolatry, if they wish to do their duty as might be expected of them. There is, in short, in our day, no man of any renown who is not quite agreed on that point.

Well, then, Madame, seeing that it has pleased the Lord God, of His goodness and infinite compassion, to visit you with the knowledge of His name, and to enlighten you in the truth of His holy Evangel, acknowledge your calling to which He has called you. For He has drawn us forth out of the depths of darkness, where we were detained captives, in order that we may follow uprightly the light of His Word, without declining either to the one side or to the other, and that we seek more and more to be instructed by Him, so that we may profit more abundantly in that holy wisdom wherein He has made some beginning among us; and, above all, to look to it carefully that we do not restrain His Spirit, as do those who shut their eyes and ears to the evident plain truth, being content to remain ignorant of that which the Lord would have them know and understand. It is not thus that He would have us to do, out of mere dread that the Lord will punish such contempt and ingratitude; but rather we ought to study to profit continually in the school of this good Master, until

<sup>1</sup> This is the title of that work, "De Missa Matrimonio et Jure Magistratus in Religione. D. Wolfgango Capitone, auctore." The Dedication to Henry VIII., "Summum in terris Ecclesie Anglicanæ Caput," is of 15th March 1537.

we shall have attained perfection in His doctrine, which will be when we are free from this downweighing and earthly coil of the flesh, praying, with good David, that He would instruct us in the doing of His will. Certes, if we go forward advancing therein with zealous affection, He will so guide us that He will not let us go astray out of the right path. And although there are still some remains of ignorance in us, He will vouchsafe a more full revelation, when there is need for it, seeing that He knows the right season better than do we. The main point is to understand how His holy doctrine ought to become fruitful, and so bring forth fruit in us, and that is when it so transforms us by the renewal of our heart and mind, that His radiant glory, which consists in innocence, integrity, and holiness, relumes the soul within us. If it be not thus with us we take the name of God in vain when we glorify ourselves by making our boast that we know the Evangel. I do not say this to admonish you to do what you do not do at present, but on purpose that the work of God, which is already begun in you, may be confirmed from day to day.

‡ But only, as I have already at the commencement, I beseech you to pardon my simplicity. Should it be your pleasure to have more full instruction in this argument, and especially how a Christian person ought to govern herself in regard to scandals, I will attempt, so far as the Lord shall enable me, to satisfy you. In the meantime, I send you an epistle<sup>1</sup> upon the subject, as you will see, if you think it worth your while to devote some hours to it at your leisure; and besides that, a little tract,<sup>2</sup> which I have put together lately, which, as I hope, by reason of its brevity, may serve as a help to consolation, inasmuch as it contains full enough doctrine.<sup>3</sup> [That the Lord

<sup>1</sup> This was the letter of Calvin to Louis Duchemin, intituled, "De fugiendis impiorum illicitis sacris, et puritate Christianæ Religionis. Genevæ, 1537. 8vo." That letter, translated into French, has been inserted in the *Recueil des Opuscules*, edit. 1566, in fol., p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> De la Cène de nostre Seigneur.

<sup>3</sup> The conclusion of this letter is wanting in the original French, and we restore it here from the Latin translation inserted, (*Calvini Epistolæ et Responsæ*, edit. Amsterdam, p. 93.) A near approximation to the date of that piece is supplied by the passage relative to Capito:—"Et de cela Capito qui est l'ung de ceux qui taschent fort

may have a care over you in this your infirmity, and that He would manifest in you the efficacy of His Spirit in such a way that you may be as much honoured in His household as He has elevated you in station and dignity among men.]

[*Fr. autogr. minute.*—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 196.]

### LXXX.—TO FAREL.

Brotherly exhortations—efforts of Calvin to draw Viret to Geneva—  
news of that Church.

GENEVA, [11th November 1541.]

There is no need for your being over anxious about my expostulation. My object was rather to scold you than seriously to complain; besides, I am well aware that you could not have discarded me from your remembrance even though you had taken no notice of me in your letters for a hundred times in succession. Therefore I bid you be at ease on this score. Would that you could make up matters as easily with those who harass you and disturb the Church! However, as you remark, we ought not to dread the warfare with the world and the flesh if we would serve Christ. We ought, indeed, earnestly to desire it, but we ought chiefly to desire that all those who are now at enmity with Him may be brought to a willing obedience to Christ, rather than conquered and subdued by force of arms, but not corrected. Since, however, the Lord is pleased to exercise and drill us in his warfare, and allows us to take no rest, let us fight on with deliberate and constant valour, only let it be with those weapons wherewith Himself hath furnished us. Under this banner victory will be always within our reach. When the celebration of the Supper takes place, and particularly with that intimation which you mention, it will, as I hope, prove an excellent

à modérer les choses, a naguères inscript un livre." The dedication of this book to Henry VIII. is of the 15th March 1537; the death of Capito happened in December 1541; and the letter of Calvin to the Duchess of Ferrara, *written from Geneva*, between the two events, places the date, without doubt, in October 1541, after the return of the Reformer to that town.

means of recovering the Church and reconciling differences. And I hear, that owing to the moderate course which you now adopt, the minds of many are much quieted, and the spirit of contention in others very much broken. Until it prove entirely successful, you must omit nought which may avail in any degree to promote the healing of the wound. Here you will gain the fairest, the most noble triumph, if Satan, abandoned by his host, be left alone with but a handful of his leaders. As for our own proceedings, what I wrote you about being unequally yoked, I find to be more completely verified than was expected; but must endure what cannot be remedied. Therefore, should Viret be taken away from me I shall be utterly ruined, and this Church will be past recovery. On this account it is only reasonable that you and others pardon me if I leave no stone unturned to prevent his being carried off from me. In the meantime we must look for supply to the Church of Lausanne, according as shall be appointed by the godly brethren, and by your own advice. Only let Viret remain with me. This is what I strive for at Berne with all my might. The brethren must not take it ill that, passing by them, I went lately to Vevay.<sup>1</sup> My representation of the state of matters succeeded better there than could have been expected, so much so that they not only gave me to understand that they would make no objection if Berne agreed to let us have him, but even affirmed that, in their judgment, it would be for the common benefit of the Churches if he should for a while assist me. In this arrangement you will not, I hope, be more scrupulous than many men who are none of the most easy. For we have here more work before us than you suppose. The common people on both sides are willing to comply. The preachings, at least, are well attended; the hearers are decent and well behaved enough; but there is much yet that requires setting to rights, both in the understanding and the affections, and except that be cured by degrees, there is some danger that it may yet break out into the most virulent sore. You are well aware

<sup>1</sup> A Synod of the churches of the Pays de Vaud was then assembled at the town of Vevay.

with how great difficulty one strives with inward and hidden maladies of this sort, and you know by experience what kind of yoke-fellows I have, should Viret be removed. We have most willingly given your brother the best advice we could. As for the rest, whenever he pleases he shall find me ready on all occasions; for the present, however, I have stopt, because I thought it would be of no use to go on. If you think otherwise, I will rather follow your opinion; nor shall I swerve in the least degree from those injunctions which you have laid upon me. So long as we two have any authority there is no occasion for your complaining that you can do nothing, for you know that it is not you alone who have cause to complain. Adieu, my most excellent and upright brother. Salute kindly all the brethren, especially Cordier, to whom we shall reply by the first opportunity. We hope that all your family are in good health.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### LXXXI.—TO FAREL.

The Vaudois of Provence—appeal addressed to Mathurin Cordier—the Reformation at Paris and Lyons.

[GENEVA, December 1541.]

We detained this messenger here with us to-day, unwilling to let him away until we had communicated the letter to Viret. I would not have hesitated to have done so this morning. In the meantime a letter is brought to us which ought long ago to have been delivered. This was the reason why the messenger went from hence after dinner, for Viret was not then at home, and did not return until a little before sermon. In what regards the business of the brethren,<sup>1</sup> the king's party and the

<sup>1</sup> Persecuted with equal animosity by the fanatical bigotry of the courtiers and of the priesthood, the Waldenses had appointed two procurators, Francis Chaix and William Armand, charged with the duty of justifying their innocence at the Court of France; but these agents could not even obtain from their judges a copy

Episcopals are contending with one another about the division of the spoil, as if the beast were already slain. When this booty shall have been adjudged to one or other of them, he will immediately seize the possession of it unless opposed. The procurators of the brethren may indeed interfere, and thus suspend procedure in the cause until the Bernese have time to write a memorial to the King. The letter would perhaps have more weight if there should be some likelihood of war breaking out. But if there is no reason to expect such an occurrence, or if there is risk of danger from delay, we must see to it, that the Bernese themselves defend the concessions they have been the means of obtaining for your brethren. For it is of the greatest consequence to themselves not to allow the privilege, which the King has granted to them, thus to be extinguished. The prayer of their petition will easily be obtained for them, and if the letter be written urgently, which Giron will willingly do, the King will be ashamed not to perform what he has always promised them. It will, however, be safer to despatch a messenger, or to recommend the letter in such a way to the care of the ambassador, that they may get an answer. And if you think it expedient that I add my letter to his sister,<sup>1</sup> you have only to mention it. As to the old man who at present lives with Cordier, we can venture to undertake for nothing, until Cordier himself has informed us what we ought to expect from him. For the better establishment of our school is put off until his arrival. If he is of a mind to aid us, and is of opinion that the old man will be a suitable assistant, let him be sent at once; I shall willingly lodge and board him with myself, until he shall have got a situation; indeed I do not grudge the expense of a month, or even two. But if Cordier has changed his mind, frightened by

of the process which had been instituted against the inhabitants of Cabrières and Merindol, condemned by an iniquitous tribunal without ever having been heard in defence; and it required no less than royal intervention to compel the Parliament of Aix to give a copy of the acts and procedure of the whole process. The two prelates, the Bishop of Cavaillon and the Archbishop of Arles, were among the most violent opponents of the Waldenses.—Bèze, *Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 39.

<sup>1</sup> Marguerite de Valois, Queen of Navarre.



my last letter, I dare scarce promise anything certain to the good old man, until we shall have arranged with our leading men. Although, as I have already said, I shall willingly sustain the charge for one month or two. But I entreat of you, my dear Farel, do not suffer Cordier to refuse this appointment which is offered him. For, indeed, there is otherwise no hope of establishing the school, unless, regardless of his own interest, he will serve the Lord here.<sup>1</sup>

We have no news from those of Metz. They say that there are some good preachers at Paris. I am unwilling that you should exult too much for joy, or rather for gladness, on that account. I wish what is said may be true, but scarcely believe the half of what I hear; nor do the letters of friends there commend to such an extent the present state of matters. There is at least one piece of good news, that Dolet<sup>2</sup> of Lyons is now printing the Psalter; presently he will begin the Bible, and is to follow with the version of Olivetan. Let them tell us after that, that Satan is not God's minister! I was so overpowered by the sad intelligence of the death of Capito,<sup>3</sup> that since that time I have neither been well in body nor in mind. When

<sup>1</sup> Mathurin Cordier left Neuchatel a few years afterwards, to become Regent of the College of Lausanne. It was in 1557 that, at the request of Calvin, his old pupil, he took upon him the office of Principal of the College of Geneva. See the interesting notice of Mathurin Cordier, by M. Professor Betant. Geneva, 1848.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Dolet, the celebrated printer of Lyons. He published learned writings concerning antiquity; drew upon himself much enmity by the boldness of his opinions, and perished at the stake in 1544, equally suspected on both sides. He had published a work on the reading of the Bible in the vernacular dialect, which has given occasion to consider him as one of the martyrs of the Reformed Church.—See Bayle, *Dict. Hist.*, Art. Dolet.

<sup>3</sup> Capito had died of the plague at Strasbourg, in the month of November, as we learn from a letter of Calvin to Farel:—"When this worthy brother had brought word that our excellent father, and of holy memory, Capito, had been taken away from us, and that Bucer, besides, was suffering from the plague, I was so affected both in mind and spirit, that I could do nought but lament and bewail."—Letter of 29th November 1541; Calv. *Opera*, tom. ix. p. 19. Endowed with the wisest and most conciliatory spirit, Capito left a great void in the Church at Strasbourg; "happy at least," says Beza, "to have been called away from this life before having witnessed the ruin of that Church. He did not share the exile of his beloved colleagues, Bucer and Fagius, but went before to the abode and dwelling-place of the heavenlies."—Theodori Bezae, *Icones*. The decease of Capito excited a general

this letter reaches you, if I am not mistaken, yours will be upon the road, in which you will give us hope of your arrival. Adieu ; salute all the brethren.

JOHN CALVIN, in name of Viret and my own.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.*—*Library of Geneva*. Vol. 106.]

### LXXXII.—TO FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Healing of the troubles of the Church at Neuchatel—wise counsel given to Farel.

GENEVA, 5th February [1542.]

Your letter greatly astounded us at first, as it not only informed us of your tragical encounter, but also of the success of the enemy at the same time. We were somewhat refreshed afterwards when we understood that the issue of the affair was more favourable, or at least not so disastrous as we had feared. You are right, most excellent Farel, the Lord has wonderfully overruled this whole affair ; but we have been taught by the contest what a Lerna Satan must be, who can produce so many Hydras in one little town. If, however, from one monstrous head a hundred were to spring, and if for every one head even a thousand were to threaten us, we know for certain, that while we wage war under the banners of our Christ, and fight with the weapons of His warfare, we shall be unconquerable. At the same time, however, we must keep in mind, that we ought to omit nothing by

mourning ; his loss was equally deplored by the Reformers of Germany and of Switzerland.—Melchior Adam, *Vite Theologorum Germanorum*.

<sup>1</sup> The troubles which had arisen in the Church of Neuchatel (see letter, p. 262) not having been quieted by the arbitration of the Seigneurie of Berne, the latter referred that grave matter to the decision of the burgesses solemnly assembled. The majority of votes pronounced in favour of Farel. He was thereupon settled in the ministry, and peace was thus established in that Church, so long a prey to intestine disorder.—Ruchat, *Hist. de la Réf.*, tom. v. p. 167. At the news of that happy event, Calvin wrote in his own name, as well as in that of Viret, to congratulate Farel, and to recommend moderation after the victory.

which we may oppose and frustrate the crafty devices of our enemy. For this purpose our Lord has furnished us with spiritual prudence, which, as it neither slackens nor weakens our zeal, so, on the other hand, it stills and regulates it by a wise moderation. Nor do we speak of these qualities because we perceive at present any want of this temper in you, but in order that you may be more and more on your guard, that the spiteful and malicious may have not even a pretext for trumping up their calumnies against you. We trust you are satisfied as to Courault. If our friends have not performed what they promised to you, you must impute that to the untowardness of the times; and you will forgive the Church her inability in that respect, to whom you could pardon so much more serious offences. What you request about a new commission, unless we are greatly mistaken, it will be procured without difficulty. Meanwhile, be of good courage, and at the same time possess your soul in patience; for when you come, we shall give you enough to do.

Adieu, most excellent and friendly brother. Salute our brethren in the ministry, and all our intimate acquaintance. May the Lord keep you.

JOHN CALVIN, for myself and Viret.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### LXXXIII.—TO OSWALD MYCONIUS.<sup>1</sup>

Restoration of the Church of Geneva—wise and moderate behaviour of Calvin—obstacles to the establishment of ecclesiastical discipline—duty of the magistrates thereanent—information regarding an adventurer named Alberg.

GENEVA, 14th March 1542.

On my first arrival here I could not, as you had requested, write you with certainty as to the state of this Church, because

<sup>1</sup> Oswald Myconius of Lucerne, the distinguished philologist and theologian, disciple of Glarean and of Erasmus. He taught literature at Zurich in the lifetime of Zuingli, who honoured him with his friendship; was then called to Basle, where he discharged the office of theological pastor, and was elected first pastor on

I had not then myself sufficiently ascertained what was the condition of it. Since that time also I have not ventured to say anything for certain, while matters were not very settled, that I might not shortly have occasion to repent of having praised it too soon. And this was also the reason why I abstained from writing when the deputies of our republic set out for Basle. Now, however, since, notwithstanding my delay, your kindness has anticipated me, I feel that I can no longer put off my reply to your request. The present state of our affairs I can give you in few words. For the first month after resuming the ministry, I had so much to attend to and so many annoyances, that I was almost worn out: such a work of labour and difficulty has it been to up-build once more the fallen edifice. Although certainly Viret had already begun successfully to restore, yet, nevertheless, because he had deferred the complete form of order and discipline until my arrival, it had, as it were, to be commenced anew. When, having overcome this labour, I believed that there would be breathing-time allowed me, lo! new cares presented themselves, and those of a kind not much lighter than the former. This, however, somewhat consoles and refreshes me, that we do not labour altogether in vain, without some fruit appearing; which, although it is not so plentiful as we could wish, yet neither is it so scanty but that there does appear some change for the better. There appears a brighter prospect for the future if Viret can be left here with me: on which account I am all the more desirous to express to you my most thankful acknowledgment, because you share with me in my anxiety that the Bernese may not call him away; and I earnestly beseech, for the sake of Christ, that you would do your utmost to bring that about;<sup>1</sup> for whenever the thought

the decease of Œcolampadius, (1531.) Zealous partisan of the Lutheran dogma of the Sacraments, in his relations with the Swiss churches, he was ever animated by a spirit of moderation and gentleness, which procured him the constant affection of Calvin. He died October 15, 1552, at the age of sixty-three years, and was succeeded by the minister Sulzer in the direction of the Church of Basle.—Melch. Adam, *Vitæ Theologorum Germanorum*, pp. 223-226.

<sup>1</sup> "I will write concerning Viret to Berne as soon as I am able, but in the name of the brethren, that it may come with greater authority, if the object can be ac-

of his going away presents itself, I faint and lose courage entirely. I do hope that the brethren will aid you in this arrangement, (I mean the ministers of Berne,) for we entertain that love towards each other, that I can venture to engage they will do their utmost for me, as I would do for them. I am afraid, however, that the Senate will not very readily agree to the proposal. Whatever shall be the result, let us strain every nerve to bring it to bear. Do you also strive to the utmost with the brethren, as you have undertaken to do; for while there is no doubt that they would be willing of their own accord, it will be of advantage at the same time, nevertheless, to have your exhortation. Our other colleagues are rather a hindrance than a help to us: they are rude and self-conceited, have no zeal, and less learning. But what is worst of all, I cannot trust them, even although I very much wish that I could; for by many evidences they shew their estrangement from us, and give scarcely any indication of a sincere and trustworthy disposition. I bear with them, however, or rather I humour them, with the utmost lenity: a course from which I shall not be induced to depart, even by their bad conduct. But if, in the long-run, the sore need a severer remedy, I shall do my utmost and shall see to it by every method I can think of, to avoid disturbing the peace of the Church with our quarrels; for I dread the factions which must always necessarily arise from the dissensions of ministers. On my first arrival I might have driven them away had I wished to do so, and that is also even now in my power. I shall never, however, repent the degree of moderation which I have observed; since no one can justly complain that I have been too severe. These things I mention to you in a cursory way, that you may the more clearly perceive how wretched I shall be if Viret is taken away from me. What you observe, from the example of your Church, of the great injury which is inflicted by the noisome plague of discord among the ministry, I can confirm, from my own experience, to the full-

completed at all. For we also desire that the Church of Geneva may be as well supplied as possible for the good of other churches."—*Oswald Myconius to Calvin, 10th February 1542.*

est extent, in the calamity which has befallen this Church. No persons could be on closer terms of intimacy than we were here with one another. But when Satan had stirred up that deplorable misunderstanding between these brethren and ourselves, you know yourself what followed thereupon. My determination was therefore made at once, that unless with the evidence of an entire reconciliation, I would never undertake this charge, because I despaired of any benefit from my ministry here, unless they held out a helping hand to me. Meanwhile, many in their assembly are not over friendly, others are openly hostile to me. But this I carefully provide against, that the spirit of contention may not arise among us. We have an intestine seed of discord in the city, as I have already mentioned; but we take special care, by our patient and mild deportment, that the Church may not suffer any inconvenience from that circumstance, and that nothing of that kind may reach the common people. They all know very well, by experience, the pleasant and humane disposition of Viret: I am in no way more harsh, at least in this matter. Perhaps you will scarcely believe this; it is not the less true, however. Indeed, I value the public peace and cordial agreement among ourselves so highly, that I lay restraint upon myself: those who are opposed to us are themselves compelled to award this praise to me. This feeling prevails to such an extent, that from day to day those who were once open enemies have become friends; others I conciliate by courtesy, and I feel that I have been in some measure successful, although not everywhere and on all occasions.

On my arrival, it was in my power to have disconcerted our enemies most triumphantly, entering with full sail among the whole of that tribe who had done the mischief. I have abstained: if I had liked, I could daily, not merely with impunity, but with the approval of very many, have used sharp reproof. I forbear; even with the most scrupulous care do I avoid everything of the kind, lest even by some slight word I should appear to persecute any individual, much less all of them at once. May the Lord confirm me in this disposition of mind. It happens, however, sometimes,

that it is necessary to withstand our colleagues; but we never do so unless they either compel us by their unseasonable importunity, or some weightier consideration demands our interference. I will relate an instance to you, which the complaint you make in your letter, owing to the similarity of the case in point, brought very forcibly to my recollection. When we were considering about the introduction of ecclesiastical censure,<sup>1</sup> and the Senate had given us a commission to that effect, these worthy persons appeared in public to assent; doubtless because they were ashamed to offer direct opposition in a matter that was so plain and evident. Afterwards, however, they were to be seen going about secretly, dealing separately with each of the senators, exhorting them not to lay at our feet the power which was in their own hands, (as they said,) not to abdicate the authority which God had intrusted to them, and not to give occasion to sedition, with many other arguments of a like nature. We dared not close our eyes to such perfidious conduct. We endeavoured, however, to arrange the matter in such a way as not to stir up strife among us. We at length possess a Presbyterial Court, such as it is, and a form of discipline, such as these disjointed times permit. Do not, however, allow yourself to suppose that we obtained so much without the most vigorous exertion. And besides, those troops of unclean spirits break forth in all directions, who, in order that they may escape from healthy discipline, which they can in no way submit to, seek every sort of pretext for slipping away from the authority of the Church. The world, moreover, holds this laxity to be an established custom, which, for the sake of its lust, must reign paramount, because it cannot endure to resign the dominion of the sensual appetites to Christ. But however impostors of this kind may plead the plausible case of the world and the flesh, the Lord will consume them

<sup>1</sup> The right of censure and excommunication belonging to the Consistory. It was not without much difficulty that the right of ecclesiastical censure was granted to the Consistorial Court,—a body which included at once the ministers and some members of the magistracy, chosen from the various municipal councils. This right of the consistory was often contested, and was only definitively recognised after long resistance, of which traces are to be found in the Registers of Council, from 1542 to 1553.

with the breath of His mouth, provided we go forward to the assault with united courage and resolution, and fight manfully, with a stout heart and unwearied zeal, for that sacred authority and power of spiritual jurisdiction over the members of the Church which ought ever to be held inviolable. For, indeed, the truth of God shines more brightly of itself in this evangelic order of discipline, than to allow of its being easily overlaid with such lying devices. They adduce Moses and David as examples: as if, forsooth, these two rulers had exercised no other charge over the people than to rule them in the ordinance of civil government. Let those insane pleaders for the authority of the magistrate give us such men for magistrates as were Moses and David, that is, excelling in the singular spirit of prophecy, and sustaining both characters, not at their own mere will and pleasure but by the calling and commission of God, we shall then willingly concede to such persons that authority which they demand. I have no doubt that Moses himself discharged the functions of priesthood before the consecration of Aaron to the office: afterwards he prescribes, by the command of God, what was to be done. David, also, did not proceed to take order in the settling the administration of the Church, before he was invested with that power by the permission of God. Other pious godly kings defended and protected the established order by their authority, as became them; they let the Church alone, however, in the exercise of her peculiar jurisdiction in spirituals, and left to the priests the charge assigned to them by the Lord. But am I not foolish to enter upon so complicated a question, when the letter-carrier is just upon the eve of setting out? whence it happens that we have not at present sufficient leisure for going fully and particularly into the long story of Alberg. I shall make a beginning, however, and follow it forth until the messenger shall arrive to snatch away the half-completed letter out of my hands. You must understand, in the first place, that this individual has now, for many years, been engaged in nothing else than constantly running about hither and thither, to shuffle money out of some, clothes from others, and thus to live from hand to mouth, maintaining a livelihood by imposture, as is the practice of those



vagabonds who wander to and fro. He had come hither more than once before our expulsion : and had asked for a situation, but did not find one to suit him, because he wished a school of some standing, which is nowhere to be found in this quarter, and with a large salary. In a little while after he returns, deploring as usual that he had been plundered by highwaymen. He repairs to a neighbouring small town, goes round canvassing for the mastership of the school, which he does not obtain. This repulse he charges upon us, who were so destitute of influence there, that had it been known that his appointment would not have been pleasing to us, on that account alone he would have obtained it ; and yet, God is our witness, that at that time we had endeavoured nothing else than that he might find somewhere or other a situation fit and suitable for him. He came afterwards to Strasbourg, where he extorted twenty batzen from me, which I myself was obliged to borrow in another quarter ; for I had sold my books, and was then entirely without funds. He had promised that he would return them within a few days. A box, of no value, he deposited with me as a pledge. Having returned after an interval of some months, laughing in his sleeve, or rather making game of it, he asked whether I would not let him have some crowns by way of loan, and my reply was, that I needed the small sum which he had already got. The rascal, in the meantime, having stealthily conveyed the box away out of my library, consigns it to the care of Bucer's wife. She would have nothing to do with it, and gave me intimation. Thereupon I reprimanded his impudence, in the presence of several witnesses. In half a year after, or perhaps a whole year, he coolly wrote me that he was shut up at Baden, that all the gentry of the district had combined against him, that he could not otherwise escape, unless I sent him a travelling merchant, who might bring him away in his basket of goods. Bedrot received one, couched in similar or nearly the same terms. We had a laugh. I wrote a few words also in reply ; for we had reason, from many circumstances, to conjecture that he was all the while in that city. From that time he has never made his appearance. A year and a half has elapsed in the meantime.

As I was aware that the little box contained many trifling articles of no value I opened it, in the presence of many witnesses. It contained mouldy apples, and all sorts of trash, some books, tattered and torn, and these quite commonplace, such as Despautier, and the like. I found also a letter, which he had surreptitiously carried off from me. This Sturm is well aware of, whom I called to be present. We replaced every thing, not without much laughter. When Grynée, of worthy and revered memory, came to Worms, he brought word that Alberg was then at Basle. On coming away from Strasbourg I requested my friends to send him back the box. The rascal, having received it, went about proclaiming that I was a thief, that I had taken out of it many incomparable books. He came to Lausanne,—related the same story to Viret. When lately he had betaken himself hither again, he was for ten days in the city before I was aware of it. A while after, at the suggestion of Viret, I went to him, asked whether it was his intention to raise an action of theft against me, when he said that he had lost some remarkably rare books. I told him he was a most impudent scoundrel. The day after, he attacked me in my own house, not only with the most abusive language, but also making a furious assault; hereupon he was given into custody. When I was afterwards interceding earnestly for him with the magistrate, and he was about to be called and sent away without any further trouble, the jailer brought word that he had spoken still more outrageously against me there. In this manner he would not suffer himself to be benefited; and yet he is punished less than he deserves. It is his old song, that something has been taken away from him. He could not formerly go three miles' distance but he must fall among robbers. Everywhere he boasts that he has a great store of invaluable books; even as he offered books in pledge to me, which he had at Basle, when he sought my aid in getting out of durance at Baden. In like manner, at Berne, when he sought ten crowns from me and Farel, he said that he had at your house a large package of books, and fifty Bohemian ducats. Lately, also, in the taverns, he talked of nothing else than the noble library which he had left at Basle. But,

in truth, it is somewhat offensive that I should have to speak a word to clear myself, for I reckon that I have so lived as to be beyond the suspicion of theft. The letter has now been twice called for. Adieu, most excellent and very much esteemed brother. May the Lord Jesus direct you continually by His Spirit in His own work, and govern your household. Viret particularly and reverently salutes you.—Wholly yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 26.]

#### LXXXIV.—TO OSWALD MYCONIUS.<sup>1</sup>

The Reformation at Cologne—some details on the condition of Germany—  
efforts of Calvin to retain Viret at Geneva.

GENEVA, 17th April 1542.

I am glad that Bucer had got back to you in safety.<sup>2</sup> His hope of some good, which he expects on the part of the Bishop, I am afraid is not worth much, unless he ventures at last to undertake somewhat on his own responsibility, even in opposition to the whole of his clergy, for if he waits until the canons come to help him in the work of restoring the Church, he will sit still long enough. If, however, he sets his mind in earnest to it, and does not allow himself to be daunted by opposition, he has the whole affair in his own hand, for the city of Cologne will either assent, or will offer no very strenuous opposition, rather, perhaps, will lend him a helping hand. But even supposing that he can effect no remarkable change for the better, it is pleasing to observe, that he is not disposed to check the progress of improvement, and that he may qualify in some measure the fury of our adversaries, until the Lord is pleased to enlighten

<sup>1</sup> To the very faithful minister of Christ, D. Oswald Myconius, pastor of the Church at Basle, my much respected friend.

<sup>2</sup> Bucer had gone to Cologne, called thither by the Archbishop, Elector Hermann de Wied, the pious and distinguished prelate who had courageously undertaken the reformation of his diocese.

himself more fully. In so far as I gather from your letter, the German empire is in no whit better condition than it was about the time of the conclusion of the Diet at Ratisbon, although, indeed, at the commencement of that assembly, the proceedings were somewhat cheering.<sup>1</sup> At present, however, as it appears to me, the men who are carried away by furious and blind rage, who have no better object in view than to keep alive disturbances, have got everything their own way. When such is the common news of the day, I can well enough guess what may have befallen the Marquis of Brandenburg.<sup>2</sup> As he is more eagerly desirous of vainglory than is at all seemly, they must have made him drunk with the offer of the administration of the war. This one thing comforts me, that whatever may happen in desperate circumstances, the so utterly unbridled rule and dominion of the wicked cannot exist any longer unchecked; and the Lord, as you truly observe, will at length vindicate His own cause. There are many influences at work, both at home and abroad, more than enough, and many more spring up daily, which would not merely weaken, but entirely crush us, if we were not well aware that we are fellow-workers with Himself in the reformation of the Church. In our deepest misery, therefore, this consideration has sufficed to support us, that Christ has once for all obtained the victory over the world, the fruit of which deliverance we may at all times partake of.

In what concerns the private condition of this Church, I somehow, along with Viret, sustain the burden of it. If he is taken away from me, my situation will be more deplorable than I can describe to you, and even should he remain there is some hazard that very much may not be obtained in the

<sup>1</sup> Discord prevailed among the members of the League of Smalkald, one part refusing the subsidy to the Emperor for the war against the Turks, the other shewing a disposition to grant it. "It is spread abroad that there exists dissension between the Princes and the Cities concerning the money and men to be given against the Turk. *I rejoice that Christ is Lord, otherwise I had altogether despaired. Himself will preserve His Church.*"—*Oswald Myconius to Calvin*, 10th February 1542.

<sup>2</sup> The Margrave Albert of Brandenburg, a bold adventurer, who lent his sword in turn to all parties during the troubles of Germany.

midst of so much secret animosity. But that I may not torment myself beforehand, the Lord will see to it, and provide some one on whom I am compelled to cast this care. Meanwhile, I do not cease to try every method which seems to promise success in obtaining what we ask. The arrival of Munster<sup>1</sup> was most refreshing to us, although we were not able to entertain him as he deserved, and in such a way as we would very cordially have seized the opportunity of doing, since he was in so great a hurry as not to admit of that. So far as lay in our power, however, we shewed him the tokens of our good-will. We are very unwilling that the Bernese and our Seigneury should be so long in explaining what they mean to do after the pronouncing of the award; but whenever we press our friends here upon the point, they always object that it is but just that they should take precedence of the other, and now desire to know whether your Senate has received anything in the shape of an answer from them.<sup>2</sup> If you can ascertain anything privately in a quiet way, I would earnestly entreat you to let me have notice to that effect. I undertake to endeavour by all the means in my power, that our friends may not be too difficult to deal with, although I have not hitherto been able to extort so much as even to get them to take the first step in making a reply; when the decisive moment arrives, however, I will urge that to the very uttermost. I greatly wish that, in the meantime, you would do us this favour. Adieu, my excellent and greatly esteemed brother. Viret reverently salutes you and all your colleagues, whom I beg you will also salute in my name. May the Lord Jesus long preserve you and direct you continually by His Spirit. Again, farewell.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. minute.*—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 106.]

<sup>1</sup> Sebastian Munster, Professor of Theology at the University of Basle, and author of the *Geographia Universalis*.

<sup>2</sup> Allusion to the disputes between Berne and Geneva, submitted to the arbitration of the Seigneury of Basle.

LXXXV.—TO THE BRETHREN OF LYONS.<sup>1</sup>

Stay of a Carmelite monk at Geneva—declaration of motives for refusing to admit him to the ministry of the Gospel.

VILLEFRANCHE,<sup>2</sup> [May 1542.]

The grace and peace of God our Father, by our Lord Jesus Christ, dwell and be with you and upon you always, by the power of His Holy Spirit.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN,—We would desire to have wherewithal to write you, which might prove matter of greater comfort and consolation to you; for whereas there are some others who would make you sad, we would be the first to take some pains to make you rejoice and be glad. But at this present time, necessity constrains us to use other argument than our own inclination would suggest to us if we were free to choose. But yet we hope, you will not think that we have any other intention than to edify you, to comfort and confirm you in our Lord, and therefore, we shall not make any more lengthened excuses on that account. Touching the subject-matter of these presents, we trust that you shall not take it in evil part should this communication cause you more trouble than cause of rejoicing. We also do very well know, that it is an odious thing

<sup>1</sup> On the back: Letters against the Carmelite. Without date. A Latin letter of Calvin to Farel, of the 10th May 1542, relative to the same subject, furnishes us with the date, and informs us that this white friar, who had gone over to the ranks of the Reformed, belonged to Lyons: *Venit Carmelita Lugdunensis a quo non frustra timuimus.* Calvin forewarned the faithful of that town to be upon their guard against that false friar.

The Church of Lyons, one of the most glorious of the French Reformation, owed its origin to the preaching of an old Jacobin monk, Alexander Camus, surnamed Laurence de la Croix, who suffered martyrdom at Paris in 1535. The first members of that Church were merchants, "some goldsmiths and others of the town," who met together in secret. The work begun by Alexander Camus was manfully followed up by John Fabri, (or Le Fevre,) who found pious continuators in the ministers, Peter Fournelet and Claude Monnier, before the epoch of the great persecutions.—*Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. pp. 55, 56.

<sup>2</sup> That is to say, Geneva.

to find fault with a man who is not only in good repute, but has acquired some credit and renown. But when you have heard the reasons which move us to do so, we have no doubt that you will not be dissatisfied with us, but hold yourselves well content to agree. In short, we would wish you to understand, that we have some news to write you touching the white friar who preached there during last Lent, which will not turn out to his praise. The course we take in this matter is not from any desire on our part to detract from him; for although we have some occasion that might lead us to that, our courage is not equal to it, and neither is it our use and wont. But when we shall have explained our motive, you can fully satisfy yourselves; forasmuch as he has returned from among you not very well pleased with the reception which we had given him, so he has said to some persons. We can well conceive, therefore, that being thereaway, he would make many complaints, were it for no other reason than to clear himself on account of his return once more into that lower abyss from whence the Lord had delivered him. Well we see, on the other hand, what offence you might conceive against us, if you were not duly informed of the whole affair. Inasmuch, then, as we are bound to you by reason of that tie whereby the Lord has joined us together, and that we should be blameable in the sight of God towards you, did we not take the trouble to remove the scandals which the Devil sets afloat to separate and estrange us from the unity which the Lord has put in the midst of us, it has seemed to us a sound discretion, simply to relate to you the history of the treatment and reception which we have vouchsafed him, and, on the other hand, how he has conducted himself, that you may judge for yourselves how little he had to make him discontented with us. What we shall relate to you shall be told as in the presence of God, to whom we do appeal as witness, beseeching Him to make manifest the truth such as it really is, and to confound those who would speak falsehood, or make use of calumny of what kind soever.

Some days after his arrival, having already spoken to him in private, and having shewn him tokens of courtesy and friendship, we called upon him, being met together, to know what

might be his determination. After he had told us that he had come to serve the Church of God, we besought him not to take it ill, that we had not on the first day of his arrival offered him the pulpit. In like manner, we requested that he would excuse us should we still delay for some time; and we shewed him the causes which hindered our being hasty in so doing. First of all, because the Lord has delivered our rule in writing, which it is not lawful for us to overpass. It is, that He has forbidden us to receive any man to the ministry before he has been well and duly approven, and that rule ought to be inviolably kept by us, if we would have good order and policy maintained in the Church. We admonished him to consider how the rule of the ministry, as a matter of Church polity, was recommended to us of God, which would be lightly esteemed were we to receive any individual at random, without observing the lawful form and order. Secondly, we demonstrated to him what might be the consequence if we should thus hastily and unadvisedly introduce him; that is to say, that another would be received after his example, and in such sort, that it would come to pass that we would fall into greater confusion than even we have had in time bygone, making dispensation in favour of one, and denying it to another, which inequality is mortal ruin in the Church of God. Thirdly, we told him, that even were we so far to trifle with our conscience as to be willing, in his favour, to transgress the commandment of God, that nevertheless we were not at liberty to do so, for that we have our laws ecclesiastic, which are reduced to writing, and which give us a quite different lesson. We must therefore observe them, in regard that all the people of our manner of worship are obliged so to do. Fourthly, we clearly pointed out to him, that it was even for his advantage that the proceeding should be maturely gone about and ripely advised beforehand; that in the interval, he might have leisure to consider how difficult and irksome a charge it is, and in order to be well resolved as to what he would have to do; and also to become acquainted with our form and manner, with a view to suit and accommodate himself to it, from fear of giving offence to the people who are tender and delicate, for even the untaught and ruder sort are sometimes rather



difficult to please. Notwithstanding, we gave him clearly to understand that it was no intention of ours to keep him a long while in suspense and weary him out, but rather to shorten his probation, and as soon as shall be possible to admit him to the service of God. Thereupon we requested of him to have yet a little patience, waiting until everything might be done according to the prescribed order of God; and that in the meantime he could deal with us privately as with brethren, we offering to do him all the service and shew him all good-will in everything which the Lord might put into our hand.

It certainly did appear to us that our proposals were so reasonable, that he ought to take them into consideration. Moreover, we spoke as kindly and gently as he could think of requiring, and you may rest assured that every God-fearing man, and having a clear conscience, would have been well satisfied. More than that, even a man of a bad heart, if so be that he might have had some measure of honesty, and was not become altogether shameless, would have felt a sort of shame in refusing to acquiesce. Our Carmelite, as an answer to everything, required us to give assurance on the spot, notwithstanding all the reasons which we have alleged. And that for two causes: the first was, that he had at this time companions who could lead him surely out of danger, and furnish him with money and equipage, and that he would not always have that opportunity at hand. The second, that if he was to return to France, the sooner he went the better, before the noise of his coming hither was made public.

We saw clearly by this answer, that he knew nothing about the Church nor the ministry either, and that if he had but little understanding, he had even less heart and zeal in her service. Nevertheless, having made him withdraw, and having spoken with each other, once more we made him a very gentle and gracious reply, praying that he would pardon us if we could not acquiesce in his request, seeing that our consciences were fast bound up from so doing by the Word of God; and what had formerly been said to him was explained and confirmed besides, as well by the testimonies of Scripture, as by the example of the ancient Church. We also plied him with exhortations,

which might well have subdued him and brought him back to better reason, had he not gone too far astray ; and, in order that it might not appear as if we had not treated him with all due honour, we shewed him that the same course had been followed in the case of others not less worthy than himself, and who of their own accord willingly submitted to it.

But in place of yielding to reason, he replied, flatly, and somewhat at a non-plus, that if *we* thought we had the Spirit of God, *he* was not altogether void of it, and shewed clearly, that all our forementioned dealing with him he took in no other way than as a mockery. We answered him, in the first place, that in this matter we had the Word of God so clear, that our consciences were well enough assured. And that, even if the thing were doubtful, or we might have some scruple about it, it was our duty to attempt nothing against what we considered to be the will of God. Moreover, that what we alleged in proof of that was so clear, that there was no need to make any further dispute about it. That he ought, besides, rather to suspect himself than us, seeing that he had only his own interests to consider, while we, on the other hand, had no other object in view but that of keeping close to the order of God. He replied also to that, that if he had come before the time of Lent, he would willingly have submitted to examination, but since he had preached in a church so near at hand,<sup>1</sup> that we ought to hold *that* for approbation. On that point, we told him, that it had happened in France, as Solomon had said, that to the hungry soul bitter things appear to be sweet, for the poor people are so famished and starved with regard to the true doctrine, that when one touches on a single word, were it only by halves, they are so ravished and transported, that they do not take leisure to judge aright. Besides, referring to his boast of having preached there, we told him, that he need not exalt his horn on that account, and that we knew well in what weakness it had been. And yet, nevertheless, we protested that it was not by way of reproach, and that we were not so wanting in humanity that we would not support those who are somewhat weak when in such danger, but that it was to lead him to the knowledge of

<sup>1</sup> The Church of Lyons.

himself, in order that he might not pride himself upon that without cause, having more occasion rather to humble himself. In conclusion, we set ourselves again to soothe and to encourage him, while, on his part, he did not exhibit any farther appearance of being irritated.

On the morrow, being in a tavern with a large company, among whom there were about half a score of preachers about him, after they had discoursed of some matter, without any provocation, or any occasion given, as if he had been the controller of the whole world, he declared that they had not a learned man among them hereabouts, and spoke even more outrageously than I can repeat; and as truth always comes to light in time, we have been told since, that from the first day of his arrival in this town, he has never ceased to malign sometimes one person and sometimes another, and at other times the whole of us, even so far as to pronounce, that he found no savour nor edification in all our preachings and lectures. And, notwithstanding, while all this was going on, he did not hesitate in venturing to dine with us. We see his object perfectly; it is, that the poor man has such a hungering after notoriety, that he burns everything to attain it, and all the while we see nothing about which he need glorify himself. For when one has thoroughly sifted all that is in him, even all the inward parts of the belly, there is nothing one finds after all, but the ignorance of an ass. He knows somewhat less of Latin than a child of eight years ought to have. In Scripture he is as blind and ignorant as a beetle, and all the while he is so drunken with ambition, that he can scarcely keep upon his feet. We do not trouble you by the recital of all the shifts and subtleties which he has devised and attempted. He had all the will to trouble the Church, had the time been seasonably disposed for it. This, however, is no new instance of the kind, for these sort of people have had their predecessors since the time of St. Paul, who, by a like sort of artifice, that is to say, bragging and vaunting about their own doings, and disparaging the holy apostle behind his back, in order to advance themselves, threw all in disorder, as we may see in the Epistles to the Corinthians and the Galatians.

Towards the conclusion of the whole affair, this discreet and worthy man having made up his mind to [have nothing more to do with us,] and to be gone, came to one of us to clear himself, and principally with the view of justifying everything that he had said in his answers; he was told, that it would be for his own advantage seriously to consider all that had taken place, as in the sight of God, that he might accuse and condemn himself, and without being so resolutely bent upon maintaining his honour by loud talk, after having, both by act and deed so greatly wounded it; for that, should he persist in thus contending both against reason and truth, he would come to a bad end, inasmuch as that judgment must ever prove true, that whosoever exalteth himself shall be humbled. As touching the silly expressions he had made use of in the tavern, he wished to be credited in denying them, and that we must consider all those to be liars who had heard him. He was answered, that then he must plead against our Lord, who had willed, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word should be established. And although there was not any special need whatever to discuss that point, inasmuch as it need not give us very much concern how much they prize or despise our knowledge, and that our chief glory consists in our being the servants of God; so much so, that we held it to be a laughable matter and of no consequence whatever, and that to such a degree, that we could not so far defer to him as to admit that he is a competent judge. We could, nevertheless, very well perceive by such expressions, that his heart was so swelled with venom, that he was compelled to disgorge it by vomiting forth his spite in such language upon us; and this sign and token of his malice gave offence, seeing that we had never given occasion for it. Touching the third point, he could not deny that he had in some sort misrepresented our preachings. Yet it was difficult for him to state any certain ground of objection, even although he had possessed the knowledge required to enable him to do so. For even though he came once for the sake of countenance, as if from the fear of being seen listening for the purpose of learning, he read in a book apart by himself, in which one could see his foolish ambition, to be so

much afraid of lessening his own reputation should he condescend to do so much honour to the Word of God as to give Him a hearing.

The final result of this proposal was, that he to whom it was addressed said, that he would call together his companions to speak with him ; and as he gave him clearly to understand, that he need not be under any fear that we would recoil upon him in the way of revenge, no more than as if he had conducted himself very wisely, upon that he supped with one of our companions, and made him believe that he intended to take lodgings and stop in the town. The next morning he mounted on horseback, and in mounting gave full rein to his abuse, more than ever he had yet done. Whether or not he has had just cause for so doing, we leave yourselves to judge, after having read the statement which we have now made you, which we protest before God to be the simple truth, without having added anything, and praying the Lord to give you the spirit of direction to take knowledge of it, and rightly to judge, in order that you may not take offence, whatever report he may make to you ; for in writing this letter to you, we intended, besides the discharge of duty in giving you satisfactory information, to convince you that we had not treated him with inhumanity. For in truth, because it had pleased the Lord to make use of his services in that quarter by his preachings, and that some edification had followed thereupon, our wish and desire was entirely bent on not rejecting him. Our conscience, however, would not admit of our receiving him immediately, until his pride had been a little abased, that he had learned to trust somewhat more in God, and that he had profited yet farther a little so as to teach faithfully and purely ; for he had three things about him which by good right were displeasing to us. First of all, that good persuasion of himself. Secondly, that he was so devoted to the kitchen, that methinks the earth itself would scarce have supplied him, as if God in heaven were not all-sufficient for the nourishment of His own. Thirdly, he was so ignorant, that we were very much astonished ; for in our congregation, where we read a text of St. Paul, which contained beautiful matter of doctrine and copious, and ought to be well known by all who preach in that

quarter, because it is the Epistle for the first Sunday in Advent, when it came to his turn, not only did he speak meagrely and sparingly upon it, but he reversed the whole of what Paul said, not intentionally or in malice, as we thought, but in pure stupidity. Other vices we let pass, as worldly vanity and the like, that we may not appear as if we persecuted him in hatred and enmity. What we have now told you is to forearm you, that you may not be imposed on to your hurt. As regards the individual, we pray the Lord that He would give him the spirit of humiliation and of meekness, correcting that lofty and foolish presumption which he has; and above all, that he might know himself such as he really is, so as to get a true sight of himself, for then he will have occasion indeed for self-abasement. In conclusion, very dear brethren, we shall commend you to the holy safeguard of our Lord Jesus, who is the true Pastor of all the faithful.

[*Fr. orig. minute—Library of Geneva. Vol. 145.*]

### LXXXVI.—TO FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Detail of the edifying death of the first Syndic, Amy Porral.

GENEVA, 16th June 1542.

Would that I might attain to that discipline in contempt of this present life, and in the meditation of a holy death, as the experience of the past year, in the deaths of many pious persons, may well have brought me. Porral, the chief magistrate of the city, has departed to the Lord; his death, which could not be other than occasion of sadness to us, has been bitterly lamented. The manner of his decease, as it was in some respects consolatory to me, so, on the other hand,

<sup>1</sup> The Republic of Geneva incurred the loss of an excellent magistrate and friend in Porral, who had been named first Syndic of this year. He had concurred with Calvin in drawing up the Ecclesiastical Ordonnances adopted the preceding year, and he died, as this letter of the Reformer to Farel testifies, with sentiments of the deepest and most lively piety.

it increased my sorrow when I considered how great has been our loss in the bereavement of that one man. The day after he became unwell, when we were calling upon him, that is, Viret and myself, he told us that he considered himself in danger, for that the disease with which he was afflicted had been fatal in his family. Thereupon we had a long conversation on a variety of matters: he talked about them just as though he had been in sound and perfect health. During the two following days his sufferings were more acute, but, notwithstanding, his intellect was stronger, and he exhibited more fluency of speech than he had ever manifested in his life hitherto. Whoever called to see him, heard some suitable exhortation; and that you may not suppose it to have been mere talkative vanity, as far as was possible he applied to each individual what was best adapted to his circumstances, and most likely to be of use to him. Afterward he began to feel somewhat better, so that very much hope was entertained that he would be forthwith restored to health. In this state he continued for three days; at length, however, the disease began to grow more severe, so that it was evident that he was in the greatest danger. The more he was afflicted in body, the more animated and vivid was the spirit. I say nought about the intermediate period; but upon the day of his death, about nine in the morning, we went thither, I and Viret. When I had spoken a few words, to set before him the cross, the grace of Christ, and the hope of eternal life,—for we were unwilling to weary him with tedious addresses,—he replied, that he received God's message as became him; that he knew the efficacy of the power of Christ for confirming the consciences of true believers. Thereupon he spoke in such a luminous manner on the work of the ministry, and all the benefits which accompany or flow from it as the means of grace, that we were both of us in a sort of stupor of astonishment; and whenever it recurs to my memory, even yet I grow bewildered. For he spoke in such a way, that it seemed to reflect some discourse by one of ourselves after long and careful meditation. He concluded this part of his address by declaring, that the remission of sins which we promised

on the authority of Christ, he received just the same as if an angel had appeared to him from heaven. After that he spoke of the unity of the Church, which he commended with marvellous praise; he bore testimony that, in his own experience, he had found no better or more certain source of consolation, in the struggle of death, than from having already been confirmed in the assurance of this unity. He had summoned, a little before, our two colleagues, and had been reconciled with them,<sup>1</sup> lest, having persisted in that dispute, others might make a bad use of it in following his example. And he had, moreover, said to ourselves, since the public edification of the Church compels you to bear with them as brethren, why might not I acknowledge them as pastors? He had previously, however, seriously admonished them, and reminded them of their sins. But I return to that last address. Turning himself to those who stood around, he exhorted every one to prize very highly the communion of the Church; such of them as are superstitious in the observance of days and ceremonies, he advised to lay aside their perverse opposition, and to agree with us, for that we better understood, and saw more clearly what was the prudent course than they did; that he had himself, also, been rather obstinate in these things, but that his eyes were at length opened to perceive how injurious contention might become. After that he made a short, serious, as well as sincere and luculent confession. Thence he proceeded to exhort us both, as well regarding the other departments of our charge as ministers, as also to constancy and firmness; and when he discoursed at some length on the future difficulties of the ministers of the Gospel, he seemed inspired with the foresight of a prophet. It was wonderful how wisely he spoke to purpose on what concerned the public weal. He recommended

<sup>1</sup> Two years before, he had a keen religious dispute with the minister Henri de la Mare, and James Bernard had supported his colleague. De la Mare upheld that the magistrate should not punish sins; that no one can have assurance of his election; that no one could go more gladly to his wedding than Jesus went to death. Amy Porral pronounced these opinions to be false and dangerous.—*Arch. de Genève*, Savion, c. 45. This dispute degenerating into a quarrel, had embroiled the two ministers with the magistrate.



as a most important step that we ought to lose no time in devoting our utmost attention to bring about a reconciliation among the cities in alliance with us.<sup>1</sup> "However some noisy people may clamour loudly," he said, "don't trouble yourselves about it, and do not be discouraged." My time will not admit of my relating everything. After we had submitted a few observations we engaged in prayer, and then took our leave and departed.

On the second afternoon, when my wife arrived, he told her to be of good courage whatever might happen, that she ought to consider that she had not been rashly led hither, but brought by the wonderful counsel of God, that she also might serve in the Gospel. A little while after he signified that his voice was gone; but even when his speech entirely failed he intimated that he retained a perfect consciousness of the confession which he had previously made, and in that same he would die. At the same time, having repeated the song of Simeon, with application of it to himself, "I have seen," he said, "and have touched with my hand, that saving merciful Redeemer." He then composed himself to rest. From that time he was speechless, but indicated at times, by a nod, that he had lost nothing of his strength of mind. About four o'clock I went thither with the Syndics; when, as often as he attempted to speak, and was hindered by obstruction in the throat, I requested that he would not further disturb himself, for that his confession was abundantly satisfactory. At length I began to speak as well as I could: he hearkened with a very composed and tranquil countenance. Scarcely had we left when he gave up his pious soul to Christ. This narrative, when you weigh the character of the man, will hardly appear credible to you; but I would have you understand that he had been thoroughly renewed in the spirit of his mind.

We are at present very much occupied in the choice of new colleagues, and the more so because, when we thought that we had fallen upon a very suitable one we afterwards discovered

<sup>1</sup> The disputes which had fallen out between Geneva and Berne had not yet been finally settled.

that he did not answer our expectation. When we fix anything definitely you shall receive information. There is no reason, although you may be absent, why you may not aid us with your counsel.—Adieu.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Geneva. Vol. 111.*]

### LXXXVII.—TO VIRET.<sup>1</sup>

Sickness of Idelette de Bure—the beginnings of the new ministers of the Church of Geneva.

GENEVA, [July 1542.]

This brother, the bearer, will tell you in how great anxiety I am at present writing to you. My wife has been delivered prematurely, not without extreme danger; but may the Lord have a care over us. All our colleagues have now made trial of their gifts.<sup>2</sup> The first gave a specimen of his ability to the people such as I always expected of him. Peter is much more apt to teach. The first sermon was successfully delivered by Geniston; the fourth surpassed all my expectation. As to stipend, we have not obtained what we wished; for the Senate, without much discussion, decreed to the other two the same sum that the two former had, that is, Henri and Champereau.<sup>3</sup> They have referred the election of the deacons to the Syndic Corne, to John Parvi, and to myself. But after having given in our report, they have not taken our advice. Geniston, therefore, has not more than two hundred *écus*; the other only one hundred and fifty. They hold out the expectation, however, of a better provision by and by. When I saw they were so close-fisted in this question as to stipend, I rated them rather sharply on the administration of the Church property.

<sup>1</sup> Letter without date, but written to Viret shortly after his return to Lausanne from Geneva, at which former place he had resumed the functions of pastor, July 12, 1542.

<sup>2</sup> The ministers elected to exercise along with Calvin the office of pastors at Geneva were the following:—Philippe, surnamed De Ecclesia, Peter Blanchet, Louis Geniston, and Treppereau.—See the Consistory's *Registers*, 1542.

<sup>3</sup> Henri de la Mare and Champereau, ministers before the last election.

They ought in time to think of it how they must render an account both to God and man. I said that the Pope was a thief and a sacrilegious robber; that we ourselves must take care that we did not become his successors. I prefaced, however, what was spoken with a few words to draw attention:—"that the wounds of a friend are better than the kisses of an enemy;" that they ought not to seek out for a Balaam, who might bless them with a curse. The farther consideration of the business was delayed until a more convenient season. I did not forget, however, to warn them, that it behoved them seriously to consider that question and the settlement of it without delay. They wished to have your house left empty, but from this, for very good reasons, I dissuaded them. It was thereupon granted to the ecclesiastic. Adieu.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### LXXXVIII.—TO BENEDICT TEXTOR.<sup>1</sup>

Divers recommendations.

[*July 1542.*] :

First of all, I most earnestly entreat of you, that as soon as you get home you will make the best of your way hither. Then after that, would you turn a little off the road about Nyon, or a little beyond, to visit a certain nobleman, the father of the young man who lives with me? His village is called Bursin, and may be pointed out to you at Rolle. Your arrival there will be most welcome to him, and, as I hope, he will well reward your services. I hope that at my request he may receive this favour at your hands.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

<sup>1</sup> To B. Textor, my brother and esteemed friend. Benoit Textor, the distinguished physician and friend of Calvin, who dedicated to him, in 1550, his Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians, in remembrance of the care which he had bestowed during the sickness of Idelette de Bure.

## LXXXIX.—TO FAREL.

Excuses his silence—estimate of the new ministers—works and literary productions of Calvin.

GENEVA, [28th July 1542.]

I do indeed, of my own accord, accuse myself of negligence, plead guilty and self-condemned, and I can scarce ask pardon, having nothing to offer by way of palliation. The reason, however, why we did not write by Cordier was, partly because we thought that he would himself serve as a living epistle, and partly, because there were some at that time here who spoke of proceeding to Neuchatel in a short time. All, however, were liable to this drawback, that only when they were prepared for the journey, and just ready to start, they came to inquire whether I wished to send any letter to you. In this way Sebastian, when he lately intended a journey thither, which he never achieved, came to me overnight and said, that he was to set out on the morrow by break of day. I could not attempt, however, to write on that day, on account of the state of my health, and I am not in the habit of rising so early in the morning as to be able to outrun his speed by my activity. Besides, I had to preach a sermon; but I refrain from vain excuses, lest I should seem to allege a justification, whereas I have freely acknowledged there is none to offer. If Viret is not already on the way, he will set out ere long for Berne; for it had been agreed among ourselves, that he should rather visit you on his return, for fear that the evil-disposed might accuse him unjustly of having received his instructions from you previously, if he should propose anything unpleasant to them, as he could not fail to do. Our wish was to shield you from this spiteful envy, while you are down-weighed in so many other ways. I mention this because, in the event of your disapproving of our advice, you may understand that we nevertheless felt that there was a good reason for it. What occurred here before he went away, or what has happened since, he

will explain better in conversation than can be set down in writing: this is the reason why I do not enter upon these matters.

The brethren we have lately elected<sup>1</sup> will not be found unsuitable when they have had some practice; although he who is the most learned of them, to whom we assign the precedency, is by no means popular.<sup>2</sup> He has certainly a confused manner of delivery, and were he even to pay more attention to correct and distinct utterance, his meaning would not be less obscure. All goes on well with the other three, although they are nothing to compare with Viret. Therefore, those who wish to make progress wish, at the same time, that I would preach oftener than usual, which I have already commenced, and shall continue to do until the others have acquired more acceptance with the people. Next Lord's day I go to Cartigny to James's<sup>3</sup> ordination. I feel some hesitation as to the extent of my commendation, as you may easily gather, but I follow it up because I am certain it will prove for the edification of the people.

I am not very well pleased with my little book,<sup>4</sup> because it has not been got up in the manner I wished, and had arranged three years ago; for I expected that you would have added a preface to it. Nor can I give any other explanation, than that Satan himself threw obstacles in the way of my obtaining this favour from you. For I was afraid to request you lest some one should misinterpret my motive, but that fear on my part did not proceed from spiritual prudence, as I now perceive, although somewhat besides has indirectly come in the way. For I had made a promise to Michael, that as soon as we had returned from

<sup>1</sup> See Letter LXXXVII., p. 311, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> Is he the minister Philippe de Ecclesia, who was afterwards deposed?

<sup>3</sup> The minister James Bernard. See Letter LXII. He became pastor of a country parish.

<sup>4</sup> Is this Calvin's *Catechisme*, reprinted at Strasbourg in 1541, or perhaps the treatise *De la Cène*, of which a second edition was published in the same year at Geneva? The journeys which Calvin had made in Germany to promote the interests of the Church at Strasbourg, had laid him open to suspicion of Lutheran tendencies by the Swiss theologians; it was to remove this suspicion that he published that little work, which is distinguished by the spirit of moderation which pervades it, and which was approved of by Luther himself. See *Hospinian*, ii. p. 312.

the Diet at Worms I would send him a copy, with this proviso, that you should say in the preface that you had revised the publication. He went away, and thus my whole plan was upset. I should be surprised, however, were it not that perhaps our Encomiast supposes that that which most afflicts me is, that we do not on the first page read those so very ample, or rather lavish commendations, which he has bestowed on me; and yet I opine, that you have such a notion of his prudence that you could never think him capable of such a thought. It is better to say nothing about those persons whom he assails, that we may not humour his inclinations. We see clearly what he would be at. Let that therefore be held *pro non dicto*. When you send the summary I shall willingly run over it, not as censor, but as one of the readers, unless, indeed, I am able to supply some hints, that the book may not become liable to the calumnies of the unprincipled; in this respect I may be of some use to you.

As to my observations on Genesis, if the Lord shall grant me longer life and leisure, perhaps I will set myself about that work, although I do not expect to have many hearers.<sup>1</sup> This is my especial end and aim, to serve my generation; and for the rest, if, in my present calling, an occasional opportunity offers itself, I shall endeavour to improve it for those who come after us. I have a mind to set about writing several things, but as my wife is now in ill health, not without danger, my attention is otherwise engaged. This, however, I may observe at present, that I have always set a very high value on the temper you have shewn in bearing with your colleague, and have, besides, always advised you to persevere. But when I hear the way he behaves himself, no other conclusion can be arrived at, except that the case must be dealt with more openly and straightforwardly. For I can by no means approve as a remedy, that you should be more upon your guard with him, and so live in a course of constant dissimulation. When he perceives he is suspected, he will thereupon become worse. You ought

<sup>1</sup> This Commentary was not published for some time afterwards, when it appeared under the care of Robert Etienne.—*Commentarius in Genesim*, in fol., Geneva, 1554.

rather, therefore, simply to admonish him. Adieu, my dearest Farel; may the Lord long preserve you. Salute the whole of the brethren, with their wives also, very kindly.

Read the letter yourself alone, or only to a few, and take care that nothing gets abroad.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 106.]

### XC.—TO VIRET.

Proceedings of Castalio—school of Geneva—criticism on the new ministers—tidings of France—domestic sorrow.

GENEVA, 19th August 1542.

I would have written to you long ago had I not been aware that my letter could not reach you one moment sooner than if I delayed writing until your return. Now, because I conceive, from the reckoning of the time, that you must have at length returned, you have herewith what I have to say in the meantime. As soon as you were gone, strange bickerings broke out between Sebastian<sup>1</sup> and his brothers-in-law, which have sorely exercised me in trying to settle them by a little friendly interference. My motive for taking part in these disputes was, that the quarrel might not go so far as that the scandalous report of it should get abroad to the disgrace of the school. With all my care and diligence, however, I could not even so far succeed as to get the one party to cease from abusing the other, and thus they are everywhere become the town-talk of most people. When the common controversy about the payment of the dowry-money was somewhat allayed, lo, new disputes break out between Sebastian and Peter,<sup>2</sup> partly about the manage-

<sup>1</sup> The person here mentioned is no other than Sebastian Castalio, who was afterwards so unhappily celebrated by his debates with the Reformer. Born in the little town of Chatillon en Bresse, he sought an asylum at Strasbourg, where he was acquainted with Calvin, and became a member of the French Church; esteemed by Calvin on account of his character and talents, he followed him after his recall to Geneva, and was nominated regent in the new college of that town.

<sup>2</sup> The minister Peter Blanchet.

ment of the household expenses, and partly also about the dwelling. I have never seen a more complicated affair. After much wrangling with each other they came at length to a sort of compromise, which, however, brought forth by and by another and a fresh dispute. Tempers on both sides were so much fretted that one can scarcely hope for any solid friendship between them, such as ought to exist among brethren. These disturbances have calmed down for the present, indeed, but there is much reason to fear that some trifling circumstance may, all of a sudden, stir them up again. Behold, you see the state of our school, that you may not envy us. On the other hand, Nicolas de Jussy has been the occasion of new vexation to us within the last few days, on account of his pride. He had been commending some one—I know not who it was—who, he supposed, had suffered wrong in being imprisoned on very sufficient grounds, and because the assessors did not yield to his demand, he proceeded to launch against them a very bitter invective. The affair was reported to the Senate, who were glad to avail themselves of the opportunity for his expulsion. We interceded for him, not so much for the sake of the individual, who complained, not many days since, that there was far too much deference shewn to me, but that so hurtful a precedent of the easy, or even rash and precipitate ejection of a minister, might not be set up in the Church. They are making fuller inquiry at present, and afterwards, taking us along with them in the decision, they will pronounce judgment. If I am satisfied that there is just ground for laying him aside I will make no further opposition. You would be surprised to see how stoutly our Henry philosophizes about asserting the honour of the Gospel ministry;<sup>1</sup> having presented, forsooth, such a distinguished example of firmness and constancy of principle in his own person. Upon which score I was by no means silent, but have certainly discharged my duty, having declared openly, in the presence of all, that in the making up of my mind, I did

<sup>1</sup> The minister Henri de la Mare. He had discharged the functions of the ministry during the exile of Calvin, under conditions which were scarcely compatible with the dignity of the ministry.



not so much consider what was done to myself, but rather what ought to be done. Our colleagues make considerable progress in preaching; but in two of them there is, I fear, somewhat of vain-glory. You understand who the other person, the third, is; in my opinion he evinces a better regulated judgment. Peter has, besides, shewn already some tendencies which are not very satisfactory, if what Geniston has reported to me be indeed true. As, however, we have not yet ascertained the point with sufficient certainty, I have resolved to observe him more closely. If we have been deceived by him, where is faith to be found? Louis, as I always feared, has more of levity and less of self-control in his conversation and behaviour than becomes a minister of the Gospel; but this defect, as I hope, will, in course of time, be corrected, if only the other more essential qualifications are not found wanting. As you passed through Neuchatel on your way to Berne, I have no doubt the brethren there must have fully explained to you all about the departure of Farel,<sup>1</sup> which I may now tell you from the letter in which he mentions it; therefore I forbear to enter more at large upon the subject. The letter itself I send you, that you may be fully instructed. Froment returned lately from Lyons. He reports that the Queen of Navarre is at present even better disposed than ever she was;<sup>2</sup> and he even gives the assurance in her own language, for he was admitted to familiar converse in an interview with her. Howsoever you are aware that we must not rashly hold every word that the messenger utters to be strictly true; for he is so carried away by the honour which has been put upon him in having been admitted

<sup>1</sup> He had set out for Metz.

<sup>2</sup> After the affair of the Placards this Princess shewed herself less avowedly and openly favourable to the Protestants of France; she, however, took an unceasing interest in their cause. She wrote, in 1541, to Calvin, on occasion of the projected marriage of her daughter, Jeanne d'Albret, with the Duke of Cleves:—"We think that God has given us a son to our own heart and mind, by whom we hope that we shall contribute somewhat to His honour and glory. We entreat you, that in whatsoever you shall perceive that I can do you any good service, you will not spare me; and I assure you that I will do my endeavour very heartily, according to the power which God shall bestow upon me."—*Paris MSS.*, an Unpublished Letter of the 25th July 1541.

to an interview with the Queen, that he seems to me to have lost the small remnant of common sense which he still possessed.<sup>1</sup> To say nought of other absurdities, when he mentioned that the Queen wished me to write to her, he thought proper to dictate at the same time the subject-matter; and, having but little confidence in my judgment, he forbade my writing and sending away my letter unless previously read and revised by himself. He has spread a report through the whole city that he was very near preaching before the King himself. There are a thousand silly statements of this sort. That you may not think, however, that all he says is false, part of what he says he heard from the Queen or her ministers. But these artful courtiers, when they get hold of a simple-minded individual, abuse his credulity for their own advantage or amusement. They wish that such a report may reach Germany, and reconcile the minds of the godly to the King, whom they know at present to be entirely estranged from him. Among other things they persuaded him that the Chancellor was imprisoned on no heavier charge<sup>2</sup> than because, without the orders of the King, he had directed the promulgation of that edict about books,<sup>3</sup> and had caused the godly to be burnt. What more need I say? He not only believed everything he heard, but besides, he has invented many other things which he never heard at all. The King of France has passed an army into Spain,<sup>4</sup> which is threatened on the other side by the Turk. The Duke of Orleans has done nothing memorable hitherto, except that he has burnt down two towns.<sup>5</sup> That, however, is

<sup>1</sup> Of a vain and flighty turn, Froment could not remain content with that better part which had been assigned to him as the missionary of the Reform at Geneva. He abandoned the ministry of the Gospel to become a notary, and incurred more than once the censures of the Seigneury.

<sup>2</sup> The Chancellor of France, William Poyet, accused of malversation. He was condemned to pay a heavy fine, and deprived of all his offices.

<sup>3</sup> See Sleidan, lib. xiv. p. 408. The *Institution Chrétienne* of Calvin was particularly forbidden by this edict.

<sup>4</sup> Brought to a stand for six months before Perpignan, by the heroic resistance of the Duke of Alva, the French army could not cross the Pyrenees.—Robertson, *Hist. of Charles V.*, book vii.

<sup>5</sup> More fortunate than the Dauphin, the Duke of Orleans began the campaign with success in Luxembourg, but he compromised all his advantages by a preci-

old news. Many events have probably occurred since that time. Our friends here have at present a rather hard knot to untie;<sup>1</sup> and all the more so, because even although, for the future, all they ask were conceded to them, the opposite party has hitherto made the hope to be very uncertain. I have carried my point, however, with the lesser council.<sup>2</sup> Entreat the Lord, that the question may be brought at length to a successful conclusion. There is some risk lest, when it comes to be debated in the larger public assembly, that little coterie, which you know consists of veteran and disciplined demagogues, may throw all into confusion. But the Lord, I hope, will overrule everything for good, if we only carefully entreat him.

Adieu, my excellent and highly esteemed brother. Greet all the brethren; your maternal aunt also, and your wife, to whom mine returns her thanks for so much friendly and pious consolation. She is unable to reply, except by an amanuensis, and it would be very difficult for her even to dictate a letter. The Lord has certainly inflicted a severe and bitter wound in the death of our infant son.<sup>3</sup> But He is Himself a Father, and knows best what is good for His children. Again adieu; may the Lord be with you. Would that you could make a run as far as this, I would willingly have half a day's free conversation with you.—  
Yours,  
JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 234.]

pitate departure for the Roussillon, and the towns of which he had taken possession in the Netherlands fell back under the power of the Imperialists.—Robertson, *Hist. of Charles V.*, book viii.

<sup>1</sup> In allusion to the struggle which the ministers had to sustain in the Councils of the Republic for the appliance of discipline.

<sup>2</sup> The lesser council, as distinguished from that of the two hundred. They have at Geneva four councils. 1st, The common council, or lesser council, formed of the four syndics going out of office, of the four new, and seventeen members nominated by the two hundred. This is the *Senatus minor*. 2d, The council of the two hundred. 3d, The council of the sixty. Lastly, The council general, a popular assembly, convoked only upon extraordinary occasions.

<sup>3</sup> It is to this sad loss that Calvin alludes in so remarkable a manner in his answer to the Jurisconsult Baudouin:—"Wishing to clear himself from the charge of a want of natural affection brought against him, Balduin twits me with my want of offspring. God had given me a son. God hath taken my little boy. This he reckons up among my misdeeds, that I have no children. I have myriads of sons throughout the Christian world."—*Responsio ad Balduini Convitia*. Geneva, 1561.

XCI.—TO VIRET.<sup>1</sup>

Instructions given to Viret for the Synod of Berne—need of maintaining the spiritual independence of the Church—various directions.

GENEVA, 23d August 1542.

I wish that your letter, which no doubt is already on the way, had reached me. For although I do not expect it to contain very cheering intelligence, it will yet be a help to me to know somewhat certain as to the state of the Church of Berne. At present I am under the necessity of writing on a subject without being sufficiently informed about it, yet, nevertheless, I cannot refrain from writing. I hear that the Deans of the Classes had been summoned to attend, for the purpose of hearing what the Senate has determined about the Supper of God. I can say nothing to you but what you have thoroughly considered and meditated on. The importance of the cause, however, does not admit of my silence. You perceive there are two considerations here to be kept in mind, the state of the question itself, and the mode of procedure, which partly depends on circumstances. Concerning the cause itself, it is unnecessary to recommend that you diligently compare notes with your own dean. This I earnestly wish, however, that you would see to secure that whatever persons he addresses, he may not scruple to bear testimony, that there is not only figured in the Supper,

<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding the constant endeavour of the Seignery of Berne to maintain peace and union in their churches, serious differences on the subject of the Supper had made their appearance on several occasions among the members of the Bernese clergy. A new formulary, reproducing the terms adopted in the disputation of Berne in 1528, was then drawn up by order of the Seignery, and submitted for the acceptance of the ministers. The Deans of the different Classes of the Pays Romand, Payerne, Yverdon, Lausanne, Morges, Gex, and Thonon, were assembled together at Berne, with the view of sanctioning, by their approbation, the uniformity of doctrine in the districts subject to the Government of Berne. Alive to every proceeding which might compromise the independence and dignity of the Church in a neighbouring country, Calvin does not spare giving his advice to Viret, and puts him on his guard.

but actually exhibited, that communion which we have with Christ, and that not words merely are bestowed upon us by the Lord, but that the truth and the reality agree with the words. Moreover, that this communion is no imaginary thing, but that we are united, each individually, in one body and one substance, with Christ. Let him fearlessly set aside all unreasonable views, in replying to them and warning them, taking care that he does not weaken the truth in so doing. Nor is it allowable to complicate, by ambiguous or obscure language, what requires the utmost clearness or perspicuity. As to the mode of procedure, this point ought to be well weighed, what a fatal precedent they are about to set, if the brethren acknowledge the Senate as judge in the case of doctrine, so that, whatever the Senate sanctions must be accepted and embraced by us as if proceeding from an oracle. What kind of a precedent, and how great a prejudgment must this be for posterity! Assuredly, if we suffer the yoke in this manner to be imposed upon us, we treacherously betray the sacred ministry by our dissimulation. Nor shall we be able to excuse this perfidy either in the sight of God or before men. It will be noway needful for us, however, to descend to the discussion of this question; because the brethren, by a modest and courteous reply, may avoid this reef, if they merely say, that the matter in dispute is of far too great importance for them to take any step in it whatever without the advice of their colleagues. They have besides both honourable and favourable pretexts with which to give reasonable satisfaction to the Senate. And we cannot but press the observation, that when they shall perceive the goodness of the cause itself, they will apply themselves seriously to the consideration of it, lest while they wish to follow a middle course, they desert entirely the cause of truth. It is not at all my meaning, that they ought to join themselves as adherents to what is either vicious or unsound; or if both sides are to blame, that they should entangle themselves in the fellowship of either party. All that I wish is, that they may adhere to true and sound doctrine openly and without any dissimulation. Lastly, explain to your dean what you think of the individuals themselves, and what fault you have to find with them, that he may

know where to have or give confidence; but I feel that this is troublesome in so anxiously taking upon me to forewarn you, to whom it is quite sufficient to give the signal by one word. I shall therefore conclude.

The bearer who takes charge of my letter to you seems to me to be pious and upright. He engaged here with an apothecary of Vienne, who has his business there, with the intention to learn the art. I was present at the agreement, because there was a person here who affirmed that the apothecary was an honest and worthy man. Should he turn out not to be such, the agreement can be cancelled, so that the youth may be released from the contract. Will you therefore direct him with your advice, and consider him as recommended? He will not cause you any expense, or be any way troublesome by importunity.

Adieu, my excellent and very agreeable brother. May the Lord Jesus always direct and confirm you more and more. Salute for me all the brethren, your wife, and your aunt.—  
Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

## XCII.—TO VIRET.<sup>1</sup>

Disquietude of Calvin on occasion of the acts of the Synod of Berne.

GENEVA, [August 1542.]

I am still waiting to hear what has been done at Berne, what has been said to the Deans, what sort of a reply they made, and what they found they could not obtain. Whenever a trustworthy messenger arrives among us, I will explain my meaning more fully. For the present, I send you a formula, from which you can extract what you please, or strike out what you do not like; and yet, peradventure the Lord will vouchsafe something

<sup>1</sup> See the note of the preceding Letter. The different Deans of the Classes of the Pays de Vaud having met at Berne, received communication of the new formula, and declared their adherence to the acts of the Deputy from Lausanne, regarding the question of the Sacraments.

better, so that it may be unnecessary either to correct or to approve what I now propose to you.

Our friends both shame and grieve me, Viret, when the truth of God is overborne by either the hatred or the favour of men.<sup>1</sup> I express myself in this way, because Gering<sup>2</sup> speaks in such terms as if the hypothesis of Erasmus<sup>3</sup> were, after all, the best; the others speak nought but falsehood. I can clearly perceive how greatly rumours of this kind endanger sound doctrine, and therefore, that I may keep a clean conscience, I have determined openly, without dissimulation or concealment, to declare my sentiments.

Besides, what occasion is there for any apology? I have not found a single individual in this Church who has even a competent understanding of this sacrament. What annoys me at present is this, that while they are not only nourished and brought up in error, and at the same time confirmed in it, they at length fall into such a condition as to become wholly incurable. I now repeat what I said before, that if you put any confidence in my judgment, you must not humour our friends overmuch in this fundamental doctrine. We think alike; let us, therefore, all with one voice speak the same thing.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

<sup>1</sup> The Seignury of Berne, jealous of the authority which they claimed the right to exercise in ecclesiastical as well as in civil affairs, and looking on every attempt of the ministers to maintain the dignity of their office as a direct infringement on their power, began to introduce the system of despotism in Church matters, which had met at first but slight resistance in the Pays de Vaud, recently brought under government, but which was destined gradually to excite there an energetic opposition, and to occasion the voluntary retirement of the most distinguished ministers.—Ruchat, *Hist. de la Réf.* tom. vi. p. 256, *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> The minister Beat Gerung or Gering, a declared partisan of the Lutheran dogma of the Supper, and one of the most servile of the Bernese clergy.

<sup>3</sup> Another minister of Zurich.

XCIII.—TO FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Wishes for the success of the journey undertaken by Farel to Metz—  
calumnies of James de Morges.

GENEVA, 30th August 1542.

Wherever, my very dear brother, you are, may the Lord keep you in health and safety all the day long, and that for the good of His Church. If, as we suppose, you have got an entrance within the walls of Metz, may He even there also open up a way for the Gospel; may He fill you with the spirit of wisdom, of prudence, of moderation, of zeal, of fortitude, that you may be armed at all points for an undertaking so difficult and arduous. I clearly perceive how many imminent and dangerous conflicts surround you, which require the special help of God. But you are neither so raw nor inexperienced in this warfare, as that even great danger has any power to alarm you. Neither is the strength of Christ, which has ever been present with you in such a wonderful manner, at all diminished. We who are here at Geneva, await somewhat anxiously the issue, to see what success shall be vouchsafed you. You are aware how very generally, in our day, the judgment of folly rules everywhere, so that men form their estimate of every plan or undertaking from the event. In the meanwhile, you would scarce believe what complaints James de Morges spreads everywhere hereabout, saying that you hastened to accept a call which had been offered to him, whereby serious injury had been done to him, and that, against the mind of all the godly in that quarter (Metz) you hastened thither. You know the ostentatious vanity of the man, which I wish you had checked in time. It has now with age increased in growth to such a degree, as to have become an incurable malady, for certainly he has never raved so openly as he does at present.

<sup>1</sup> At the request of the Protestants of Metz, Farel had left Neuchatel to go to preach the Reformed doctrine in that town. He received Calvin's letter at Strasbourg, where the Reformer joined him the year following.—See *Hist. des Martyrs*, liv. iii. p. 153; Bèze, *Hist. Eccl.* tom. iii. p. 432.



The Metz brethren are, however, in some measure themselves in fault, who have fled to him as to a sacred anchor, when they might have got others who were more distinguished, and also more apt to teach; but these trifles can no way hinder you in this bold undertaking, neither would I have troubled you with these at present, were I not afraid that some reports of that kind might reach you from some other quarter. I preferred, therefore, to be beforehand. By the first safe opportunity I will write you more at large about our present state. Adieu, most excellent, most genuine brother. Salute all our friends, for whom it is my prayer that counsel and courage may be imparted to them, and that, upheld by the strength of the Spirit, they may fear nothing. Again, farewell.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.*—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 106.]

#### XCIV.—TO VIRET.<sup>1</sup>

Origin of the disputes between Calvin and Castalio.

GENEVA, 11th September 1542.

The letters of Farel and his brother were brought to me four days ago; and I thought that you also had seen them, seeing that Peter Cossonay had brought them back with him. Now listen to the freaks of our friend Sebastian, which may

<sup>1</sup> This letter throws light on the first disagreements or differences between Calvin and Sebastian Castalio, or Castello, occupied on the translation into French of the Sacred Scriptures. Castalio evinced very little anxiety about elegance and purity of language in the work on which he was engaged. Thus he could not fail to encounter the severe criticism of the Reformer, who doubtless was charged in the name of the Seigneury with the revisal of the translation of the New Testament, and refused to give his approbation. It was not until some years afterwards, at Basle, that Sebastian Castalio published his work, under this title,—“The Bible, with Annotations on the Difficult Passages. 2 vols. in folio, Basle, 1555.” This work has become so rare, that it is at present impossible to procure it, and to ascertain the justice of the criticism which it has occasioned. The celebrated Henry Etienne accused the author of speaking the language of the Gueux. Bayle has been less severe.—See *Dict. Hist.*, Art. Castalion; and MM. Haag, *La France P. o'cistante*, 6me part, p. 365.

both raise your bile and your laughter at the same time. The day before yesterday he came to me, asked whether I was agreeable that his edition of the New Testament should be published. I replied, that there would be need of many corrections. He inquired the reason why. I pointed them out to him from those few chapters which he had already given me as a specimen. Thereupon he answered, that he had been more careful in what remained. Then he asked me over again, what I thought as to the publication? I answered, that it was not my wish to hinder the publication; but that I was ready, nevertheless, to perform the promise which I had made to John Girard,<sup>1</sup> that I would look it over and would correct, should there appear to be anything that required to be corrected. This arrangement he refused. He offered, however, to come and read it to me if I would fix a time. This I refused to do, even were he to offer me a hundred crowns, to bind myself to certain hours; moreover, that I would be obliged sometimes to dispute for a couple of hours, perhaps, over some little insignificant word. And so he left me, dissatisfied as appeared. That you may understand how faithful an interpreter he is; while in many ways he wishes to change and innovate, in most things he corrupts the meaning. One passage I may mention as an instance: where there occurs, *The Spirit of God which dwells in us*, he has changed to *haunt in us*, when to *haunt*, in French, does not mean to  *dwell*, but is used to signify to *frequent*.<sup>2</sup> One such boyish mistake may stamp a bad character upon the book. Such unseasonable trifling as this I swallow, nevertheless, in silence.

Adieu, dear brother. May the Lord preserve and always guide you. Salute all the brethren; but unto all, you will please not impart the whole of what I write.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Gotha. Vol. 404.*]

<sup>1</sup> Printer of Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> This word is taken in a bad sense: to *haunt* the wine-cellars and the *cabaret*, or beer-shop.—See the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie*.

## XCV.—TO VIRET.

Invitation to Viret to come to Geneva—nomination of a principal of the College of that town.

[September 1542.]

You ask that I would pardon your somewhat lengthy letter. That I may not be compelled to request a like forbearance on your part, I shall not only be brief but even very precise. It is not very easy to advise as to Zebedee,<sup>1</sup> for it is of very little use to deliberate about what cannot at once be carried into effect. He has increased the blame which attaches to him twofold by his foolish journey, and has not corrected the sin of profane swearing. Would that he were advised by these warning intimations, and that he may at length learn from experience not to take so much his own way! Had it been convenient for you to have come thus far at present, we might perhaps have effected more by conversation than we can do by letter. I mention this, partly because Claude Franc wishes you to be present at his marriage, which will be celebrated the Lord's day after next. But, further, I look forward to your being able, at the same time, to refresh yourself a little while with us after these troubles which have annoyed you, and that we may talk over matters together. I am also rather in doubt about a successor. No one will be able to undertake it unless he has been well trained beforehand, and accustomed to the duty. We have no such person here at present. If Celio<sup>2</sup> would rather turn his attention in that quarter than to

<sup>1</sup> See note 2, p. 268. Dismissed by the Seignury of Berne from the Church of Orbe, Zebedee was on the point to become pastor of the Church of Nyon.

<sup>2</sup> Celio Secondo-Curione, among the most illustrious of the preachers of the Reformation in Italy. Born at Turin in 1503, he devoted himself successfully to the teaching of Luther's doctrine, and preached the Gospel in Piedmont, at Ferrara, and at Lucca, stole away by flight from the pursuit of the Inquisition, and took refuge in Switzerland with his celebrated countrymen, Ochino and Peter Martyr. The same year he was appointed Director of the College of Lausanne.—See M'Crie's *History of the Reformation in Italy*; and Jules Bonnet, *Vie d'Olympia Morata*. Paris, 1851.

the rectorship of the school, it might be arranged. But whether Turtier would be a sufficient substitute for the other, I have some doubt. This one charge both plagues and vexes me; for if we put off the consideration of the settlement any longer, the spirit of restlessness will break forth, to enter, as it were, and take possession of the vacant office. Suppose that Ribitti or some one else should come hither until Christmas, that in the meanwhile we may look about and make some more permanent arrangement? I propose this because nothing better occurs to me. At the same time, I must own, that frequently, when I think of you and about you all, I feel almost pressed to death. Earnestly would I entreat of you that you do not allow any one to come hither without a letter, or some hint or intimation of your present state and condition.

What I wrote about Imbert was reported to me, but I do not remember my authority. Nay, it was even said that he had fled the city and gone away into Germany, or elsewhere at a distance. Let him perish, however, himself and all of us, rather than that we should present such an instance of cruelty to our own age, and leave such an example to posterity. Adieu, my excellent and very dear brother in the Lord. Salute all lovingly, Celio, Imbert, Ribitti, and your own family. Once more adieu.

Yours,  
JOHN CALVIN.

I have written with a troubled mind and confusedly, as well as in haste.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### XCVI.—TO VIRET.

Approval of a letter of Viret to the Seigneuries of Berne—the ecclesiastical property—Italian emigrants at Geneva—troubles caused by the differences of that town with Berne.

[*September 1542.*]

(For yourself only.)

That day on which I thought of writing to you by Nicolas some other business came in the way; this is the reason why

I did not perform what I had undertaken. At length, when I was looking about for an opportunity whereby to write, this brother conveniently offered his services, but saying that he wished me to reply immediately. But when I would have excused myself, owing to my not being able to write so soon, because the Consistory was about to meet, without any hesitation he granted me the whole day. As even then, however, there is not very much time left, I shall briefly run over the particular points which I intended to discuss with you.

The letter to the Senate,<sup>1</sup> seeing that we cannot have the other remedy, which I thought better, pleases me remarkably well. There is somewhat manly and spirited about it. Moreover, it closes the door for the future against mischievous and tyrannical precedents. In my opinion, Erasmus has been very leniently dealt with, especially since others may be brought under more severe discipline, who, unless I am mistaken, had both a better case and were less reprobable in their conduct. Nor do I express myself in this way, because I would have you to flatter others; but caution is required, lest while you are reproving the many, you take care, at the same time, that, on a like occasion, you do not spare the individual offender. However that may be, the whole affair has turned out better than I had even ventured to hope. May the Lord cause your letter to be well received and hearkened to by men.

As to the ecclesiastical property, I have almost no information beyond hearsay.<sup>2</sup> First of all, therefore, I shall mention what I have heard; then, what is my own opinion. They have determined, that whatever the Church possessed of property or annual rents should be put up to sale, on condition that part of the purchase-money should be paid down: that the balance of the price should be met by an annual payment. They add, by

<sup>1</sup> Concerning ecclesiastical affairs. See pp. 321-323.

<sup>2</sup> The Seigneury of Berne put to sale this year the property of the churches, of the priories, and of the cloisters, and drew from them considerable sums, of which a portion ought to have been applied to the foundation of new cures, and in augmentation of the ministers' stipends.—See Ruchat, *Hist. de la Réf. en Suisse*, tom. v. pp. 201-203.

way of exception, that they cannot guarantee or defend possession to the purchasers beyond the period of their own administration. Subject to this condition, Peter Wendel purchases the priory for the sum of one thousand five hundred crowns, others bought vineyards, others fields, others dwelling-houses. Now, you may at once conjecture what I must think of all this. You perceive an alienation of the property has been made, that the Church is to be left unprovided, that the magistrate may grant just what he pleases, as if the property were his own, and if the incumbent does not discharge the duty entirely to his satisfaction, he can even curtail the provision which he allots to the ministers, and may even threaten to withhold it altogether. It is not an easy matter to unravel this business or to say what ought to be done, especially when there are so few who, without self-seeking, dare venture disinterestedly to expose themselves to the shafts of envy ; and there are many who rather prefer by connivance to forget their duty, and so to obtain the favour of men, than to incur their displeasure by a firm and honest opposition. In this affair of the Church property, however, nothing can be accomplished without an entire agreement amongst ourselves. In vain, therefore, you may attempt to set any train of operations in motion unless you have them all ready at the same time to pull along with you. We have this much, however, in our own power, that we withhold our approval, either by words or by any other token, of whatever may be even questionable.

I am glad that lately I did not put myself to trouble to no purpose, by writing into Italy, since my letter after all could not have arrived in time. We have here now another Italian,<sup>1</sup> an old man of a reverend aspect, even in his outward appearance.<sup>2</sup> He was of great authority among his countrymen, lives

<sup>1</sup> The year 1542 was signalized by the establishment of the Inquisition in Italy, and by the dispersion of the reformed communities established at Naples, at Lucca, and at Venice.—See M'Crie, *Hist. of the Ref. in Italy*, c. v. pp. 212-231.

<sup>2</sup> Bernardino Ochino of Sienna, [ancien supérieur-général,] of the order of the Capuchins. Renowned for his eloquence throughout all Italy, he preached the Reformation successfully at Naples and at Venice, was cited before the tribunal of the Inquisition, and escaped by a voluntary exile the condemnation which threatened

here at his own charges ; and if he can acquire the language, I expect will become some time or other exceedingly useful.

John the bookseller, who has lately returned hither, spoke to me about Zebedee,<sup>1</sup> and says that he is ready to come hither if there was any opening for him. I made no other reply except that I would write to you about it. But what to write, verily I know not ; for, as you are aware, we have not the means to engage him ; and you are better able yourself to form an opinion as to the many obstacles which may lie in the way of such an arrangement than I am to express them in writing to you.

There is another affair which sadly vexes me. When I was supposing that everything was conclusively settled by arbitration with the Bernese,<sup>2</sup> lo ! all of a sudden the whole affair is broken off. It was thereupon resolved, on the part of the Council of Two Hundred, that the claims of the Bernese ought to be yielded up to them. There remained an appeal to the General Council or Assembly of the People, which, when the Senate was considering deliberately about convoking them, our friend Amy Perrin<sup>3</sup> said that he retracted his former opinion. Then in magniloquent terms he discoursed about the meanness of making such a base concession. There were some who followed him on the same side. The upshot of the whole was, that the Council of Sixty, and next the Council of Two Hundred, were to be assembled. When the two hundred met, and the matter was propounded to them, lo and behold ! Paguet, as if he were the sole Atlas of the commonweal, broke out in a bitter invective, reproaching the men who were so ready, of their own accord, to despoil the city of such a distinguished privilege. To such a degree did he allow himself to be carried

him. In the month of September 1542 he arrived at Geneva, and was the first pastor of the Italian Church founded in that town.—See M'Crie, *History*, and *Council's Registers*, 1542, *passim*.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 1, p. 328.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 2, p. 204. Notwithstanding multiplied conferences, and the conciliatory efforts of the arbiters of Basle, the disputes between Berne and Geneva had not yet been settled. The two republics were brought to agreement only in the month of January 1544.

<sup>3</sup> He was then devoted to the Reformation and to Calvin, of whom he soon became the most determined adversary.

away by the spirit of contention in debate, that he even went so far as to threaten the members of Council with the Woodmarket, where traitors to the republic are wont to be beheaded. A serious disturbance and riot was the consequence. At length, however, it passed away, on a resolution being come to, that he must humbly, on his bended knees, ask pardon of the Senate for having made use of such language. The whole affair, as you may perceive, is hatched in the workshop of Macrin, who seems to me to be determined, of set purpose, to keep the two towns in a state of perpetual dissension with each other. Now, if you could make it suit your convenience to come hither at present, you would do me a very great favour. For even although there may be no possibility of falling on any remedy, it will afford some comfort both to me and to yourself to have the opportunity of deploring this calamity together. There cannot be a doubt, however, that your arrival will be of great importance to us, provided you are here by Monday. Take care, however, to keep to yourself the reason of your coming, for all those who were present bound themselves by oath to keep silence, so that it will not be without danger. The advantage to be derived from your journey you shall hear of when we meet; and, as I hope also, you will yourself acknowledge it.

Adieu, my dear brother; may the Lord preserve you, and bring you speedily hither in safety. Salute all the brethren and your family in my own name and in that of my wife.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 111.*]

### XCVII.—To VIRET.

The plague at Geneva—conduct of the ministers in these circumstances—  
Italian refugees—the question of the ecclesiastical property examined.

[GENEVA, October 1542.]

Your letter, in which you requested that I would write somewhat about the ecclesiastical property, was delivered to me on



Monday, while I was engaged upon the relics of the wedding. Although that by no means had prevented me from writing, yet since that time I have not had a single moment of leisure.

The pestilence also begins to rage here with greater violence, and few who are at all affected by it escape its ravages.<sup>1</sup> One of our colleagues was to be set apart for attendance upon the sick. Because Peter offered himself all readily acquiesced.<sup>2</sup> If anything happens to him I fear that I must take the risk upon myself, for, as you observe, because we are debtors to one another, we must not be wanting to those who, more than any others, stand in need of our ministry.<sup>3</sup> And yet it is not my opinion, that while we wish to provide for one portion we are at liberty to neglect the body of the Church itself. But so long as we are in this ministry, I do not see that any pretext will avail us, if, through fear of infection, we are found wanting in the discharge of our duty when there is most need of our assistance. In what concerns yourselves I have already told you what occurred to me.<sup>4</sup> Now, since that colleague has been removed you must seek for some one else to be put in his place. If no such person can be found you must devise some plan, but with the common advice of the brethren.

Our friend Bernardino<sup>5</sup> has been assailed by strange manœuvres to induce him to leave us. He remains constant, however; and, in a great measure, he has so broken with Antichrist, that they need not think of troubling him for the future. He has written a volume of sermons, at the end of which he professes

<sup>1</sup> "The plague having made its appearance in several houses of the town, the Plague Hospital was supplied with officers."—*Registers of Council*, 25th September 1542.

<sup>2</sup> "Peter Blanchet, minister, having offered to attend and offer consolation to the poor affected with the plague who are at present in the Plague Hospital, his offer is accepted."—*Ibid.*, 23d October 1542.

<sup>3</sup> According to the testimony of Michael Roset and of Savion, cotemporaries of Calvin, the Reformer offered himself at the same time with Blanchet to visit the sick. But the Seigneurie of Geneva refused his offer, "on account of the great need which the Church had of his services."—*Registers of Council*, 1st June 1545. *Chronique de Roset*, iv. fol., and Savion, 60.

<sup>4</sup> The plague prevailed equally at Lausanne.

<sup>5</sup> Ochino.—See Note 2, p. 331.

that he entirely, and, without any exception whatever, goes along with us—thinks as we do. Many of the Italians visit him; and we have already two other preachers. Those who have known him, consider that the kingdom of Christ has got no small addition in that single individual. In the meantime, as you may conceive, I need to have all my wits about me. The more attentively I observe him, the more highly do I esteem him. He acknowledges, however, that he has been greatly helped and relieved by me, so as to be less easily shaken. The Senate has already granted allowance for his preaching as often as he thinks proper.<sup>1</sup> We have here at present Julio Camillo,<sup>2</sup> whose manifold tergiversations are somewhat suspicious; for although he talks boastingly of the Gospel, yet, because he has something of a secret purpose, which even, although unknown to us, we do not like, we have reason to be upon our guard with him. It is well, however, that Bernardino is on his guard, and dreads him as an enemy.

Now, however, I return to that request of yours about the ecclesiastical property. For you remind me of it again in your last letter. I beg, however, that you may pardon me; for you are aware that the nature of this question is of a kind that requires both time and leisure, a composed mind, and no little diligence. When we were at Ratisbon I lent a hand to Bucer in collecting those materials which he published among the acts of the conferences; but as the question was there only incidentally brought under discussion, what was written there at that time will not suffice for the present exigency. Some little insight, however, may be derived from it. To me it seems twofold. The case seems to me to divide into two

<sup>1</sup> “Bernardin de Sesnaz, of Sienna, an Italian minister, having asked permission to preach in that language, resolved to grant it to him, and that he shall preach in the chapel of Cardinal d’Ostie.”—*Registers of Council*, 29th October 1542.

<sup>2</sup> Julio Camillo, better known under the name of Renato, which he had adopted on embracing Protestantism. Originally from Sicily, he left his native country in early youth, for Paris, where he was long devoted to the study of the Cabala. Having left Paris for Geneva, he preached the Reformation in the Valteline, and joined the sect of the Anti-trinitarians.—Bock, *Hist. Anti-trinit.*, tom. ii. p. 482. His solemn and taciturn manner appeared to conceal heterodox opinions; Calvin’s clear sight did not deceive him.

heads. In the first place, that you may declare that this alienation will occasion stumbling and causes of offence, and, in the next place, you may demonstrate that it is not lawful.

The occasions of stumbling are readily stated. Because that on that account the Papists defame the Gospel, and they have begun to do so even at a time when they had not such a specious pretext for doing so. Formerly, therefore, they took advantage of these calumnies; they will now have a just ground of accusation when they talk about the plunder of Church property. In the next place, because the common people throughout the whole canton dare not speak out openly, they complain about it everywhere in corners, and the ministers have not a word to answer. For after having cried out without ceasing against the sacrilege of the Pope and the whole of the Popish priesthood, with what face can they defend the sale of property which entirely strips the Church bare, and may leave her naked, while they could not even submit to any abuse or misapplication of the revenues. In the third place, because they afford the very worst precedent to other states and rulers. They are more eager than enough to seize upon church property without having further inducement from any other quarter presented to them, but now, if they shall transgress in this respect, one half of the blame will lie upon those who set them the example. Fourthly, that they are not aware, and have no means of knowing, what posterity will do in this matter; for it may so happen, that when the Church has been plundered of everything of her own, she may be left entirely helpless and destitute.

With reference to that second head which is above stated, keep in mind that argument on which the chief hinge of the whole question turns, that what has once been devoted to Christ and the Church, is not the property of the magistrate. And here it will be necessary to put them in mind of that law and ancient method, by which rule of appropriation property of this kind was to be dispensed. You must, therefore, insist upon it that these ungodly paunches have taken possession of what had been solemnly set apart to the service of the Church, that it is clear enough what is a lawful application of Church

property, and that appropriation ought now to be adopted; that the alienation is liable to anathema and to the curse, because it profanes that which is sacred. In the meantime all suspicion will need to be taken off, that they may not think you have a hankering desire after the property. It will need to be demonstrated to them, however, that the rule of reformation which King Josiah prescribed is the best, that the magistrates may have a power of inspection, and that the deacons be the administrators. You can testify, however, that you are content that the magistrate may have the full power of administration, provided he faithfully dispenses the annual income, and neither diminishes nor dilapidates the property.

You perceive how confusedly and hurriedly I have run over these few heads. I make no apology, however; with you, especially who are so well aware that I do not, on so grave a matter, babble with carelessness and rashness whatever comes uppermost, but am forced, by the urgency of the case, to launch forth at once what I would willingly elaborate had I more leisure. Adieu, my excellent and very dear brother. We shall see to the relative of Cordier. The brethren salute you,—my wife and the whole household. Again, farewell. May the Lord preserve you and other good men. I am very glad that you have at length removed to another house, which, if you had not done, I would have turned you out of the old one by my abuse. Farewell; may the Lord always guide you by the counsel of His own Spirit, and protect you by His strength from on high.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

I scarce know what I have written, my eyes are so much affected.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

## XCVIII.—TO BULLINGER.

Numerous occupations of Calvin—death of Leo Juda—ravages of the plague in Switzerland.

GENEVA, 8th November 1542.

When this bearer, who brought you my letter, sought a recommendation from me, I entertained no doubt whatever that he was worthy of it, since he possessed a testimonial from godly and trustworthy persons of his own country who are resident among us. But that which caused me most concern was, that in the midst of these hindrances which beset me at this time, I am compelled to write more briefly than I could have wished after so long an interval. Such, however, I am aware, is your considerate forbearance towards me, that I do hope you will not be very implacable, that you will admit this my excuse, more especially since you may rest assured that I seek no frivolous pretext, nor does it arise from any wilful negligence that I do not now write more exactly and fully. Indeed, I take you to be well aware of my respect for you, how much I honour you, how much, to sum up the whole in a word, from the heart I love you. My long silence has arisen from the circumstance, that when I returned hither, so entirely was my whole attention directed to the renewal and reparation of our affairs, which were almost utterly broken up and fallen to pieces, that it was not possible for me to turn my attention to anything else.<sup>1</sup> Afterward, when the opportunity for writing seemed to me to have been allowed to pass, I wished rather to wait until some fresh opportunity might occur. On this present occasion, while there is a call upon me to write, I could wish that time as well as leisure were at my disposal. On another occasion, I hope both will be allowed me, and then I shall willingly avail myself of the advantage. The death of our brother Leo,<sup>2</sup> as there was

<sup>1</sup> The Seignery of Geneva shewed their sense of the zeal and indefatigable activity exercised in their behalf by the Reformer. "Ordered, to make present to Calvin of a tun of old wine of *l'Hôpital*, for the pains which he takes on account of the town."—Extracts, *Registers of Council*, 17th Nov. 1542.

<sup>2</sup> Leo Juda, one of the pastors of the Church of Zurich, translator of the Old Testament into Latin. He died of the plague the 19th June 1542, in the sixtieth

good reason why it should be lamented by all good men, so also it has sorely afflicted me. For he had always evinced towards myself personally a singular affection, and when I dwell upon the loss the Church has sustained in the death of this man, it is impossible for me not to be deeply grieved. With us, also, the past year has been more than usually fatal; for it carried off both Grynée and Capito, and many other distinguished men, together with Leo. Wherefore, we ought all the more assiduously to endeavour to sow the good seed, that the Church may not remain utterly destitute; in reference to which most desirable object, as your Senate of Zurich has never ceased from the very commencement to employ their utmost exertions, so I understand that it has lately augmented its ecclesiastical establishment. In this belief, we have thought it advisable to send this brother, the bearer, to you. For besides that our schools are but thinly attended, the stipend also is very small. Nor dare I venture to press our Council very closely on this point, since I see clearly that they are quite willing to do so, but their hands are tied. I do not, however, recommend the bearer of this letter rashly to your notice; for Bernardino of Sienna, a man of eminence, and two others, who have observed his conduct, have seriously assured me that he is an excellent young man, and that he is not unworthy the patronage of your Senate. I therefore do request of you, that, on my account, you would take some charge of him, and aid him by your influence with the Council. Neither do I entreat this favour from you only, but also from others of my respected brethren, to whom you will remember me. May the Lord Jesus ever direct you by His Spirit, and preserve as well as increase His gracious gifts in you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Gotha. Vol. 404.*]

year of his age. "Our Church," wrote Bullinger, "has lost in that man an inestimable treasure. As regards myself, I have lost a good part of my life by the death of that much-loved brother; and if I did not find consolation by the hope of a better life in that which is to come, and of the resurrection of the dead, I must have given way under my sorrow."—Letter, cited by Ruchat, *Hist. de la Réf.* tom. v. p. 188.

XCIX.—TO MICHAEL VAROD.<sup>1</sup>

Recommendation of a sick person.

[1542.]

SEIGNEUR MICHEL,—This poor man is so very disfigured body, that it is pitiful, and even shockingly horrible, to see. He says that it has not happened through profligacy. Seeing that it is a pitiable case, will you consider whether you can manage to help him, so that he may not putrify in rank corruption. I recommend him all the more earnestly to you, as thinking that he must belong to the town, for had he been a stranger, I would myself have provided for him in some way, so that no occasion might be given to cry out as they do. But since he is here, I make less difficulty about it.—Your brother and good friend,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Archives of Geneva.* Vol. 1250.]

C.—TO MONSIEUR LE CURÉ DE . . .<sup>2</sup>

Religious controversy occasioned by the plague at Geneva—apologizes for the Reformation.

[1543.]

MONSIEUR LE CURÉ,—We acknowledge that point of your letter to be very true, that the plague which we have in our

<sup>1</sup> Michael Varod was *procureur* of the hospital at Geneva in 1542.

<sup>2</sup> *On the back*: "Answer to a certain *Curé*, which he had written while the plague was at Geneva, wherein there are several remarkable instructions—without date."—From the Council Registers we see that the plague made its appearance at Geneva in 1542, and that during several years it made great ravages in the town and throughout the whole territory of Savoy. The number of sick was immense. It was almost certain death to visit them. Three ministers offered spontaneously to discharge that duty: Calvin, Sebastian Castalio, and Blanchet. Castalio, who was the first person designated by lot, appears to have declined that perilous honour. Blanchet generously made the sacrifice of his life, and the urgent solicitations of the Seignoury of Geneva, who were afraid to expose the valuable life of the reformer, could alone determine Calvin to desist from undertaking the charge which he had himself solicited. See Roset, *Chronique*, iv. 60, and Savion, 60.

town is a scourge of God, and we confess that we are justly punished on account of our faults and demerits. We do not doubt also, that by this mean He admonishes us to examine ourselves, to lead and draw us to repentance. Wherefore, we take in good part what you have said, that it is time for us to return to God, to ask and to obtain pardoning mercy from Him. We likewise see that throughout the whole of Christendom there is great trouble, that there is scarce a single corner which is not in some way afflicted in that respect, from whence we must conclude that the wrath of God is greatly kindled against this poor world. And it is no wonder, for the causes are evident, and they are not far to seek, while one sees that such corruption everywhere prevails, and how vice of every kind is carried to the utmost pitch and reigns paramount. We do not say this to excuse ourselves, by hiding, as it were, in a crowd, but inasmuch as the wrath of God ought to be all the more dreadful in our apprehension when it is thus spread abroad over the whole earth, like a kind of deluge. Besides, when we have well considered the matter in every way, we can come to no other conclusion, except that over and above the vice which reigns generally everywhere, there are among Christians two things which specially provoke the wrath of God; namely, that the one party of them dishonour Him by their idolatry and superstitions, and instead of receiving His holy Word to bring them back into the straight road, not only despise and mock and flout, but have a hatred and horror of, and even persecute the truth. On the other hand, we who know by His Evangel how we ought to serve and honour Him, do not make strict account in our discharge of duty, so that the word of life is as if it were idle and unproductive among us. We have no wish to justify ourselves by condemning others. For in so far as it has pleased God to withdraw us out of the horrible darkness wherein we were, and to enlighten us in the knowledge of the right way of salvation, we are so much the more blameable if we are negligent in doing our duty, as it is written, "The servant knowing the will of his master, and not doing it, shall be severely punished." (Luke xii.) So that we ought not to be astonished if our Lord should visit us twofold, on account of our ingratitude which is in us, when we do not walk



as children of the light, and produce no fruit of that holy calling to which He hath called us. Moreover, He threatens that judgment shall begin at His own house; that is to say, that He will correct His servants first of all. (1 Pet. iv.) But, nevertheless, we would rather consider, on the other hand, that seeing above all else He holds His own glory in highest commendation, He hates and chiefly holds in detestation the idolatries and superstitions by which He is dishonoured, and which more grievously offend than every other thing. Think for a little on what takes place among you. They adore stone and wood; they invoke the dead; they trust in lying vanities; they would serve God by ceremonies foolishly invented without the authority of His Word. The true doctrine is buried, and if any one wishes to have it brought forth, he is cruelly persecuted. Do you think that God can bear with such pollutions and blasphemies against His own honour? St. Paul bears witness that God had sent the plague on Corinth, because the holy Supper had not been so reverently treated there as it ought. (1 Cor. xi.) Then what must we expect, seeing that it has already, for so long a period, been converted into such an execrable sacrifice as is your mass? There is no need for a long proof of what we say. Consider attentively the institution of our Lord, and make the comparison between it and your mass. You will find a greater distance between them than between the heaven and the earth. Thus, in truth, our duty would be, to give glory to God all together with one accord, by confessing our offences, every one for his own sin, according to his state and circumstances. (Dan. ix.) This it is, that on our part we should feel how grievous a sin it is for us not to receive His grace as it befits us to do, when He presents it to us, and that we do not live in higher perfection, considering the knowledge which He hath given us of His Evangel, and the exhortations which are daily made to us by His commandment. Let those who, instead of the Word, follow their own fancies or human traditions, consider that it is an abomination very displeasing to God, that of corrupting His service, as they have done, of adhering to false doctrine, of attributing the grace of His salvation to creatures, of reversing the right use of the

sacraments, turning them quite upside down, of abusing and taking His name in vain, and along with all that, of persecuting the witnesses of Jesus Christ, who dare venture to open their mouth against such abuses. And if some of them are at present in prosperity, let them by no means put their trust in that. For it is ever the fashion of hypocrites, and especially of idolaters, to glorify themselves when the hand of God does not press upon them, as if this were because they have so well deserved of God, while dishonouring Him by their idolatrous mummeries, and by that they harden themselves in their impiety, flattering themselves and condemning others. But what says our Lord? "I have done them," He says, "all the good which was possible, and they have thought that this was the wages of whoredom with their idols. Wherefore, I will take away all that I have given them, to discover their vileness, and constrain them to return unto me."

Now, even at this very time, when we are seeking and searching to find out the misdeeds on account of which God punishes us, and in what we have offended, you allege against us, that we have changed the divine service, and the order of the Church, which had been so well established and observed in this town. This is not any new reproach, for it was made against Jeremiah in his time, as he relates in the forty-fourth chapter. It is, that the hypocrites complain, that since they had left off the adoration of the Queen of Heaven, they had had nothing but famine, war, and all poverty. Lactantius also, an ancient doctor of the Church, and St. Augustine, demonstrate that in their time all the afflictions which had happened in the world were imputed to the Evangel, because it had brought about the abolition of the Pagan superstitions, which were thought to be service to God. You will reply, that it was not all alike; we hold that it was. What then is to be done? We must ascertain what is the truth upon the point, in order to pronounce a sound and correct opinion. Well then, besides that our consciences speak peace to us before God as touching that, the thing itself can clearly answer for us before men. For no one has hitherto shewn us that we had changed anything which was commanded of God, nor that we had introduced any novelty against His person,

nor that we had declined from the truth to lay hold on some evil doctrine. On the contrary, it is notorious that we have reformed our Church according to the pure doctrine of God, which is the rule to apply and to keep up a healthy state. It is true, that it is rather an odious thing to alter what has been hitherto received. But the order which our Lord has once delivered to us ought to be for ever inviolable. Thus, when it has been forsaken for a season, it ought to be renewed and set up again, even should heaven and earth commingle. There is no antiquity, no custom which can be set up or pleaded in prejudice of this doctrine, that the government of the Church established by the authority of God should be perpetual even to the end of the world, since He has willed and determined that it should be so. The reasons which have made us change are more than sufficiently urgent. The first point in Christianity is the true adoration of God. Now, we have come to know, that the form of adoration which we have been in the habit of observing was false and perverted, and, moreover, that it was not in the spirit of truth, (John iv.,) but in external ceremonies, and even in superstitious practices. It is certain that then we did not adore God alone, but wood and stones instead of Him, the pictures, the reliquaries of the dead, and things of a like kind. To the adoration of God is conjoined the rule of worshipping Him aright. And in what manner is it that He is invoked throughout the Papacy, except with doubt and distrust, inasmuch as they know nothing about the office of Jesus Christ as our Advocate and Intercessor, by whom we obtain our requests? (Rom. viii.; 1 Tim. ii.; 1 John ii.; Heb. iv.) Besides, what are the public prayers but murmurs and ululations, vain repetitions without understanding? Thirdly, how many blasphemies are there in it, in so far as the power of the sole Mediator is attributed to saints and saintesses, to obtain grace in their name and by their merits? After the invocation follows the service, as if we were instructed to serve God by the vain traditions of men. On the contrary, He wills and requires that we take for our rule His will alone throughout. (Deut. xii.; 1 Kings xv.) As concerning the confidence and firm persuasion of our salvation, which is like,

as it were, the foundation of all, instead of relying on His pure mercy, in order to have our consciences at rest, and give to Him the glory which appertains to Him, we were taught, like the rest of the world, to put our trust partly in ourselves, and partly in other creatures. There is no need, however, to rehearse all the rest, for there would be no end of that. For, in short, it has come to this, that the grace of Jesus Christ was, as it were, buried out of sight to us. When we have understood so much, and that it has been clearly proven to us, that all that was abomination in the sight of God, what could we have done? Were we to withstand God, and to resist His truth? Had it merely been a matter of Church order, if it had been at all bearable, we might have been content to remain, but it was such a Babel of confusion and disorder, that there remained no other remedy but that of an entire renovation. What shall we say of the Sacraments, the observance and use of which had been altogether perverted from the ordinance of Jesus Christ our Lord? How many silly baptismal ceremonies had been sought out and invented by men, without the authority of God? And what is worse, the true and pure institution of our Lord was, as it were, abolished by such frivolous patchwork. In short, they set a greater value upon the anointing chrism than the water, and at present it seems to be a settled point with you, that our baptism is null, because we have only retained what the Lord has commanded, and what the Apostles have observed and held fast in practice. As for the holy Supper, it has been much more profaned. Our Lord has left us that as a pledge, on purpose that (we might be) certain that our souls are nourished from His body and from His blood, to make us partakers of all His benefits, and peculiarly so of His death and passion. In order that we may do this, we ought to distribute it according to the terms of his commandment, namely, in declaring the worth and efficacy of the mystery. On the contrary, they have converted it into a sacrifice, to make reconciliation anew with God by man's work, and not for the living only, but also for the dead. The priest, to make what he considers a due use of the sacrament, separates himself from the Church. The whole is done and spoken in an unknown

language, after the manner of enchanters with their charms. When Easter comes, again they only give to the people the half of the sacrament, depriving them of the cup, against the express command of the Master. To consent to such sacrilege as that, is not even to be thought of. And yet, nevertheless, they reproach us with having let down and abased this holy sacrament. But the thing speaks for itself, that we have restored it in complete integrity, where it had been corrupted and polluted in so many ways. St. Paul, wishing to correct an abuse which had grown up among the Corinthians in reference to this sacrament, sends them back to the first institution of the ordinance by the Lord himself, as to an inviolable statute. (1 Cor. xi.) What could we do, then, to correct the infinite abuses with which it had been contaminated, except to follow that same rule? Let them shew us, if they can, if there be anything in the manner of our worship which is not conformable to the institution of our Lord, to the usage of the Apostles, and we are ready to amend our fault. But when they accuse us without either rhyme or reason, that will not in the least disturb or excite us, so as to make us renounce the true and settled institution. Wherefore, that which you impute to us as a fault, we hold and take to be a work of God, the best which we had been able to attain to. Yet nevertheless, we do not deny that we have come very far short in many respects, for which our Lord has good right to punish us, but it is in regard that our life does not correspond with His holy doctrine of which we make a profession.

In like manner, where you exhort us to return back to God in order to appease His wrath, you drive us back to the means which rather serve to provoke and inflame it the more. First of all, you would have us to present the oblation of the precious body and blood of our Lord Jesus. We are well aware that it is a customary practice among you; but in order to ascertain whether it is a work pleasing to God, inquiry ought to be made if it is according to His will. Besides, He does not say that we should offer His body, but that we should receive it. (Matt. xxvi., Mark, Luke, Paul.) *Take*, says He, *eat*. Instead of receiving the body of Jesus Christ, if we wish to make God believe that

it is a sacrifice which we offer to Him, where shall we find any approval of our phantasy? We would pray you seriously to ponder this reason. You advise us to make an offering of the body of Christ by a priest, for the purpose of obtaining grace. We reply, that He never gave us His sacrament for that end, but that it is in order to receive *him*, in the intention of being partakers of that once-for-all and eternal sacrifice which He alone has offered, according to His office. (Heb. vii.-x.) We say, moreover, that it is to derogate from His dignity, inasmuch as He has been consecrated sacrificial priest, without successor or companion, to make offering of Himself, because none other could be worthy to perform an act of such excellency. For the office of sacrificing is to be Mediator, to make reconciliation between God and men. In whom shall we put our trust,—in Jesus Christ, or in you? seeing that there is such contrariety. Then after that, you hold forth to us the beautiful general processions. But what use is there for that, except that with great pomp and ceremony one would think of appeasing God? You will tell us that you would intend that they should devoutly engage in them. And what devotion is there, to place reliance in candles and torches, in beautiful and sumptuous equipage, in images, in reliquaries of the dead? Such, indeed, has always been the use and wont of Pagans, as appears from history. How such things comport with Christianity it is impossible to explain. We make no question about assembling together to make solemn prayer to God. But we ask what there is in these public general processions, beyond the pompous accoutrements, lamps and luminaries, relics, and other things of a like kind? All that sort of thing smells of rank Judaism, and befits Pagan rather than Christian worship. They shout well, indeed, and make an outcry, and they sing prettily. But to what end? It is in an unknown tongue, and therefore against the express command of the Holy Spirit, (1 Cor. xiv.,) who wills, that the common prayers be made in the common language, on purpose that the rude and uninstructed may take part in them, and say Amen at the end. You further exhort us to invoke the Virgin Mary and the saints, among whom you make special mention of Saint Peter, as our patron. But God calls us to Him-

self alone, forbidding us to have recourse elsewhere, (Ps. xlix.,) and with good right, for His chief glory lies in that we should call upon Him alone in the name of Jesus Christ. But even had there been no such reason for it there, we have many exhortations in Scripture pressing our return to God with prayer and supplication in time of pestilence, of war, and famine. (Is. xlv. xlv.; Jer. iii.; Hos. ii.) Never does there occur a single word about the invocation of the saints. It would therefore be very inconsiderate on our part were we to follow what you have told us, in turning away from the doctrine of God. Touching that of your calling Saint Peter our patron, it is the same thing with what the prophet speaks: *Israel, thy gods are according to the number of thy towns*, (Jer. ii.,) and at that time the intention of the people of Israel was not to invent many gods in order to abolish the worship of the true God the Creator of the world. Forasmuch, however, as each town chose a patron in whom to trust, they are reproved by the prophet, for that every town had its own god. You would have us to do the like at present. But it does not please God that we should take up with any other patron than Jesus Christ, who has taken us into His keeping, to recommend us to God His Father. If we have formerly been in this state of blindness of mind, the darkness has passed away. (John x.) There is now an end of transgression, now that we have the shining light before our eyes. But you have known by experience, you say, how much that has profited you. It is no new thing, as we have said, to attribute God's benefits to our own foolish and perverted doings, as if by our idolatry we had merited the good things which He has sent us. The sorcerers, enchanters, soothsayers, and other like, could say as much. But we have our certain rule, which is, that reason goes before, and experience follows after. If we do thus, we shall not wander away from the right path, and shall neither decline on this side nor on that from what God commands us. And we shall find in truth and without deceit, that His help is never wanting to those who put their whole trust and confidence in Him. On the contrary, in seeking for other help, we shall sometimes think to profit by it, but we shall be disappointed in the end.

Well, then, our Lord Jesus wishes to open your eyes to understand and to see what it is that He would say, when He calls Himself the only Saviour, the only life, the only sanctification, the only wisdom, the only confidence of men; that it is in order that we may altogether acknowledge Him to be such, that with good accord we glorify Him, as well in heart as with the mouth, and equally in all our works, so that as we have all received one baptism in His name, we might have the same confession of our Christianity.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

### CI.—TO PHILIP MELANCHTHON.<sup>1</sup>

Testimony of respect and of fraternal affection—his homage in one of his books—details of his labours at Geneva—survey of the state of Germany and of Italy.

GENEVA, 16th February 1543.

You see to what a lazy fellow you have intrusted your letter. It was full four months before he delivered it to me, and then crushed and rumped with much rough usage. But although it has reached me somewhat late, I set a great value upon the acquisition. Howsoever, therefore, I have been, through the negligence of this person, deprived for a season of so much enjoyment, he, nevertheless, at once obtained my forgiveness, when I got possession of the communication. Would, indeed, as you observe, that we could oftener converse together, were it

<sup>1</sup> This letter is doubtless one of the first addressed by Calvin to Melanchthon. United, since the Conferences of Ratisbon, to the German Reformer by the bonds of affection and friendship, he thenceforth lavished upon him the testimonies of his esteem and respect, and kept up relations with him which were never interrupted, notwithstanding the difference of their doctrine and genius. Calvin dedicated, in 1543, to Melanchthon, the publication which he set forth against Doctor Albert Pighius, the opponent of the doctrine of grace, and he edited, some years afterwards, the *Loci Communes* of Melanchthon, translated into French; thus presenting a remarkable example of the spirit of union and concord which he applied in its development to the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, according to that beautiful passage of one of his Letters: "Would that the union between all Christ's Churches upon earth were such, that the angels in heaven might join their song of praise!"



only by a letter. To you, indeed, that would be no advantage ; to me, however, nothing in this world could be more desirable than to take solace in the mild and gentle spirit of your correspondence. You can scarce believe with what a load of business I am here burdened and incessantly hurried along ; but in the midst of these distractions there are two things which most of all annoy me. My chief regret is, that there does not appear to be the amount of fruit that one may reasonably expect from the labour bestowed ; the other is, because I am so far removed from yourself and a few others, and therefore am deprived of that sort of comfort and consolation which would prove a special help to me. Since, however, we cannot have even so much at our own choice, that each at his own discretion might pick out the corner of the vineyard where he might serve Christ, we must remain at that post which Himself hath allotted to each. This comfort we have at least, of which no far distant separation can deprive us,—I mean, that resting content with this fellowship which Christ hath consecrated with His own blood, and hath also confirmed and sealed by His blessed Spirit in our hearts, while we live on the earth, we may cheer each other with that blessed hope to which your letter calls us, that in heaven above we shall dwell for ever, where we shall rejoice in love and in continuance of our friendship. But that you may not suppose that I have made an improper use of your name in the *Essay*<sup>1</sup> which I have lately published, I ask you to recognise or approve of it on the score of my affection for you, or to yield so far to your own kindly disposition as to acquiesce in what I have done. Among many reasons by which I was induced to take this course this was not the least important, that Pighius had selected Sadolet, under whose name he might impose upon the world his own frothy conceits. That there might, however, be no occasion for drawing odious comparisons, I have held my peace ; nor, indeed, shall I here make any lengthened apology, since I could have avowed at

<sup>1</sup> This treatise, first of all written in Latin, and afterwards translated into French, is inserted in the *Recueil des Opuscules*, p. 257, under this title, *Réponse aux Calomnies d'Albert Pighius, Contenant la Défense de la Sainte Doctrine contre le Franc Arbitre*, with a Preface to Melanchthon, of February 1543.

once that I had taken the course which I felt assured, from the kindness and good-will which you entertain towards me, was no unwarrantable liberty.<sup>1</sup>

As to our own affairs there is nought that I will write. The sole cause which imposes this silence upon me is, that I have so much to tell you that my tale would never have an end. I labour here and do my utmost, but succeed indifferently. And, nevertheless, all are astonished that my progress is so great in the midst of so many drawbacks, the greater part of which arise from the ministers themselves. This, however, is a great alleviation of my troubles, that not only this Church, but also the whole neighbourhood, derive some benefit from my presence. Besides that, somewhat overflows from hence upon France, and even spreads as far as Italy. It is not without the bitterest grief that I hear of the sad condition of your Germany. Nor are the evils which I dread of a less serious kind than those which I bewail. For if what is reported be correct, that the Turk again prepares to wage war with a larger force, who will stand up to oppose his marching throughout the length and breadth of the land at his mere will and pleasure?<sup>2</sup> And as though it were a small matter, after having disbanded the army under base circumstances, after so much expenditure lavished in vain, after so much dishonour incurred; and finally, after having, by the three years' pestilence, and that which more lately visited us, lost the very flower of their strength, they are at this present time suffering even more severely from civil discord. Notwithstanding all this, however, our rulers, though so sharply chastised, are not awakened from their sleep, nor have they learned

<sup>1</sup> In his answer, dated the 4th of May following, Melanchthon thanks Calvin for the Dedication of his book, mingling the expression of his acknowledgments with high praise of the author. "I am much affected by your kindness, and I thank you that you have been pleased to give evidence of your love for me to all the world, by placing my name at the beginning of your remarkable book, where all the world will see it."—*Calvini Opera*, tom. ix. p. 175.

<sup>2</sup> Faithful to the engagements which he had contracted with the King of France, Soliman in fact invaded Hungary with a numerous army, and took possession of almost the whole country, while the crescent of Mahomet and the Lilies united, to the great scandal of Christendom, before the walls of Nice, then besieged by the combined fleets of France and Turkey.—Robertson, *Hist. of Charles V.*, c. vii.

to give glory to God. This, however, somewhat revives me, they say that the Archbishop of Cologne and some others have turned their minds in earnest to set about the work of thoroughly reforming the churches.<sup>1</sup> Nor, indeed, do I consider it an affair of small importance, that the bishops, from among whom hitherto not a single individual has given glory to Christ, now raise their hands, and publicly declare their defection from the Romish idol. Only, we must now be very careful and strive diligently to promote their progress, lest from a divided Christ some still more monstrous form of evil may arise. Meanwhile, the Pope of Rome already parades the empty show of a Council at Trent,<sup>2</sup> that may amuse the world, and keep it hanging a little while longer in suspense. But God will not suffer Himself to be mocked any longer. I am deceived if this year does not produce a very great change of affairs, which may soon take place; but already I have said too much.

Adieu, therefore, O man of most eminent accomplishments, and ever to be remembered by me and honoured in the Lord! May the Lord long preserve you in safety to the glory of His name and the edification of the Church. I wonder what can be the reason why you keep your *Daniel* a sealed book at home. Neither can I suffer myself quietly, without remonstrance, to be deprived of the benefit of its perusal. Will you salute Doctor Martin respectfully in my name? We have here with us at present Bernardino of Sienna, an eminent and excellent man, who has occasioned no little stir in Italy by his departure. He has requested that I would greet you in his name. Once more adieu, along with your family, whom may the Lord continually preserve.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Zurich. Coll. Simler, tom. lii.*]

<sup>1</sup> The Archbishop, Elector of Cologne, had requested the advice of Bucer and of Melanchthon in endeavouring to reform the churches within his diocese. See Melch. Adam, *Vita Melanchthonis*, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> The Council of Trent, so often announced and as often adjourned, only commenced on the 13th December 1545.

## CII.—TO VIRET.

Ecclesiastical particularities—struggles to maintain the right of excommunication over the ministers.

*The day before Easter, [1543.]*

I send you the letter of Pellican,<sup>1</sup> that you also may consider it and take counsel along with me whitherward that may tend about which he writes. As for the books he inquires about, I have no certain information. I shall wait until William returns, after the fair-time. Antony, as you are aware, has been admitted and received without any difficulty. Thus the brethren wisely, so they think, could give no better decision than to pass over in silence so much wickedness. It cannot otherwise be, than that the Lord, for the punishment of our remissness, will soon take the case into His own hand, and from His own judgment-seat pronounce a just deliverance. The aforesaid Antony has given me to understand, through Matthew, that Sulzer has advised him to make his peace with me; but on what ground could I condescend to this reconciliation? However, should he once seek to have an interview, the Lord will open up a way. We have lately had a discussion with the Council, which, however, was soon disposed of. While we were met in consistory, the Syndic brought us word that the Senate retained in its own hand the right of excommunication.<sup>2</sup> I immediately replied, that such a decree could only be ratified by my death or banishment. Yesterday I called the brethren together, by whose advice I have demanded of the Syndics, that the Senate should appoint an extraordinary meeting. They assented, but not willingly. There, in a large discourse upon the weighty argument, I laid the whole question fully before

<sup>1</sup> See the next letter.

<sup>2</sup> See note 1, p. 292. The ecclesiastical ordonnances had separated distinctly the domain of religious authority from that of the civil jurisdiction. To the Consistory belonged the right of private remonstrance, of public censure, and of excommunication. When the delict was punishable by corporal chastisement or by fine, the Consistory then referred the matter to the Council, who pronounced sentence, and enforced the penalty.

them. Without any difficulty I have got what I asked for, and, from what I understand, those who have been the means of raising this question have been sharply taken to task about it. Who they may be, if you do not know by this time, you are well enough able to conjecture. Adieu; may the Lord have you in His keeping, and ever direct you by His Spirit, dearly beloved brother. Salute Ribitti, Imbert, and the rest.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 235.]

### CIII.—TO CONRAD PELLICAN.<sup>1</sup>

Offer of his services—answers the accusations directed against Farel—  
justification of Ochino—introduces two young men.

GENEVA, 18th April 1543.

I reply somewhat late to your letter, because I wished previously to ascertain somewhat about the books which I sought for, that I might let you know something certain about them. I am now given to understand that they have not yet been printed. Whenever they do appear in print, I will carefully see to it, that you may receive them by the first opportunity. I do not proffer my good offices to you in whatsoever they may be of service with many expressions of forwardness, because I think that you are quite persuaded that nothing would be more agreeable to me than in any way to be able to satisfy you by actual experience of the good-will and respect which I entertain for you. But because you mentioned in your letter that Bullinger

<sup>1</sup> Conrad Pellican, a pious and learned professor of the Academy of Zurich. Born in 1479, he evinced from his infancy an extraordinary taste for the study of the Hebrew language, in which he made rapid progress, and which, at a later period, he taught at Basle and at Zurich. Called to that latter town in 1526, he acquired the friendship both of Zuingli and of Bullinger, was a correspondent of Calvin, and died in 1556. The celebrated Peter Martyr succeeded him.—Melch. Adam, *Vitæ Theologorum Germanorum*, p. 162, *et seq.*

had communicated to me by letter what might concern the public business of the Church, I wonder how it has happened that his letter was not brought to me at the same time. Now, however, as many days have elapsed, and none has come to hand, I am led to suppose that either what was written had been lost, or that he had altered his mind. Would, however, that he had done as he proposed at first, that I might not be deprived of the singular pleasure which I could not but have thence derived. Will you, however, request him earnestly in my name, whenever his convenience will admit of it, to do me this kindness? For he may have somewhat perhaps to communicate, upon which it may be both useful and necessary that I should be admonished.

That which has been reported to you about Farel is to me so utterly incredible, that I would venture, even at the peril of my life, to be answerable for it, that no such expression had ever fallen from him; for I know that he both loves and reveres you. And, most assuredly, the very atrocity of the words used is a good enough argument of itself to prove how little ground there is for that accusation. If it had been said that he had made you wince a little, and without any more serious outrage, I would admit that the report might have been believed, or at least suspected to be true, until he had cleared himself. But only consider how monstrous it is to suppose, that he who has always been so closely allied and intimately connected with you, who at this very time reveres and loves you, had given utterance to such reproachful expressions as would be reckoned extreme even among the most deadly foes. It will be your duty, therefore, most reverend Sir, entirely to root out of the hearts of our brethren that unkind suspicion. Besides, indeed, that it is altogether inhuman, and utterly unreasonable, that any man should be condemned unheard; such persons do wrong Farel when they do not acknowledge him to be such a man as they have ever truly found him by experience to be. Therefore, do you apply your utmost endeavour to uproot this noxious weed of malevolence, (for it has sprung from nothing,) before it breed further mischief, and lest that advantage be given to Satan which he is

always so eager to catch at. Had Farel been now at Neuchatel,<sup>1</sup> I would not have allowed him to delay so long to justify himself carefully, even to your full satisfaction. For the present, however, until we shall know for certain that he has escaped in safety out of the jaws of death,<sup>2</sup> we will supplicate the Lord that He would restore him to us as soon as possible, so that some time or other he may do what he would himself have done at the very first had he been present.

There is also another subject on which I am requested by Bernardino to write you. We have been informed as a fact, that through the folly of a certain brother who was of his acquaintance, he had become suspected in your eyes, as though he were not altogether quite sound in opinion either on the article of the Trinity or of Christ. I shall say nothing further in his excuse, than simply to state the truth. As I do not place much reliance on the most of the Italian wits, after that he mentioned to me his intention to make a more lengthened sojourn among us, I discoursed with him carefully on the separate heads of the doctrine of faith, and in such a way that he could scarcely conceal it, should he differ materially in any point from us. It did appear to me, and if I possess any judgment at all, I can bear testimony, that as well in every other point as upon this important one, he was entirely of the same mind with us. This, however, I have remarked, that he did repudiate those over-nice distinctions and discussions which we meet with in the scholastic writers; and certainly, if we weigh attentively how much these subtle speculations of the sophists differ from the sober and moderate doctrine of the ancients, we shall be of the same mind. It seemed, therefore, only what was due, to bear this testimony to a pious and sincere man, that he may not be undeservedly aspersed among you, by having even the shadow of a suspicion

<sup>1</sup> Farel was then at Metz. See the Letter XCIII.

<sup>2</sup> The life of Farel was threatened more than once, by the Roman Catholics of Metz, as it had been formerly, when he was preaching the gospel in the valleys of the Jura and the Alps; but, like the Apostle Paul, nothing could quench his zeal for the promulgation of the truth.—*Hist. des Martyrs*, lib. iii.

thrown over him. He is indeed an excellent person, and a man of genius, learning, and sanctity.<sup>1</sup>

But now to make an end of my letter. These two youths come to you for the purpose of following out their studies. As they have sojourned some considerable time among us, and have so conducted themselves that we can venture to engage for their probity, and do consider them worthy of our recommendation, I request of you, my dear Pellican, that you would shew them the same kindness you are wont to express toward all good men. They have wherewithal to live at a moderate rate, but they would ask the favour of you to put them in the way of finding a convenient lodging.

Farewell, respected Sir, and greatly esteemed by me in the Lord. Salute reverently Bullinger, Theodore, Megander; may the Lord continually direct you all for the upbuilding of His Church.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

#### CIV.—TO THE SEIGNEURY OF GENEVA.<sup>2</sup>

Calvin at Strasbourg—exposé of his proceedings with the magistrates of that town for preaching the Evangel at Metz—the news.

STRASBOURG, 1st July [1543.]

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL AND VERY HONOURED LORDS,—I hope that Master Peter Viret shall have made my excuses for not

<sup>1</sup> Ochino allowed himself to be entangled at a later period in those opinions which at this time he repudiated. He afterwards became one of the principal chiefs of the sect of the Anti-trinitarians.

<sup>2</sup> This letter, written from Strasbourg, has reference, as well as the following, to the journey which Calvin undertook, in 1543, for the evangelization of Metz.

A town of the Empire, and the seat of one of the three bishoprics which the treaty of Cateau-Cambresis incorporated with France, Metz received betimes the seed of the Reformation. The first missionaries were John Leclerc and John Chataelain, who suffered martyrdom, (1523-1524.) The Church which they had helped to found by their testimony, enlarged under the cross of persecution. She demanded, in 1544, the free exercise of religion at the Diet of Ratisbon, but without obtaining it. The year following, she called Farel. The intrepid missionary answered the perilous appeal. Driven from the town by a sedition, he retired to the village of



having written you from Berne, forasmuch as at the time I was indisposed. Having arrived at Basle, I presented my letters to Messieurs of the Council, who gave me letters of recommendation to Messieurs of this town, requesting that they would assist me with advice, as well as furtherance on my journey.

In this town, as well by means of your letters and those of Messieurs of Basle, as from the good affection which they bear towards me, and singularly in favour of the cause, I have met with good furtherance, as much as I could desire. Messieurs have very liberally offered to do whatsoever lay in their power. Only that we must be careful, Master William (Farel) and myself, as to the means which it would be fitting to adopt. We have therefore set before them three ways: either to bring us on direct to Metz, although that was not without danger; or once more to call on the Council of Metz to let us have a hearing; or otherwise, to send to the town of Smalkald, where the Protestant League are at present assembled, and there to request pressing the princes and ambassadors of the towns to take the thing in hand.

As to the first method, they have replied, that willingly they would send an embassy along with us, to insure our safety and to solicit a hearing, and that they would spare no pains in regard to that, were it not that they saw that they could not do so without endangering our persons, and with but little hope of advantage. To send letters in their private capacity, would be labour lost. The reason is, that the Papists wax more insolent upon the coming of the Emperor, inasmuch as he has promised, on the occasion of this journey, to settle all the religious differences, as if he had nothing else to do at present.<sup>1</sup> So, whenever they have written from this

Montigny, where the Protestants flocked together to wait upon his preachings. The gates of the town were shut upon them by order of the Roman Catholic magistrates, and thus they perceived they were driven from their country. Received with kindness by the magistrates of Strasbourg, they had recourse to the intervention of the Protestant princes of Germany to obtain free access to their houses and property, as well as the free exercise of their worship. It was during these negotiations that Calvin left Geneva, and rejoined Farel at Strasbourg.—Bèze, *Hist. Eccl.* tom. iii. p. 431, and following.

<sup>1</sup> Charles presided in the following year at the Diet of Spire with extraordinary

town, for answer and solution of everything, they always refer them thither.

The third method, therefore, has been found the best, to send to Smalkald, which they would have done already, were it not that they have wished to get articles from us to set forth whatever might seem best to us. But to-morrow, please God, the messenger will set out. They have allowed us to proceed in the affair with so much diligence, and so thoroughly in earnest, that we would acknowledge their zeal and courage; and as I know them, I have no doubt that they will do yet more than they promise. It is six days' journey thither, at the rate of speed their herald will go, for usually they take fully eight days.

Now, while this journey is gone about, seeing that I must wait here, it seemed to me to be best, my Right worshipful and very honoured Lords, to send back your herald, the present bearer, in order to let you understand how matters were going on, for I would have hesitated to make so lengthened a stay only in expectation, without in the meanwhile letting you hear my news; and that could be done without being at much more expense than if I had retained the messenger here along with me. You will consider, however, about sending him back as shall seem good. To meet whatsoever may happen, I have delivered over to him six crowns, that he may have wherewith to meet his expenses in going and returning, with three *testons* which I have given besides. Howbeit you can do according to your own good pleasure. I tell it, that you may know, in case you should send him back, that, in order to be in time, he must be here within a fortnight; for we shall then arrange to set out for Metz, should it please God to open up the way for us.

As concerning myself, I am well aware that I cannot be so long time absent from you, without some shortcoming in the care of your Church. But seeing that one has come so far, to return without effecting anything whatever, would have been too absurd, and when there is a reasonable ex-

éclat, but strove in vain to bring the two parties to agreement. All that he obtained from the majority of that assembly, was a declaration by which the points in dispute were to be submitted to a Council.

pectation in waiting yet a little while longer, I am well inclined, before my return, to essay whether or not the Lord would have somewhat accomplished. Wherefore, I beseech you to have patience until that interval, which is short, be overpast. Thereafter, with all possible speed I will hasten to return thitherward.

Meanwhile, Right worshipful Lords, I beseech you to have in mind and to aim at the honour of God, as you do, and to keep the Church together in good order and condition. On purpose that you may see what need there is for going to Metz to silence Caroli, I send you a copy of his last correspondence by way of answer, wherein he displays more fierceness and arrogance than ever, and inasmuch as he relies wholly upon the presence of the Emperor, we shall never get him to hearken to reason, for before that arrival he would have betaken himself to flight.

There has been a great uproar here, burst forth in different parts of the Netherlands, now that the Duke of Cleves has recovered a strong town which he had lost, since he was ruined and dispossessed; but seeing that all as yet is uncertain I forbear writing you further about it.<sup>1</sup> Howbeit, such is the disturbed state of affairs, that no further off than a distance of two leagues they have made a raid for two nights running, and have stolen and carried off fifty horses belonging to the merchants.

And now, Right worshipful and very dread and sovereign Lords, after our humble commendations of Master William and myself, I pray the Lord Jesus to preserve and uphold you by the bestowal of His grace, enabling you well to guide and rule your people happily, and always in peace, to the honour of His name.—Your humble servant in our Lord,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.*—*Archives of Geneva*. No. 1250.]

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Cleves, the ally of France, was threatened at the time by the whole force of Charles V.

CV.—TO THE PASTORS OF THE CHURCH OF GENEVA.<sup>1</sup>

The preaching of the Gospel encounters difficulty at Metz—intrigues of Caroli—fraternal exhortations.

AT STRASBOURG, 1st July 1543.

Grace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is at present, my dearest brethren, nothing about which I have to write, except that up to this time we are kept waiting in a state of suspense; for my coming hither has happened very untowardly, and at a most inconvenient season, seeing that the Papists of Metz wax insolent because of the near neighbourhood of the Emperor, and pretend his authority as a cover for their making no concession to us whatever. They maintain, indeed, that it is not becoming to decree an alteration in their condition in the presence of the Emperor, and without consulting him. Therefore, because it is perilous to proceed to Metz, and would now be of no use,—for that even the letters of the Senate here would be set at nought and despised, the Senate resolved that a deputation be sent to Smalkald, where the Protestant Confederates are at present met, requesting them to appoint an embassy in the name of all, who may accompany us to Metz, and extort from the inhabitants of that city what they are not willing freely to grant. Moreover, the journey from hence to Smalkald requires eight days' travel, which a speedier messenger will, however, accomplish in six. And that there may be no delay, the horses have been kept in readiness. We have resolved to await the result here, that we may not incur to no purpose the fatigue of so long a journey; and it appears to us that we shall have obtained no mean advantage if the deputies come thither along with us, who, whether he will or no, may draw that impious dog to a disputation, which he not only tries to shirk, but plainly

<sup>1</sup> To the godly and faithful servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, the pastors of the Church of Geneva, my very dear brethren.

refuses.<sup>1</sup> For the present, indeed, under shadow of the Emperor's presence,—because he has got that convenient hole to crawl into, he raves more saucily than ever. But the Lord, as we hope, shall ere long repress the insolence of this sacrilegious agitator. See to it, I beseech you, while I am absent, that you are all the more attentive to duty, and even more earnestly diligent. There are, indeed, many considerations which ought to arouse you to take care, that the Church may not feel any change or inconvenience from my absence. If you only set about this with hearty agreement, and with a serious desire and sincerely affectionate zeal, the Lord will vouchsafe a very prosperous issue. In the meantime, do you commit unto the Lord in your prayers both ourselves and this His own cause, in which at this time we are engaged, which is not free from danger or difficulty, notwithstanding all the help which human foresight can supply. Farel very kindly salutes you. I not only keep my health much as usual, but feel as if restored, so that at present it is somewhat better than ordinary. Adieu, my very dearly beloved brethren, and do labour diligently in the upbuilding of the Church. Master Bernardino may also be invited to be present at the reading of this letter, whom salute most kindly in my own name and on behalf of Pirrhus.<sup>2</sup> Salute all the godly. May the Lord, indeed, so govern and direct you by His Spirit that you may serve Him profitably and with advantage.—Your brother,  
CALVIN.

[*Lat. autogr.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 106.]

<sup>1</sup> The apostate Peter Caroli. Reconciled with the Sorbonne, he went to Metz to give proof of his zeal to support the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, and had boasted publicly to confound Farel and Calvin by a public discussion, at which he dared not even appear.—Bèze, *Hist. Eccl.*, tom. iii. p. 431, *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> It is probable that Farel is here indicated, in allusion to the impetuosity of his disposition.

## CVI.—To VIRET.

Relation of his proceedings at Strasbourg, and the state of things at Metz.

STRASBOURG, *July 1, [1543,] about mid-day.*

As usual it has so happened, that I have found matters far more forward and advanced than I had expected. But, indeed, as you are fully aware, I am not very effectively supported. The Senate neither advises nor permits our at once proceeding to Metz. It is thought to be quite useless to write thither, since the letter which has already been sent is either held in contempt, or at least is not so much considered as it ought to be. For the coming of the Emperor elates the courage of the Papists, who have obtained the entire direction of affairs at Metz. Therefore it is that our magistrates are about to send a deputation to Smalkald, where the Protestant princes are at present assembled for the purpose of demanding a common embassy, whereby to quicken the motions of those who will do nothing unless they are driven on and goaded forward. You cannot imagine how important our magistrates conceive this to be. They have received us indeed with the utmost courtesy. Whensoever we shall have an answer, we must then gird up our loins for action, and we shall call you to our assistance. But after all, in this so doubtful and unsettled state of affairs, what could you obtain? In the meantime, while the deputation is gone to Smalkald, our Senate have thought it was desirable to let them know where I was, and what expectation detained me here. Should the messenger return hither, as I expect he will, take advantage of him to inform us certainly about everything. As to the challenge of Caroli you need have no doubt whatever about that. We have his own hand for it. Of late he was meditating flight, but now when the Emperor is nearer at hand he waxes more audacious and insolent, because he takes it certainly for granted, that a public discussion cannot possibly be obtained by us. Request from this bearer a sight of his reply, which

having read, you can return. You will clearly perceive from thence the lofty puffed-up humour of the man. Adieu ; salute all the brethren, and pay a visit sometimes to Geneva. Again, adieu. May the Lord preserve you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### CVII.—TO THE SEIGNEURY OF GENEVA.

Answer from the Assembly at Smalkald—prolongation of the stay of Calvin and of Farel at Strasbourg—preaching of the Evangel at Cologne—war-like preparations in the Netherlands.

*From STRASBOURG, this 24th July 1543.*

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL AND VERY HONOURED LORDS,—Only two days after the return of your herald we have got an answer from the meeting at Smalkald, that for the present the princes and ambassadors from the towns could not openly undertake anything in the affair of Metz ; but before separating they would come to a settled determination ; that is, to hold another meeting to finish what has been begun, seeing that those of Metz will not go forward, unless they are compelled. Now, for the present, their mind is to demand a safe conduct for themselves and those whom they wish to bring thither, and that done, proceed to the place in order to press the business further. On hearing these tidings, we have gone, Master William and myself, before Messieurs the Councillors of this town, to request of them that they would inform us what might seem to them good to be done, representing to them that we were afraid it would be too tedious to await the coming of their ambassadors, and also that I had received letters from you, in which you required me, in the event of there being no hope of doing anything for the present, that I would speed forward my return without loss of time. Albeit, that should it seem good to them, Master William would be able to wait on still, in case perhaps the good brethren of Metz might be disheartened if we should both of us go away together. So thereupon we gave

them to understand, that our wish would have been that Master William had remained, and that I had withdrawn homeward, until that some fixed resolution had been come to. Their answer was, that had there been any very pressing occasion which constrained me to return forthwith to you, that they would not have ventured to hinder me, but if it were possible, the preferable course seemed to them, that I ought not to stir until the return of their ambassadors, whom they expected to see here again in this town within eight days.

As touching the commendations, thankful acknowledgments, and offers which, on your part, I have made to them, they have answered, that as up to this hour they have engaged in that cause, so they are thoroughly determined to follow it up and persevere for the future; only they are sorry that matters are not in a better order, and have charged me to make their commendations to you, promising without fail to write by me, for that they were not aware of having so safe a messenger. Having received this answer, Master William and I have altered our purpose; and we have no doubt you will approve of my having followed the advice of the Council of this town, seeing that the course to be followed was somewhat doubtful. It is quite certain that they would never have wished to detain me without having some good hope. Would that our Lord might so order and dispose His work that the issue may be yet better!

The Metz brethren on their part, also earnestly desire that it may be so, for the late eschevin,<sup>1</sup> with four of the burgesses, was at the meeting, and there is still a representative there. As soon as I am able, you need not doubt that I shall hasten my return; and were it not that the interval is so short, I would not have failed to make the journey to offer my excuses in person by word of mouth. But seeing how the matter rests, it would be to no purpose to leave a work so well begun. Wherefore, Right worshipful Seigneurs, I beseech you yet further, that you would be pleased have patience for a little while, as indeed

<sup>1</sup> Gaspar de Heu, Seigneur de Buy. It was under the administration of this magistrate, favourable to the Reformation, that Farel had been called to Metz.



also I hope you will, which is the reason why I do not make you more lengthened excuses.

For news, the Archbishop of Cologne is wonderfully stedfast in planting the Evangel in his country;<sup>1</sup> and truly his is a miracle of zeal, for notwithstanding the resistance he meets with from the clergy, the university, and the town of Cologne, even, forsooth, to the extent of openly threatening him with deposition, he does not on that account relax, but perseveres more stoutly than ever, entreating the preachers who are with him to make no account of his person nor rank, but that the Reformation may go forward vigorously, and as it ought, inasmuch as his conscience urges him to discharge this duty before his death. He has at present called together the states of the country, to settle a right form of order and policy over the churches, and to correct the idolatry; for as touching the preaching, he had already been determined formerly, seeing that the whole country, the clergy and the town excepted, have accepted everywhere the preaching of the Evangel.

In the meantime the Emperor makes his preparations for the defence of the Netherlands against the King,<sup>2</sup> or rather to wreak vengeance upon the Duke of Cleves, one cannot tell which; howsoever, he is not yet very far advanced, and it would be rather dangerous were he to be in too great a hurry. For the Turk approaches with a great power, and is about to enter Germany on three sides. If that does not compel him to withdraw altogether, it will at least retard his movements. If he had leisure to apply himself against the Duke of Cleves, every one considers that he would get the upper hand.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See note 2, p. 296. This prelate, remarkable for his zeal and for his piety, had boldly introduced the reformed doctrines into his states, without allowing himself to be intimidated by the opposition of his clergy, or the menaces of the Pope. He protested, however, against the title of *Lutheran*, declaring, that he wished to order his diocese in manner conformable to the apostolic doctrine. In 1546 he was excommunicated by Pope Paul III., and deposed after the battle of Mühlberg.

<sup>2</sup> That war, which was the last act of the struggle between Charles the Fifth and Francis I., was fought simultaneously in the Netherlands, in France, and in Italy. The Emperor was in alliance with the King of England, Henry VIII.; Francis I. with the Duke of Cleves and the Sultan Soliman. Peace was re-established by the treaty of Carpy, (18th September 1544.)

<sup>3</sup> Ill supported by the King of France, the Duke of Cleves was overborne by the

As for the King, he has been hampered for about a month bypast on account of the continual rain. It has been the news of the last four days that he was about to march to attack the Duke of Cleves. But yesterday the news came that he would withdraw. It is not known whether it is on that account that the English press forward. Neither is it known for certain that it is so. The Emperor seeks to borrow the artillery and ammunition belonging to the towns; but he has not so much credit with them as he would like to have.

To the right honourable and redoubtable Seigneurs: after having humbly commended me to your kind favour, I pray that our Lord Jesus would govern you always by His Holy Spirit, vouchsafing you prudence and uprightness in the discharge of your office which He has committed to you for His own honour and glory, and the safety of your people, upholding by His holy protection your town and Seigneury in happy prosperity.

Your very humble servant in our Lord,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Archives of Geneva. No. 1250.*]

#### CVIII.—TO THE AMBASSADORS OF GENEVA.<sup>1</sup>

Exposé of the motives which prevent immediate return to Geneva—Cologne news and of the Netherlands.

FROM STRASBOURG, 24th July 1543.

VERY HONOURED LORDS,—Having received an answer from Smalkald, I would, with devoted good-will, have desired to come to you at Berne on my return to Geneva, had I not been prevented by Messieurs of the Council of this town. The answer was, that they must settle some other points in the meeting of the convention before they could take the affair of Metz into consideration. There should, however, be no remissness on their part, and they would determine before their departure to hold another meeting, and in the same place, in order to follow up their pro-Emperor, reduced to implore pardon on his knees, and dispossessed of a part of his states.

<sup>1</sup> To the ambassadors of Geneva at Berne.

ceedings more vigorously, and that before going to Metz, they would ask safe-conduct as well for the arbiters deputed as for such as they might bring in company along with them, without mention of any person to conduct us thither in greater safety. Having heard this answer, I was of opinion to return immediately to Geneva, until it were necessary to proceed to Metz, and that in the meantime Master William could remain here to keep up the spirits of the Metz brethren and encourage them to persevere. But Messieurs, the councillors of this town are of opinion that we should both of us wait until the arrival of their ambassadors, who, as they expect, will be here in eight days. I am well inclined to give good heed to their advice, seeing how faithfully they have engaged in this affair. Meanwhile, I beseech you to pray the Lord, that He would not allow me to return without bringing forth some fruit, since I have waited so long already. I shall also pray to Him on my part, to guide the affair in which you are engaged, in suchwise that it may be brought to a good issue, and shall return Him hearty thanks, when I shall have heard some tidings, such as I desire.

I have not leisure to write you the news at length, and besides I have scarcely any that I know of to tell you but bad, except that the Archbishop of Cologne shews a marvellous affection on all occasions to promote the Evangel.<sup>1</sup> It is true that the town and University of Cologne, with the clergy, made all the resistance thereto which they could; but so much the more has he shewn stedfast constancy in going forward. This is the first day of his meeting with the states of the country, to consult about setting up an order and policy in the Church: I mean, for their resolving and carrying into execution that which shall have been agreed, for the formula is already drawn up. If the Lord vouchsafe him that grace to get the consent of the States, this will serve to dash the rage of the adversaries.

The Emperor continues always his preparations for a descent towards Brabant, whether it may be to drive back the King or to make an onset upon the Duke of Cleves. But he does not make

<sup>1</sup> See the preceding letter, p. 366.

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his approach in any great hurry, and besides, he has not made out a case. On the other hand, there is some danger that the Turk will stop him, who is coming down with a great force to attack Germany upon three sides. Were the Emperor able to march forward, the Duke of Cleves could not sustain the attack unless he had the King's aid, who has been prevented by the continued rains from approaching. Now of late he has begun to do so, and was already well advanced, but the rumour is that he draws back. We do not know whether the English are forced to withdraw. Howsoever it may turn, it is a sad thing to see such desolation everywhere throughout Christendom. Would that our Lord, of His infinite mercy, might consider the miserable condition in which we are, and albeit that we might very deservedly have been more sorely visited, that it would please Him to withdraw His hand, vouchsafing to us the spiritual acknowledgment of our sins, in order to bring us back to himself.

Wherefore, very honoured Lords, after my hearty commendations to your good graces, I pray the Lord to assist you in the business which you are gone about, upholding you in real prosperity.—Your servant and good friend,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Archives of Geneva, No. 1250.*]

### CIX.—TO THE SEIGNEURY OF GENEVA.<sup>1</sup>

New delay in conclusion of the affair of Metz—Calvin makes arrangements for his return to Geneva.

13th August 1543.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL AND VERY HONOURED LORDS,—The eight days which Messieurs of this town had required me to wait

<sup>1</sup> The negotiations pending between the Protestant Princes and the Magistrates of Metz were prolonged to a wearisome length. Tired of a proceeding that seemed to be endless, balked in his expectation of seeing a free access open to the preaching of the reformed doctrine in that town, Calvin sought permission to depart, from the Magistrates of Strasbourg, and prepared to return to Geneva. The refugees of Metz obtained leave that same year to return to their country, with the promise of a Church, and a precarious toleration of their worship, which, with much ado, scarcely lasted a few months.

have turned out to be three weeks, and hitherto we have not gotten any final resolution, for their chief ambassador has not yet returned from the court of the Emperor; and it was he who could explain matters, so that upon his report they might advise further.

But, nevertheless, my conscience goads me to delay no longer, for I ought not to be carried away to such a degree by the longing desire to serve the town of Metz, as to overlook the duty which I must fulfil toward you.

I am more content to have made the journey to no purpose than that I should weary you out by my tiresome delay. However, I purpose, once for all, to go for the last time within three days before Messieurs of the Council, and to state to them that I could stay no longer, and having done so, to return to Geneva, unless an entrance has been already obtained into Metz, which is not to be looked for; for the Council of Metz, instead of replying to the Protestants, has sent some one to the Emperor in order to protract matters, and will take care to create delay as much as it can. Our Lord, it is true, can easily break up and frustrate all their devices, and the chief thing is to pray to Him that He would assist us in the doing of His work, else we shall be utterly unprofitable, whether it be in counsel or in action, so far as we are concerned. But I shall make up my mind to follow as nearly as possible the path which He shall point out to me, that is to say, to do my utmost for those of Metz; in suchwise, however, that I may not set aside or neglect your service, seeing that He has specially bound me to you.

After my humble commendation to your Right worshipful and redoubtable Seignury, commending me to your good graces, I beseech our merciful God to govern you by His Holy Spirit, for His own glory and the welfare of your town, upholding you in real prosperity.—Your humble servant,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Archives of Geneva.* No. 1250.]

CX.—TO MONSIEUR DE FALAIS.<sup>1</sup>

Exhorts him to quit his native country and to retire where he can make free profession of the Gospel.

[14th October 1543.]

MONSIEUR,—How much soever it may be contrary to the usual fashion of men that I use so much freedom as to address you familiarly by letter before being better acquainted, nevertheless, since I feel well assured that my letters shall be agreeable to you, it would be hypocrisy in me to make lengthy excuses as if there were any doubt about that. So, therefore, my bearing and behaviour in this respect shall be as that of one of your friends, without any further preface.

The matter in hand which I have to discourse with you would, indeed, almost require that we should meet together to talk the matter over for at least half a day. And in good earnest, for four or five months past, I have often desired that it might be the good pleasure of God to afford us that opportunity.

<sup>1</sup> *On the back*: "To my good lord and friend Sire Jacques Le Franc."—James de Bourgogne, Seigneur de Falais and of Breda in Brabant, great-grandson natural of Philip le Bel, Duke of Burgundy. Brought up at the Court of Charles the Fifth, this seigneur adopted, in his youth, the reformed faith, and under the Spanish rule not being able to avow his profession, by the advice of Calvin he quitted his country, abandoning the whole of his property, which was confiscated by a decree of the Court of Malines. Thenceforth devoted to perpetual exile, he dwelt successively at Cologne, Strasbourg, Basle, Geneva, and maintained an active correspondence with the Reformer, who heaped upon him the tokens of his friendship, and dedicated to him in 1546 his Commentary on the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians. These kind relations were unfortunately disturbed at a later period on account of the trial of Jerome Bolsec, in which M. de Falais openly took part against Calvin. The latter keenly resented that act of hostility on the part of a friend, which broke up the friendship, without any after healing, in 1552. The letters of Calvin to M. de Falais have been published in the last century at Amsterdam from the originals long preserved in that town.—*Lettres de Calvin à Jacques de Bourgogne, Seigneur de Falais*, 1 vol. 8vo. Amsterdam, 1744. We republish them here in more chronological order, revised and corrected from the originals now deposited in the library of Geneva, with some other pieces appended which have not hitherto appeared in print.

And, indeed, up till this time I have been in doubt, whether for better advice I ought to entreat you to undertake a journey, in order that after having seen and considered more closely, we might be able to determine what ought to be done. For had the question been, to deal with the matter in deliberation as at all doubtful, there would have been many *pros* and *cons* to settle before being able to solve it; it would have been somewhat silly and inconsiderate on my part to attempt to do so by letter. But at length, I have thought, on the other hand, that if our Lord hath already bestowed the courage upon you to visit us in good earnest, to put your confidence in our Lord along with us, that it would be trouble thrown away, and show much besides of shyness and drawing back, to recommend you to come merely to see what was done there, to advise you at all upon that head. Wherefore, I would not recommend you to take that unnecessary trouble, only to have to begin again afterwards afresh, and that perhaps in less favourable circumstances than the present.

I understand very well the difficulty in which you are placed if you look to the world, and those considerations which may keep you back. But you will need to come to a settled conclusion, to cast aside everything which shall come in the way to cross you in your purpose. One ought not, it is true, to take such a step at random, that is to say, without foundation, and without knowing why or wherefore. But when you have your conscience assured by a testimony which is better and stronger than all the world could give you, you ought to acquiesce therein out and out, and deem besides, that all the obstacles which interpose to divert or turn you aside, are scandals which Satan lays before you to block up the way. Howbeit, to my thinking, there is no great need to allege many reasons to shew you what to do according to the Word of God. I take it for granted, that you are already clear upon that point. You have only the regret of what you leave on the one hand, and on the other, the fear of not meeting with all that you could desire. All worldly regrets, however, may be overcome by this consideration, that there is no condition more unhappy than to live in trouble of mind, and to have a continual warfare raging within

one's self, or rather without ceasing to be tormented by a hell within. Consider, then, whether you can have peace with God and your own conscience, while persevering in the state wherein you now are. In the first place, if the hope of being better off still holds you back, you perceive plainly enough that the opening abyss grows ever wider, and that in the end you sink the deeper. Secondly, should it please God to repair the disorder which prevails at present, what delight would it afford you if you could say,—While my Master was banished from this country, I was quite willing to be excluded, and of my own accord to go and serve Him; and now that he is come again, I return to give Him praise? while as yet there is no appearance of his being about to do so. Wherefore, the course which it most befits you to take, is to withdraw before you are plunged so deep into the mire that you are not able to extricate yourself; and, indeed, the sooner the better. For in such a case you must seize the opportunity when it presents itself, concluding, that when the Lord vouchsafes the means, it is as though he opened the door for us; thus it behoves you thereupon to enter without further trifling or delay, for fear that it may be shut, while in the meantime we wrangle and debate about it.

Now, the most seasonable occasion, I conclude, is when He has broken those heart-ties, as well your own as those of your good wife, making that easy to you, by the disposedness wherewith He has inclined you, to what must otherwise have been so full of difficulty. In such a case, we ought, according to the exhortation of the holy apostle, to avail ourselves of the gifts of the Spirit, putting them to profitable use and into practice, and never allow them to lie dead and useless, fearing lest they may be altogether quenched through our own negligence. Therefore, since you have every appliance you could wish for at hand, you ought not to tarry, for should it so happen, what experience of your faith could you ever have in that? There cannot be a doubt, that our father Abraham must have felt great reluctance when he was obliged to leave his country, and that he had not all things to his liking; yet nevertheless, without hesitation he hastened forth. If we are his children, it is only seemly that we do follow him. We have no express revela-



tion commanding us to leave the country ; but seeing that we have the commandment to honour God, both in body and soul, wherever we are, what more would we have ? It is to us, then, equally that these words are addressed, *Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred*, whenever we are there constrained to act against our conscience, and cannot live to the glory of God. For the rest, our Lord will vouchsafe you wisdom to order your steps aright, and you are yourself in the most favourable position to judge whither your affairs are tending. I desire, however, that you should be endeavouring to shake yourself loose, in order that you may feel yourself more alert and free to act, when you shall have got rid of these entanglements, with the aid of the good friends whom you have with you thereabouts, who may be helpful to you both in the way of advice and painstaking on your behalf.

The worthy seigneur whom you have so much desired to lend some help,<sup>1</sup> is about to leave, offering to do, for his part, all that lies in his power in the way of duty ; and certes, the zealous interest he evinces toward you, ought indeed to quicken your motion, and be like a new spur to increase and stir up the good inclination which you already possess.

Then as for what remains, we cannot so well manage to settle that by writing. I shall, however, beseech our heavenly Father, that He would open your eyes yet more and more, that you may be able to contemplate what He has already in some measure bestowed upon you, giving you, besides, strength of endurance to follow the course which He points out to you. Finally, that He would direct you in everything and throughout all by his Holy Spirit, keeping you in His protection. Whereupon, I would commend me humbly to your kindly acceptance, without forgetting the good fellowship of the worthy Seigneurs who are along with you.

Your servant, humble brother, and entire friend,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.*—*Library of Geneva*. Vol. 194.]

<sup>1</sup> David de Busanton, Seigneur du Hainaut, in retirement at Geneva.

CXI.—TO MADAME DE FALAIS.<sup>1</sup>

Christian counsel and exhortations.

*This 14th October [1543.]*

MADAME, AND WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—I have no great matter to write you about at present, unless it be to let you know that I have received your letter, which affords me a suitable occasion to thank our Lord for the many graces He has bestowed upon you, and peculiarly on account of His having thus disposed you to relinquish and renounce all, to devote yourself wholly to His service. It is, indeed, only what we ought all of us to do without murmur or gainsaying, and is even, as it were, the first lesson in the school of Christ. The greater number of scholars, however, acquit themselves very badly. On that account, therefore, I praise our Lord, for that He has made you feel how highly He prizes the glory of His name, to give it the preference above every other worldly consideration, and even so to experience what a happiness it is to serve Him with a quiet peaceful conscience, so that you may reckon *that* the greatest treasure you could happen upon. As it is, therefore, quite superfluous to exhort you very much, when I see that you have already made up your mind as it appears to me, all that remains for me is to take pains to confirm you in that holy resolution. Besides, I do earnestly hope, that our Lord has not kindled such a zealous desire in you, as not also to give you the grace to reach forward to the mark whereto He urges you forward. And over and above all, He has already shewn by such considerable beginnings, that we ought to have confidence in Him, that He will perfect what He hath begun.

<sup>1</sup> *On the back*: "To Madame and good sister Madame Katerine Le Franc."

Iolande de Brederode, of the ancient and illustrious house of the Counts of Holland, aunt of Henri de Brederode, who, in 1566, presented the request of the four hundred reformed nobles of the Netherlands to Margaret of Austria, and thus laid the foundation of the liberty of the United Provinces. Of a stoical and generous spirit, Madame de Falais partook the sentiments of her husband, and she shared the noble fellowship of the sacrifices which he made for the sake of liberty of conscience.

It is true also, that on your part you have great bars which lie in the way to obstruct your progress, and also the gentleman on his side yet many more. But in putting on the strength of our Lord, you will not care a straw for them, and skip over them without difficulty, not, however, so far as the flesh is concerned, but in suchwise that you shall acknowledge the truth to be fulfilled in you, according to what the prophet says, "The Lord maketh my feet like hinds' feet." Only, take care not to let the zeal which the Lord has bestowed upon you grow cool; but rather to look upon it as though it were Himself who solicits and importunes you to come away. And should there be some weakness of infirmity about you, first of all, entreat Him specially in prayer that He would correct it, while on your part you strive against that weakness to get the better of it. Secondly, beseech Him when He shall perceive that you come on too slowly, that He would take you by the hand, and, as it were, deliver you in spite of yourself. There cannot be any doubt but that Sarah was a great solace to our father Abraham, when he had to set forth upon his journey. Follow you her footsteps like one of her daughters, for we see from the example of Lot's wife what is the consequence of looking back. Howsoever that may be, I do entertain the assurance that you have not put a hand to the plough, meaning to look behind and turn back upon it.

If this letter had been presented to you by a messenger who was altogether a stranger, I would have been possibly somewhat more lengthened in my address; but when the messenger can himself supply what is deficient in the letters, we must not cast such discredit upon him as to write all that we would have you to know, as if he had not a mouth to speak for himself. For this reason I shall conclude this letter, after having commended me affectionately to your kind favour, and having prayed our Lord that He would carry forward His work in you, leading you even by His Holy Spirit, both to the knowledge and the obedience of His good will, giving also strength and prudence to him who ought to be your guide, to go before, to urge you by his example, and also that He would be so gracious to you as to make you a helpmate as He has ordained. I

shall await the return of the kind gentleman, the present bearer, not without having a great desire to see you.

Your servant, humble brother, and entire friend,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

## CXII.—TO MONSIEUR DE FALAIS.<sup>1</sup>

Further exhortation to decide him on quitting his country.

GENEVA, [1543.]

MONSIEUR,—Although I rely with confidence in our gracious God, that as He has guided you hitherto, bestowing grace to overcome many difficulties, which might have turned you aside out of the straight road, He will also in time coming vouchsafe you strength to resist all the assaults which Satan can muster up against you, nevertheless, when I consider the danger wherein you now are, already harassed by so many temptations, as I see them arrayed and set in order, I could not refrain from reminding you, that the benefits which God hath bestowed upon us, indeed require that we should prefer His honour to all the world besides, and that the hope of salvation which we have by His Evangel is so precious, that we ought readily to forego all meaner considerations, in so far as they hinder us from reaching forward to that hope, and that we ought to have such contentment in conforming ourselves to His will, that whensoever the question arises of our displeasing the whole world, that we may obey His pleasure, it is good for us. Not that He does not put you in mind of this without my warnings; for I am well assured, that foreseeing the occurrence of temptations, you have taken good care to arm and furnish yourself beforehand by meditation upon these things. And can you not say as much, moreover, that you have that imprinted on the heart? But well do I know how profitable it will be for you to hear a word or

<sup>1</sup> This letter is without date; but Calvin might have written it shortly after the two which precede it, in order to overcome the last scruples of M. de Falais, then on the point of abandoning his fortune and his country.

two of exhortation from your friends, for that will serve very much to confirm you. I have sometimes experienced this myself. On the other hand, had this only been the point in consideration, that in this manner I might express the anxiety which we entertain about you in this quarter, that of itself were quite a sufficient reason for me. That, besides, such as it is, ought to be an argument to persuade you of our desire to have good accounts of you, that we may have occasion to return thanks to God, having understood that you are spared, or rather that He shall so have tried you, that He will, notwithstanding, have given you courage to overcome all the wiles of the devil. If you have to fight, and that should be the will of God, reckon that it is but a passing tempest, and that you can betake yourself to a covering shelter from the storm—for we have no other retreat than that of our God—let us then hide ourselves there, and we shall be in security. The hope of our being able to reform by the instrumentality of human means is very small. Wherefore, we must not repent of having come forward, nor of our on-waiting in following of God, even should the whole world pass on before us. And even now we must not draw back on that account; for whosoever shall do so will find himself deceived. Let us firmly hope that at length the Lord will take pity upon His Church. But let every one proceed just according as he is called, and let him who has more grace shew the way to others. This is what ought to make you bethink yourself, that is to say, that you are so much the more obliged to run quicker than many others, on account of our Lord having given you the power, and having also brought you to the spot, from whence it is not allowable for you to withdraw to the rear. And in fact, when a man has once withdrawn himself from that abyss of the spiritual captivity, or rather, has been delivered by the hand of God, should it so happen him to be engulfed anew, and to depart from the liberty which the Lord had vouchsafed for him, he is quite overwhelmed when he finds himself in a state of confusion, from whence it is not possible to come forth.

I say this, not because I think it shall happen, or that I distrust you, for, as I have protested from the beginning, I feel

well assured that nothing will shake your resolution ; but we must not be wanting in stirring up one another, however well disposed we may be ; and all the more that we have been deliberating with ourselves, we are the more glad when our friends hold out a helping hand to strengthen us. In short, I just do what I would desire you to do to me were I in your situation, and I never doubt but that you will take it with the same heart as that from which it proceeds.

Wherefore, Monsieur, after my humble commendation to your kind favour and to that of Madame, I beseech the God of grace always to manifest Himself for your protection, and to defeat the wiles of Satan, so that having full hope in Him you may not have any other motive but to glorify His name, and that He would so strengthen you in constancy that you may never be disturbed by the fear of man, nor stunned by the uproar which they shall make, but He would so sanctify you that Himself may be the place and palace of your sanctification.

Your humble brother and servant always,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

### CXIII.—TO VIRET.<sup>1</sup>

The ministerial office refused to Castalio—The marriage of Bonnivard,  
Abbot of St. Victor.

11th February 1544.

SEBASTIAN has set out with our letters to you. Would that either he might consider more advisedly what was best for himself,

<sup>1</sup> Regent in the College of Geneva, Sebastian Castalio sought also to have the title of minister, as we see from the Council Register, January 1544. "Sebastian Chatillon, regent. Calvin represents to the Council, that it is very right to employ the Regent, but not in that office of the ministry, *on account of certain peculiar opinions which he entertains.*" These opinions which were called in question, were his doubts on the doctrine of election, on the descent of Jesus Christ to hell, and on the authenticity of the Song of Solomon. Offended at not being able to obtain the office and functions of a minister, Castalio denuded himself of those of regent, and prepared to leave Geneva, provided with the most honourable attestations of the pastors of that town.

or that we might have fallen upon some method by which we could have contented him without disadvantage to the Church. When his old situation with us had been kept open for him, he refused to stay unless we should add somewhat to his stipend. This could not be obtained from the Senate. To me it seemed better to say nothing whatever about the reason why he could not be admitted to the office of the ministry, or to hint merely, that somewhat of a hindrance lay in the way, and thus to prevent all unpleasant suspicions, so that the public estimation in which he is held should suffer no diminution. My intention was, that I might spare him, which I would willingly have managed, (although, perhaps, not without incurring displeasure,) if he would only have suffered me. The case, therefore, at his own request, was discussed in Council, but without any difference of opinion. I am truly sorry on his own account, and all the more so, because I fear that he may not find in your quarter that which he desires. Do you look after him, and help him to the utmost of your power. What his opinion of me may happen to be, gives me no concern whatever. Raymond, assuredly, so far as he could, has lately torn me in pieces during my absence, by venting the most outrageous invectives. There is no need, however, of my annoying you by repeating them over. Depend upon it, however, there is nobody here so perversely saucy who would venture upon the half of what he said. I bear with it all, notwithstanding, and conceal my knowledge of it, except that among the brethren, I have complained that there were some who did not speak and feel kindly concerning me. But let us not stop to consider such trifles. Do you know that the Abbot of Saint Victor, and the mother of Corne, by their unsuitable marriage, have afforded us plenty of sport in the way of joking?<sup>1</sup> Adieu, my dear brother; salute

<sup>1</sup> Francis de Bonnivard, prior of St. Victor, celebrated for his wise and prudent spirit, his talents, and above all, by his long captivity in the Castle of Chillon. Restored to liberty on the conquest of the Pays de Vaud by the Bernese, he returned to his own country, and was charged with the editing of the Chronicles of Geneva. Having been married previously to Catherine Baumgartner of Berne, he married, in 1544, Jeanne d'Arneis, herself at that time widow of two husbands, and mother of the Syndic Amblard Corne. This marriage was not a happy one, and the

Celio, Ribitti, your family, and the rest of our friends. May the Lord preserve both you and them.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

#### CXIV.—TO BULLINGER.

Conclusion of an arrangement between Berne and Geneva.

GENEVA, 17th February 1544.

I have never yet replied to your letter in which you admonished me of the need there was that those disputes between the Bernese and our people which were then astir<sup>1</sup> might be settled by friendly arbitration, and wherein you also requested that so far as was allowable for me, I would constantly interpose to prevent that useless quarrel on both sides from creeping on any further at so unseasonable a time. Albeit, however, that you only spurred me on when running in that direction of my own accord, it has helped me forward not a little when I was almost exhausted in rolling this stone already, to be goaded forward by this new impulse, that I might not give in before the matter was finished. And besides, that you may be all the better aware of how much service your exhortation and those of others have been to me, I was very nearly ten times over begin-

quarrels of the two spouses drew upon them more than once the censures of the Consistory. See *Notice of Francis Bonnivard, Prieur of St. Victor*, by Doctor Chaponnière. Genève, 1546.

<sup>1</sup> After five years of embroilments and continued struggles between Berne and Geneva on account of the disputed territories then in litigation, peace was at length re-established between the two towns by the definitive sentence of the deputies of Basle, chosen as arbiters, (January 1544.) This decision, accepted equally by both parties, divided between them the jurisdiction of the lands belonging to Saint Victor, and the Charter granted to the Genevese fourteen cures or benefices out of the dependencies of the ancient bishopric, with power to place ministers; discharged the Bernese from the oath which those of Geneva pretended to be due to them on account of the occupation of the bailliages of Gex and of Ternier; and last of all, stipulated for the free return of the banished exiles of Geneva, after the troubles of 1540.—See the *Chronique de Roset*, l. iv. c. 65; and Ruchat, *Hist. de la Réf.* tom. v. pp. 240, 241.



ning to lose courage and to despond. It was not without great difficulty brought about, that the former judgment which had been passed at Basle was received here, and the second proved yet more troublesome to me, for more than ever had been yielded by it to the Bernese, and our people, because they now considered that they had fully discharged their duty, became all the more difficult to manage. Thereupon, it behoved me all the more to set my whole energies to work, and although my labour was not far from being thrown away to no purpose, when I was beginning almost to despair of a happy settlement, the Lord, altogether unexpectedly, shone forth marvellously upon us. At present, therefore, by the blessing of God, we enjoy not only peace, but also the most perfect agreement, which I trust shall be firm. Adieu, most learned Sir, and my very dear brother in the Lord. Salute reverently D. Pellican, Theodore, Megander, Gualther, and the rest of the brethren. May the Lord ever direct you all by His own Spirit.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

My colleagues salute you all.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### CXV.—TO VIRET.

Farther details of the arrangements with the Bernese—recall of the refugees—preparation of several works—disagreements with Castalio.

GENEVA, *March* 1544.

When scarce a day passes in which some messenger does not set out hence direct for you to whom I could commit my letter, I shall not throw away time in excusing myself, that you may not believe it has happened through my neglect, that for so long I have never written you, when you would not only be desirous to know somewhat of our affairs, but had also requested that I would do so. Howbeit, you must not impute it to neglect, that I have for a while delayed. For while the deputies were here, because nought had been settled, I was unwilling to write

to no purpose. Lately, when Nicolas and William went away I had scarcely time to write a short letter to Germany. With the exception of these two, no one else presented an opportunity. I could have found one if I had made inquiry. In so far I confess that I was negligent. When, however, I was about to give the letter to Godfrey's son, in came Ribitti in the meantime, to whom I have briefly narrated the story of the agreement.

It would be tiresome to enumerate all the details. Let it suffice that you have the sum and substance.<sup>1</sup> The winding-up of the whole business leads me to hope well for the future. For the Bernese deputies, having got the business brought to a settlement according to their own heart's desire, went away homeward rejoicing. And our own friends, although they have not obtained all they wished, are nevertheless very well satisfied. So far as I can forecast in my own judgment, it will be not only a sure and firm peace, but a lasting friendship. Lambert, the provost of the city, has married his step-daughter to the son of Amy Chapeaurouge.<sup>2</sup> Thus you have some prospect of an amnesty.<sup>3</sup> Ever since our exiles first heard that the magistrates are so ready to set open the gates, they also pant wishfully to return. There is now a stir made about Vanzy, and, so far as one may conjecture, he will obtain what he asks, for the prospect of money is pleasant and inviting: and the more headstrong spirits have already been tamed. One is restored already, the son-in-law of Francis Favre, at the request of Amy Perrin, who wishes to entrust him with the management of Melchior's tavern, which he holds at present as tutor or trustee.

<sup>1</sup> See the preceding Letter.

<sup>2</sup> One of the Genevese refugees at Berne, belonging to one of the most distinguished families of the republic.

<sup>3</sup> In the original: ἀμνηστίας. During the period of Calvin's banishment to Strasbourg, several parties had arisen at Geneva. The most important was that of the *Articulans*, or of the *Artichaud*, whose chiefs, after having possessed supreme power for some time, were either put to death or banished, in consequence of a popular reaction. Several of the exiles retired to Berne, whence, after matters in dispute had been arranged between the two cities, they were permitted to return to Geneva.—Spon, *Hist. de Genève*, tom. i. pp. 281, 282, Note O.

I have spoken to the deputies about you ; for I wished to sound them whether we could draw you thence to ourselves. They refused, however, but in such a way that it did not look as if they would be stubborn, if our people were some time to push the matter. I have offered my service to Girard, if there should be occasion for it. That the work should be dedicated to the Bernese, would not be according to my mind,<sup>1</sup> unless you shall have ascertained beforehand from the secretary, that such a mark of respect would neither be displeasing to them nor hurtful to you. I had heard that you were meditating somewhat against the Sorbonne articles,<sup>2</sup> which I earnestly would desire may be true ; but Ribitti replied, that he had heard nothing of it. I wish therefore you would do so, and that you would write me back word that it is done. There are very many indeed in France who desire to see it. I have been requested by some of them. You can, if you will, relieve me of this undertaking. Those of Neuchatel tease me incessantly for another book against a certain work of the Anabaptists.<sup>3</sup>

Ribitti also in an offhand way dealt somewhat with me about Sebastian,<sup>4</sup> and seemed to press home, that he ought not to be passed over by us. When he often repeated the expression, What would I wish him to do ? I replied, somewhat roused, that I would willingly give way, but that I ought not to be so hard pressed to admit him against the voice of conscience. He objected to that, that he had been in the office of the ministry. I denied

<sup>1</sup> Without doubt the Dialogues of Viret, *Dialogi de Confusione Mundi*, published in Latin and French. Geneva, 1545.

<sup>2</sup> "It was," says Th. de Bèze, "in this year (1543) that those of Sorbonne, with the connivance of the bishops, usurped the authority of making articles of faith on the controverted questions of our time in the matter of religion."—*Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 33. It was not Viret who replied to that strange pretension of the Sorbonne, but Calvin. The answer of the Reformer, a model of pith and irony, appeared in 1544, under the title, *Les Articles de la Sacrée Faculté de Théologie de Paris, avec le Remède contre le Poison*.—*Recueil des Opuscules*, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> *Briève Instruction pour armer tout bon Fidèle contre les Erreurs de la Secte Commune des Anabaptistes*: Geneva, 1544. Inserted in the *Recueil des Opuscules*, with a preface by Calvin to the Ministers of the Churches of the county of Neuchatel, 1st June 1544.

<sup>4</sup> Sebastian Castalio.

that; and added, that he had been sent to preach without any previous examination while I was absent, and without my knowledge; it was not fair, therefore, to charge that upon me. I could not rightly understand whether he was in jest or in earnest when we came upon the mention of Canticles; but his opinion seemed to me not to differ greatly from that of Sebastian. Concerning the descent of Christ to hell, we exchanged not more than three words; for our conversation was broken off by the entrance of some visitors.

What Sebastian would be at I know not, in boasting that my friends are surprised and laugh at the thought of my adducing the forty-fifth psalm for the defence of the Song of Solomon, and since the descent of Christ to hell in the Creed is subjoined to the burial, bringing forward for the confirmation of my own interpretation, that expression which he uttered while hanging on the cross—My God, &c. But I can bear his mockery, as well as that of others, patiently and willingly. I am not at all alarmed at the conceit of their being able to overcome me by reasonable argument. This only I would beseech of you, that you do not interfere with me about Sebastian. So far as I have been able to collect from his discourse in conversation, he entertains such an opinion of *me*, that it is almost impossible we can ever agree together. I express myself to you in a way that I would not write to others. Nor indeed have I any reason to complain of your having hitherto given me any trouble on that score.

A little while after his return, I wished to know what those particular acts were in regard to which he deemed that it would be of advantage to myself and to the Church that I should be admonished. I have only been able to extort two. That there was a certain native of Berne who had been informed by myself what it was about the Canticle that I so much disapproved in him. I refuted this calumny. The other offence was, that my colleagues flattered me. I answered him with a suitable response. He had nothing more to say. I was sorry for him. I could wish, that without offence provision were made for him somewhere; and willingly to the best of my ability would I exert myself for that purpose. His learning and genius I highly

esteem. Only I could wish that it were allied to a better judgment—the judgment regulated by prudence, and that overweening confidence which he has conceived from a false persuasion that he has discovered a more excellent [*i.e.*, *moderate*] way, were entirely uprooted out of his mind.

Adieu, my very dear brother and sound friend ; kind salutation to the brethren, your wife, and your aunt. The Lord preserve you all. My wife dutifully salutes you and your family.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### CXVI.—TO THE MINISTERS OF NEUCHATEL.<sup>1</sup>

Controversy with Chaponneau regarding the Divinity of Christ.

GENEVA, 28th May [1544.]

It has much grieved me, my very dear brethren in the Lord, that your letter was not sooner delivered, for had I received it in time your wish would have been complied with, if not to the full extent, yet, at all events, partially. That I did not, therefore, come to Neuchatel on the day appointed, nor send an answer, arose from no neglect, but only because John Roger, the surgeon, upon the sixth day after his arrival here, at length presented your said letter, along with those pretty articles of Courtois.<sup>2</sup> Because, however, the time had gone by, I did not think that there was any need to be in greater haste, until an occasion for writing should offer itself. Our brother Michael now presents himself, who will faithfully bring you my reply.

<sup>1</sup> The Doctor John Chaponneau, *ancien moine* of the Abbaye of Saint Amboise, at Bourges, become minister of the Church of Neuchatel, had attacked in some points the doctrine of the book of the "*Institution Chrétienne*." Calvin answered his observations in few words. Chaponneau did not feel satisfied, and repeated his attacks with extreme violence. The subject of debate was the Divinity of Christ, seriously altered by the rash interpretations of Chaponneau. The reply of the Reformer, written at the request of Farel, was addressed to the pastors of the Church of Neuchatel.

<sup>2</sup> Son-in-law of the minister Chaponneau, whose opinions he no doubt shared.

As for Chaponneau, one may well wonder what would induce him to disturb the Church, if I had not known, long ago, the nature and disposition of the man. There is, however, this peculiarity about it, which I cannot but wonder at. I mean, what can be the cause or pretext why he wishes to dispute with me? If he had done so on provocation, even then the excuse would not have been sufficient to justify him. Neither are we called to the office of the ministry in order that we may contend among ourselves, but that with cordial unanimity, and by common consent, we may wage war under the banner of Christ. But at this present time, when there is nothing whatever, so far as I am aware, either of rancour or of controversy astir among us, the man must be utterly without brains who sounds the war-trumpet so rashly in the midst of peace. Moreover, how very senseless is it, on his part, who has never been well taught the elements of grammar, to put himself forward and boast of all sorts of learning, although this is not the first time he has begun to wax insolent with his empty vapouring! I remember that when Alciat<sup>1</sup> had upon some occasion reproved the theologasters of Louvaine, because they had endeavoured to prevent the institution of a college of the three languages in that city, Chaponneau, in a noisy and intemperate oration, declaimed against the study of languages and the civil law. Alciat, offended at such dis-tempered folly, but, at the same time, conceiving it to be inconsistent with the dignity of his station to enter into a dispute with such a person, merely gave intimation to the magistrate, and requested that he would restrain his disorderly impertinence, which was done accordingly, and not without disgrace to the offender. Now-a-days, the place of his abode, and the office which he fills, ought to make him more moderate; but because he is so injudicious, so borne along by a blind and unbridled impulse, I shall consider not so much what his effrontery deserves as what is becoming and proper

<sup>1</sup> The celebrated juriconsult, Andrew Alciat, from Milan, whose instruction Calvin had received at the University of Bourges. He lectured upon Law alternately in the schools of France and Italy, and died in 1546, leaving numerous disciples in the various countries of Europe.

on my part. Certainly I shall not so far yield to him the advantage as to enable him to boast that I was drawn into strife upon his provocation. Would that he might only be quiet in time, and allow others also to be quiet; but, if otherwise, it clearly belongs to you, of your own authority, by lawful process of the Church and of the magistrate, to repress his violence. It is not without reason that Paul has written, that he who would be considered as belonging to the kingdom of Christ must be a new creature; and yet I think there did not then exist men of this sort among them—disturbers of the peace, and without any due regard either of place or person, who would be ever prompt and ready, for no cause whatever, not merely to enter upon a brawl or quarrel, but even to come to blows. O the wretchedness of these our times! Is it possible that even in the remotest corner of the Church, there can be found a place for one who dares openly to boast, as if it were a noble deed, that he had almost laid violent hands upon his own colleague,—who unless compelled by the authority of the civil magistrate, refuses a willing obedience to the Presbytery,—who makes his house a very hot-bed and nursery of sedition,—who takes counsel apart from all the rest?—to say nothing about other matters, which it is of no use, and can answer no good purpose at present to commemorate.

As for those conclusions, which, as you suspect, he has suggested to Courtois, his son-in-law, I know not why you suppose that the greater part refer to me. There is one passage, indeed, in which he plainly approaches near enough to touch me. I see nought besides which suits me in the application. In so far as relates to that passage, wherein, as if from the tripod, he pronounces, oracularly, those persons to be heretics who say that Christ, inasmuch as He is God, is self-existent, the reply is easy. First of all let him answer me, whether Christ is true and perfect God? Except he would have the essence of God to be divided, he will be forced to acknowledge that that exists entire in Christ. And the words of Paul are express, “that in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead.” Again, I ask, has He that fulness of Deity in or of Himself, or has He derived it from elsewhere? But he objects, that the

Son is of or from the Father. Now, I have not only always willingly acknowledged that, but, indeed, have also preached the same doctrine. The point is this, however, wherein these asses are mistaken; they do not consider that the name of Son is spoken concerning the Person, and therefore is contained in the terms employed in defining the relation, which relation is not brought in question where the Divinity of Christ is simply treated of; on which subject, Augustine treats elegantly upon the 68th Psalm, which writer these same persons make a boast of, when, notwithstanding, they have never read anything of his except some rhapsodies or other. The words are—*If any one asks whether the Father may be said to be the same as the Son? Reply, As regards the substance, He is the same; not relatively, in so far as it is spoken of anything else. Of Himself, He is called God. In relation to the Father, He is called the Son; and again, on the other hand, the Father, in reference to Himself, is called God; in reference to the Son, He is called Father. When what is spoken relates to the Son, the Father is not the Son. When He is spoken of as the Son in His relation to the Father, He is not the Father. When what is spoken relates to the Father and the Son as self-existent, this is the Father and the Son, the same God.* So far Augustine. Now, that distinction being employed, what further ambiguity, I beseech you, remains about the matter in question? Wherefore, the same holy man, in the 39th homily on John, after he moved this question, In what manner the Father and the Son are the Beginning? [Principium,] he makes use of this solution, that mention is here made of number, in so far as they have relation to each other, not, however, as regards the essence. Also, on the 109th Psalm: *If the Father is the Beginning, he says, are there not two Beginnings? By no means; for as the Father is God, and the Son God, so each is the Beginning. Neither are there two, but one Beginning.* Now, let your little masterling go his way, and, with a bold front, flout at us. The 38th homily also, concerning time, which has for title, “Concerning the Trinity and the Dove,” treats copiously of how much importance it is to make a distinction according as we consider the relations or the essence of the



Godhead. Should, however, his obstinacy not yet be tamed or broken in, I do not refuse to be called a heretic by such a wild beast, provided only that I may have Cyril for my companion, who makes use of the same expressions more than once. But how monstrous it is to declare that to be heresy which has so many illustrious testimonies, both in the Sacred Oracles and in the writings of the ancient Fathers !

This small particular excepted, I observe nought else that he could apply to me, although this does not touch me alone, but applies to every one of you who have made a profession along with us, which contains that same doctrine. It is, therefore, your duty, and common to you all, to follow up this reproach which is cast upon *you* and on the truth itself. Which unless you do, I have determined for my own part never to yield ; I mean, if there is any one there who confesses himself to be the author of these fine conclusions. Why should I weary you, and myself at the same time, all to no purpose in discussing the others ?

He preaches a great deal about charity, and frets and fumes grievously that it has not been well observed among us. I would like, however, to know what sort of charity that is, to cut off from the Church those who, agreeing entirely in the doctrinal sense with all the godly, merely reject certain forms of expression : " For what can be more contentious," says Augustine, writing to Pascentius, Epistle cxxiv., " than where one is agreed upon the doctrine in dispute, to contend about the person ?" If even yet he must hold us suspect, I might allow him to do so, but in such an excessive rigour I cannot discover the meekness of charity.

As regards the essence of the Godhead, how puerile to say that the Fathers did not see it before the coming of Christ ! I ask, indeed, with what kind of eyes the essence of God can now be seen by the souls of the dead ? Does he suppose that the glory of God, infinite as it is, can be seen or comprehended by *them* ? He will say, that He is to be seen, not as He is, but in suchwise as the weakness of our perception admits of. I then reply, that it was visible, in some degree, even before the advent of Christ, that now at length He is revealed

in greater fulness, and that we shall see Him perfectly, when we shall have been made like unto Him. He objects, however, that the whole choir of the saints cry out against this. But where has *he* heard that heavenly choir intoning this complaint? He opposes my arguments, but on what ground? Boastingly he vaunts, that it can very easily be proven: let him, however, make this easiness of proof quite evident by demonstration.

So far have I deigned to trifle, and to answer him according to his folly. I may now address you seriously. Consider well, I beseech you, whitherward these speculations tend. Are they not of that sort which Paul so highly disapproves? That the Spirit was not united to the Dove, so as to be constituted one person as there is one person in Christ, I consider to be beyond all dispute. That he takes away the perfection of faith from Joseph and Nicodemus, I am not inclined to question, provided he does not bestow it on any other. That the spirit of prophecy has not always continued steadfast even in the prophets, Saul presents a striking example, I do acknowledge. But perhaps *he* takes another view of it, which I could not admit. Concerning Ananias and Sapphira, he must shew that some other crime beyond lying and falsehood was punished in their case, if he wishes any reliance to be placed on his comment. It is no way surprising that in such an animated style he defends the Allegories; for those who have not an atom of understanding, unless to trifle with frigid and insipid allegories, very naturally contend for them as if they were contending for their family altars and their own firesides. But I am growing more tedious than I had resolved to be; I therefore make an end. Adieu, my very dear brethren in the Lord. May the Lord increase you more and more both in wisdom and strength, that you may go forward in the upbuilding of His Church as you had begun. Amen.—  
Your own,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Geneva. Vol. 111.*]

CXVII.—TO FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Struggles and difficulties of Calvin at Geneva—quarrels of the ministers—violent attacks of Castalio—dissatisfaction of the deputies from Berne—reappearance of the plague—dangers of the Church.

GENEVA, 30th May 1544.

For the second time, I now begin to learn what it is to dwell at Geneva. I am, indeed, beset with thousand briars. These two months bypast we have had serious wranglings among my colleagues, and they have even gone so far, that out of four it is quite evident that two have perjured themselves. Of which crime, if they who were accused had been given up to justice, a crying scandal would have arisen. The cases, indeed, were diverse, also happened at different times, so that the one party threw back the accusation upon the other. When the truth could not be got at, either by oral testimony or by home arguments, I was obliged to commend the cases to the special judgment of God, and having done so, have settled the dispute on both sides. For what else could I have done? Had both of them been cast out, the innocent party must have suffered wrongfully, and the example instead of doing good would be of evil consequence. I was besides afraid lest should the affair come to be generally talked about, it might be said they were cast out upon an uncertainty. The infamy in the meantime,

<sup>1</sup> The Church of Geneva, set up as a butt for the attacks and blackening defamation of her maligners who were unwilling to submit to the authority of her discipline, had also to lament the *scandales* occasioned by the conduct of many of her pastors. Two of Calvin's colleagues, Henry de la Mare and Champereau, were not ashamed to frequent the taverns and *cabarets*, and so to expose the office of the ministry to the mockeries of insolent raillery, and those who took a pleasure in repeating that the ministers wished to make Canons of them.—*Chronique de Roset*, lib. v. c. 2 et 3. Grieved on account of these scandals, but without the power of repressing them, Calvin found vent to his sorrow in the intimacy of his correspondence with Farel and Viret.

however, would settle down upon our order. Somehow or other it fell out crosswise, that one who had also been a monk, a boon companion and crony of some of them, and has scarcely ever been here among the brotherhood, has so traduced their manner of life, and of certain others, both in writing and in conversation, that none could be more vile than we if the discreditable impeachment should spread any wider. I called together my colleagues ; complained bitterly of them all, for that the whole of this affair was to be imputed entirely to them. I said, that indeed I was quite well aware that that frantic blockhead had been furnished with the weapons of his annoyance by themselves ; but that however that might be, they must now combine their wits together for the purpose of extinguishing, as it were, a common conflagration. I told them besides, that the hand of the Lord pressed heavily upon us, and that He would avenge the perjuries which attached to us. It would not be at all wonderful, if, on account of so much wickedness and cursing, the wrath of the Lord should begin to wax hot against us, which of old, because of the sinful conduct of only one individual, had raged so fiercely against the whole Israelitish people. I took care also to let them know, that this would never cease nor come to an end until our presbytery should be cleansed from those crimes by which it had been defiled. And in conclusion I exhorted them, each to examine himself and to look within, in suchwise as to confess that he was punished deservedly. Yet, forsooth, so far were they from giving heed to what I said, that forthwith they thought of nothing else than how they might have their revenge, at least some of them. That same monk I have mentioned was employed by these two brethren, of whom there was a strong suspicion that they had been cognizant, yea, even aiders and abettors of the accusation. Certain persons reported underhand of one of them, that he had said many insolent things against the magistracy, and that a large proportion of the senators had been sorely wounded by slanderous insinuations. Now, you know well enough by experience how sensitive and irritable our senate is whenever it is touched. As

soon as I was informed of this, I called all my colleagues together, told them beforehand what would happen, and also threatened, that in the event of anything more serious occurring, I was not going to wait patiently to be involved in such troubles along with them ; and that when I was gone away, they would feel whether their own shoulders were broad enough to bear up under such a burden. Meanwhile, the nobleman I referred to, has been cast into prison ; to clear himself, he flings back an accusation upon our colleague Louis,<sup>1</sup> which can scarcely have other issue than in a sentence of death or banishment. The former has several witnesses who can prove that this latter person had said, that the Syndics of the former year had been elected, with the clear understanding, that in the event of their committing misdemeanours, they should be punished capitally, and many things to the same purpose. On the other hand, our friend Sebastian has been raging against us with the utmost violence. There were about sixty persons present yesterday when the Scripture was being expounded. The passage under consideration was :—“ Approving themselves as the ministers of God in all long-suffering,” &c. He shrouded his attack under cover of a perpetual antithesis, in such a way as to shew that we were in all respects the very opposite of what the ministers of Christ ought to be. It was much after this fashion that he played with the subject :—That Paul had been the servant of God, we served ourselves ; that he had been one of the most patient of men, we the most impatient ; that he had been a night-watcher in order to lay himself out for the edification of the Church, but that we kept watch by playing ourselves ; that Paul was sober, we were drunken ; that he and the Christians of his time had been harassed and vexed on account of seditions, while we made it our business to set them astir ; that he was chaste, while we had been whoremongers ; that the apostle had himself been shut up in prison, but we got people cooped up even for an offensive word ; that he used only the power of God, while we had recourse to that of the magistrate ; that he had

<sup>1</sup> The minister Louis de Geniston.

suffered from the attack of others, we made it our study to persecute the innocent. What more need I say? It was certainly altogether a bloody oration. At the time, I was quite mute, lest some greater strife might be kindled in the presence of so many strangers, but I laid a complaint before the Syndics. These were the ominous intimation of the commencement of all sorts of schism. It was not so much the perverse manner of his setting about the attack, and the wrong-headed obstinacy of his ill-minded malediction that has moved me to undertake the repression of the man's restless and froward temper, as because he had slandered us by the falsest calumnies. You must now perceive the kind of straits and difficulties which so downweigh me. And that nought might be wanting to my misery, or rather to fill the cup of my miseries, the deputies of Berne, Negueli and d'Erlach the elder, have lately departed hence in high dudgeon because they could not arrive at any reasonable settlement with our authorities here, about the boundaries, which is all the more ungracious, inasmuch as they were contending about just nothing at all. And indeed, as I hear, there are certain busybodies, in the places of public resort, who appeal to me as if I were in my own person the sponsor and arbiter of peace, when, themselves, by reason of their obstinacy and insane pride, as much as in them lies, do break away from all peaceable agreement.

I now come to your letter: Marcourt<sup>1</sup> I had so far excused, that you might not suppose that he had come here upon any previous arrangement. Indeed, I was aware that his journey was quite upon another design. There is, however, no denying that he was delighted on account of the disturbances, and had done his utmost to increase them. I am no way surprised that your colleague is somewhat stirred against me; for I have discharged freely enough my own bile both on Marcourt and the others. The arrangement had been gone into as to Viret, without my being made aware of it, notwithstanding that I had taken care long ago to point out that what has been

<sup>1</sup> Marcourt, senior minister of the Church of Geneva.

done was what should be done. When our deputies, however, had returned from Berne, all of a sudden and beyond my expectation, I have heard that Viret is coming hither to be our colleague for six months. I returned thanks to the Bernese deputies because they openly announced that it had been so arranged at my request. It now remains for the brethren to give their assent, which, as I expect, will not be very difficult to be had. The book<sup>1</sup> would have been thrown off ere now had not the press been occupied with the Dialogues of Viret. I was unwilling that the printers should be called away from that job, that I might not appear to set a higher value on my own work than was befitting. In a short time, however, it will make its appearance. Bernard, Geniston, and the rest salute you most kindly—indeed, and in truth, our own family over and over again, Textor, also, who was called up hither by Baudry, who has fallen into a speechless state. The disease, so far as I can understand, will prove incurable. Textor apprehends danger from suffocation; but should he escape that evil he is still liable to be consumed and wasted by atrophy. The pestilence again alarms us, and seems to be on the increase. My little daughter labours under a continual fever.<sup>2</sup> A rumour has lately been brought hither of the dissolution of the Imperial diet.<sup>3</sup> They said that the Emperor thought of going to Strasbourg; now it is reported that he is bound for Metz, but we have no certain intelligence. In Italy the French have hitherto carried all before them.<sup>4</sup> But whichever shall gain the upper hand, either way it must prove calamitous and very disastrous for the Christian world. May the Lord look in mercy upon us.

<sup>1</sup> This was the Reply to the Sorbonne Articles. See the note, p. 384.

<sup>2</sup> Calvin had already lost a son in the month of August 1542. See note 3, p. 320. He had afterwards another child by Idelette de Bure, which does not appear to have long survived.

<sup>3</sup> The imperial assembly of Spire dissolved in the month of May 1544. Charles the Fifth had then obtained considerable subsidies from the Protestant princes in return for the important concessions which he had made to them in the great concern of religion.—*Hist. Charles V.*, lib. vii.

<sup>4</sup> The French had gained a brilliant victory at Cérisesoles, 14th April 1544, over the Marquis of Guasta, the Imperial General.

Again, my very dear brother, adieu. Salute all the brethren and your own household. The Lord preserve you all.—  
Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

CXVIII.—TO OSWALD MYCONIUS.<sup>1</sup>

Political and military intelligence from France and Germany.

GENEVA, 24th June 1544.

Already by this time, you must be caring much less about the request you made me, that I would inform you more certainly as to the preparations of the French King. For even the Swiss, you see, are astir; nor do I entertain any doubt that even there where you are, the intelligence about his plans has been spread far and wide. There is a town in Champagne, which they call Châtillon; thither he concentrates all his forces, there to await the approach of the Emperor; in the meantime, he has strong enough garrisons in the towns which are in any degree fortified. If we take into account the relative strength of the parties on both sides, the kingdom of France seems at present to be in great jeopardy. The upshot, however, is in the hand of God. As the world goes at present, every one in his senses ought to be desirous that the overbearing arrogance of the Emperor may receive an effectual check; for if France should suffer too severely, that must react upon us. If France shall be discomfited and subdued, it is quite certain that his victorious arms will then be turned against ourselves. Were they even to come to some sort of agreement, I fear lest the King, in order to avenge the injury

<sup>1</sup> Gifted with a remarkable genius for politics, which had been formed in the school of Zuingle, and called more than once, on this account, to enlighten by his experience the counsels of the republic of Basle, Oswald Myconius maintained a correspondence with Calvin, which had not merely the interests of the Church in view, but those of the whole of Europe, kept at that time in suspense by the last act of the struggle between Francis I. and Charles V.



done to himself, may abandon Germany as a prey to the fury of the Emperor. And should it so happen, who can deny it would only be according to our deserts?<sup>1</sup> And truly, at that time, God blinded the understanding of our friends so as to let them rush upon their own destruction, in allying themselves to the Emperor for the purpose of ruining France, which has been hitherto both the fortress and defence of our liberty and safety. Therefore, as though we were in the lowest depths of despair, let us learn to look upward to the Lord. As that you would not willingly be without my book, I send you one copy. Adieu, excellent sir, and right trusty brother; may the Lord preserve you with the Church and our brethren of the ministry, whom you will please salute in my own and in the name of all our friends.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. minute—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### CXIX.—TO MONSIEUR DE FALAIS.<sup>2</sup>

Arrival of Monsieur de Falais at Cologne—the sending of a minister—  
pious counsels.

*This 24th June 1544.*

MONSIEUR,—I shall begin by making our excuses for having so long delayed to let you hear from us the news. I do assure

<sup>1</sup> The Protestant princes of Germany, the steady allies of France against the House of Austria, abandoned their usual policy on this occasion, and joined the Emperor against Francis I. They alleged as their motive for this change, the impious alliance of that monarch with the Turks, whose arms threatened equally France and Italy, and they wrote to the Protestant Cantons of Switzerland, inviting them to follow their example, by refusing their assistance to Francis I.—See Sleidan, lib. xv. p. 441-446.

<sup>2</sup> M. de Falais afterwards left Brabant and went to Cologne with his family, as we see by his request addressed to Charles the Fifth: "I went indeed first of all to reside in your city of Cologne, where I abode so inoffensively and beyond the reach of blame from any one, that no person could justly complain of me." . . . Immediately on his arrival at Cologne, he had requested Calvin to send him a minister. The war which then wasted the Netherlands, and rendered communication difficult, had not allowed the reformer at once to meet his wishes.

you, that if the time has seemed long to you, it has not been otherwise than wearisome to us, by reason that we could not discharge ourselves of duty towards you according to your desire. Had the communications been open, we would not have found any difficulty, but we need not tell you what has been the time elapsed since the return of good Seigneur David. To send a countryman of your own to you, while matters were in such turmoil, we did not think was very suitable. On that account we thought best to send to inquire about a person who resides at Strasbourg, who was your neighbour, considering also that he would be a more fit person than another by reason of his country. But having gone upon a journey, we could not have a prompt reply from him. In writing to us since, he refers us to the return of Bucer, who was still at that time at Spire.<sup>1</sup>

In this way the time has glided away to our great regret, forasmuch as it was not in our power to meet your wish. How, moreover, it has happened that our expectation hath been hitherto frustrated as concerning that matter, you can perceive by the letters, and by an extract from Bucer's letter which I send you.

The present bearer has been sent instead of the other person, against our mind. Not that we are offended on that account ; for we hope verily, Sire David and myself, that there will be no loss by the exchange. He is sound and stedfast in the doctrine which is profitable for edifying ; for besides that he is pure and sound, he is well exercised in ready reply to objections. Upon the whole, he is modest, so as not to stir beyond his depth. Moreover, he is not addicted to vain glory, nor to the desire of shewing off, which is the besetting sin in many. He manifests zeal for advancing the reign of our Lord Jesus, such as ought to be set forth in His ministers. He has altogether a life which approves his doctrine ; as regards his manner of life, you will find him tractable. Then, that besides I may let you know what may be defective in him, it is true that he is not

<sup>1</sup> Bucer had gone to the Diet which was held in that town in 1544. The Emperor, pressed by two enemies at the same time, Soliman and Francis I., made important concessions on that occasion to the Protestant side.

deeply versed in the knowledge of human affairs, and is not furnished with skill in languages ; even in the Latin language he is not the most eloquent, although, he is so far instructed as he needs in the circumstances, which is sufficient. His mother-tongue possibly shall not be very pleasant to you at first, but I feel assured that this circumstance will not prevent you taking pleasure in his preaching, the more so as the substance will quite make up for that defect. He feared that he might not be sufficiently polished in manner and behaviour, but we have told him that you would not consider that to be a mortal crime. He has this good quality that you can admonish him privately as to whatever shall occur to you, without any dread of his taking offence, and I hope that he will be compliant and guidable. In short, he will much deceive us or he will so carry himself, that we shall have no occasion to repent ourselves of having sent him, and that we shall have no complaint from you.

As for his entertainment, we have said nothing about it to him, being well aware that it is not a matter for which he has much care ; and besides, even should he provide himself, he would not better himself much by doing so. There is no fear of discontentment on his part ; and on yours, I feel more than certain, that you will give him no occasion. Only, I pray you, Sir, to receive him as the servant of God, to serve you in whatever the Lord has bestowed upon him for the good of your household, so that his ministry may not be unprofitable.

Concerning the form and order of procedure in preaching and in the administration of the sacraments, we have consulted thereanent, but it will be for yourselves to determine together upon the spot. He will however declare to you, what has been thought good and desirable by us, in order that you may take counsel on that matter together. In regard to this we have our infallible rule, that everything ought to tend to edification. Moreover, to discern what is suitable for edification, the Lord it is who must give us wisdom, to whom you will have recourse.

And now, sir, in reply to your letter, I give thanks to our Lord, that He has strengthened you in constancy, enabling you

to overcome all the temptations which might prove a hindrance to you, and hinder you from coming to the place where you could be able to worship purely, and has not permitted, that with the most part of those whom He hath enlightened in the knowledge of His name, you have preferred the world instead of honouring Him, lying asleep in the mire, which must entirely have choked you at last. Besides, if that quality of self-forgetfulness, and of turning away your thoughts from things around you, and serving those ties which have held you bound, has been a special grace of our heavenly Father, since He has begun the work of His mercy towards you, in so far, He will follow it out and perfect it, putting it into your heart to understand, that it was not enough for you to be drawn forth out of the defilements in which you were, but that you should daily have His word to strengthen you in perseverance, and to urge you always to advance farther forward.

We feel by experience our weakness to be such, that if we were not urged forward from time to time, our zeal would forthwith cool down. And that is the reason why there are so many, who, like the crabs, walk backward, because being deceived by that false idea, that it is quite enough merely to have once understood the truth, they slight and neglect it, despising the daily exercise which is so needful for us all. So that, being thus instructed and prepared, as well by their example as by our own experience, how much need have we of holy exhortation from the word of our God, as a spur to goad us onward, let us take good heed that we draw not back.

We see how David, when he was among the Philistines, albeit he did not contaminate himself with idolatry, laments that he could not have access to the temple in Jerusalem, that he might receive instruction as well from the preaching of the law and the holy ordinances of God, as these are confirmations to help and serve as props to sustain our weakness. I pray then the Lord to uphold you always in this resolution, so that you may be fully conformed to our father Abraham, who not only forsook the country of his birth to follow God, but on his arrival in the land of Canaan, forthwith raised an altar, that he might exercise himself in the service and worship of God.

As for your being afraid that I would think it strange, your change of purpose,<sup>1</sup> I would be too unkind, did I not grant you the free use of such and so good a means of grace, seeing that our Lord<sup>s</sup> has offered it you there, beyond your expectation. Not that I would not have wished to see you, to enjoy the comfort and delight which I might look for from your presence, or that I am not sorry to be deprived of such a benefit. But, on the other hand, I consider, that you would be ungrateful to God in not availing yourself of the advantage which the Lord presents to you rather than men.

For the rest, I do give you my assurance, that were I at liberty, and that the Lord had not settled me here, or that he had given me leave of absence for a season, that I would not fail to come and visit you, to satisfy both your own wish and mine. As for seeing you, I have not, even now, lost the hope of that, not that I perceive any great convenience of opportunity on my part, but because I trust that our Lord will open up some way. Howsoever that may be, the chief point is, that we may be always conjoined together in Him who is the Father of all unity, as I feel myself assured, and not merely for the two or three days which we have to live in the world, but eternally in His kingdom.

To conclude, Monsieur, after having humbly commended me to your kind favour, I pray the God of goodness to have you always in His protection, together with your family, increasing the gifts which He has put upon you, until He has brought you to the utmost perfection of His children.

Your servant, humble brother, and ever assured friend,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 194.]

<sup>1</sup> M. de Falais had intended at first to retire to Geneva. He had afterwards decided to fix his residence at Strasbourg, where he indeed established himself the following year.

## CXX.—TO MADAME DE FALAIS.

Christian congratulations—hope of a speedy meeting.

*24th June [1544.]*

MADAME AND WELL-BELOVED SISTER,—Although I have had a singular desire to see you, and that I am sorry to be disappointed in the expectation of seeing you, which I had entertained, notwithstanding I am thankful to our Lord for the opening which He has made for you, that without going to a greater distance He has allowed you to worship with a pure conscience, and free from the idolatrous pollutions in which you had been led captive. It is another blessing that you can set up the form of a Church, to worship in the Christian assembly, to be comforted by His Word, and to receive the Holy Supper in pledge of His goodness, making thereby the protestation of your faith. The less expectation you had of being admitted to the enjoyment of such a privilege, the more you have occasion to rejoice when it is presented to you.

I hope that the individual whom we have sent you, the Seigneur David and myself, shall be according to your mind, for, as well in doctrine as in morals, he has a true Christian simplicity. Notwithstanding, however, my desire some time to enjoy your presence will still continue to linger about me, and I shall not lose hope. But this, at least, is well, that although absent the one from the other, we shall not leave off to converse in spirit, being united in Him who brings together things that are far asunder. Inasmuch as the messenger will, to some extent, supply the place of a letter, I will not trouble you with any further details; and therefore, Madame, and dearly beloved sister, after my humble commendation to your kind remembrance in prayer, I beseech the Father of mercies to open His hand more and more, and to impart His grace to you, continuing to uphold you as a chosen instrument of His glory, even unto the end.

I do not know what company you have at present with you, but if those whom the Seigneur David left there, with him whom they expected, should be there, I desire to be kindly remembered, as affectionately as possible. Not that I would wish to give you that trouble, but themselves can well receive and take in good part the recommendations which I wish to be presented to them. Again, I pray our Lord to guide you always, as He has done hitherto.

Your servant and humble brother ever,

CHARLES D'ESFEVILLE.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

### CXXI.—TO FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Renewal of the controversy regarding the Sacraments between the German and Swiss Churches.

[10th October 1544.]

What you have been advising of late, I mean, for me to go to Zurich to admonish the brethren, I do not see what good that would do. In the first place, I am not aware wherein they have sinned, seeing that I have never read any either of their letters or books which have so much enkindled the rage of Luther. Already I fear the sort of answer they may return. They will not fail to dwell upon the marvellous patience where-

<sup>1</sup> The sacramentary truce which was brought about in 1538, with so much labour, between Lutheranism and the Reformed, was afterwards broken, notwithstanding the efforts of Bucer, of Melanchthon, and of Calvin. Full of ill-humour against the memory of Zuingli, Luther allowed no opportunity of invective to pass, in his writings, against the doctrines of the Swiss Reformer and the Church of Zurich, which he likened to the *heresies of Munzer and the Anabaptists*. Desirous of maintaining peace among the Churches, the ministers of Zurich at first abstained from all reply, in the hope of soothing him by their silence, and avoiding direct collision with the vehement spirit of Luther. But Luther having on many occasions renewed his attacks, they considered it their duty to answer him in an indirect way by publishing the works of Zuingli, with an apology for his doctrine prefixed.—See Hospinian, *Historiæ Sacramentariæ*, Genève, 1681, tom. ii. pp. 318, 322. Ann. 1544.

with they have hitherto endeavoured to smooth him down. For even Bullinger himself, when he was complaining to me some months ago, in a letter, about Luther's unkindness, highly commended his own forbearance and that of his friends. Besides, if even I should come thither thoroughly well informed as to all the particulars of the case, and that I should be able to keep them within bounds, so as not to give rise to any future controversy, I should still come but little speed in this business. For at present the danger arises not so much from them as from Luther. He must be pacified. Will this be screwed out of the Zurichers, that they be brought meekly to entreat Luther? It ought to have been looked to long ago that they should not stir that filthy puddle. But who among ourselves had foresight enough for that? Let us, therefore, make known our request unto the Lord, who only can apply the healing remedy to this disease. It will certainly occasion a serious and ruinous conflagration, but let us await the issue.

You will read what I have written to Scriffius; and you will write to Toussain, unless you judge it advisable rather to send my letter. Adieu, my brother; may the Lord preserve you. Salute all friends.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

## CXXII.—TO BULLINGER.

New appeal to the Seigneurs of Zurich, in favour of the Waldenses of Provence—Luther's invectives against the Swiss Reformer—remarkable judgment in regard to his character—his injustice pardoned in consideration of the eminent services rendered by him to the cause of Christ.

GENEVA, 25th November 1544.

You will receive from this brother who has delivered to you my letter, a crown-piece and two silver testons; for this, if I remember correctly, was the amount that remained. Excuse



me, I pray you, for not having sent it sooner. As for the reason why this brother has been sent to you, by those of Neuchatel, he will himself tell you. There is, in my opinion, no difficulty, or very little, indeed, if any, in the case. But the perverseness and importunity of one individual, compels them to be troublesome both to you and to ourselves. They have in their meeting a man belonging to that class of doctors, from which, hitherto, not a single good man has ever yet come forth, one who has never ceased from time to time to pester them with some troublesome affair or another. There are two causes which urge him on in this course. For he seems born to contradict, and because he is not so very highly esteemed by others as he rates himself, it is after this fashion that he takes his revenge. Had he been in our Church, he would easily have been restrained. For we had a means of breaking him in quite ready at hand. But where he is, he has the Prince's deputy by whom he is countenanced. For it is thus, that men of this sort of pretension secure and fortify themselves with defences, so as to work mischief with impunity. That you would, all of you, do of your own accord what I am now about to ask, I am well aware. Nevertheless, I would entreat of you, that in so sacred a cause you may reach forth a helping hand to the brethren; that is, that you would support them by your authority, and train them by a right method that they may bridle up that Ishmael. This much have I written, not because it might be supposed to be needful, but rather to please our brother.

There is another affair, besides, in which I wish very specially to implore your aid. There are brethren in Provence, for whom you are aware, that we have always taken much pains.<sup>1</sup> Nor were they any way undeserving that we should do so; for they are a people so harmless, and withal so piously disposed, that their peace and safety ought to be the peculiar care of all

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 163, 204, 246, 249, 259, 284. Suspended by Letters-patent of the King, and by the humanity of the President Chassané, the execution of the sentence of the Parliament of Aix was furiously demanded by the new President of that Court, Jean Menier, Baron d'Oppède, supported at Court by the Cardinal de Tournon.

good men. It is now three years bypast, since they were so far advanced as to have presented to the Parliament of Aix a confession of faith, pure and simple as we could have set it forth ourselves. And besides, that you may not suppose that such a step was taken from some sudden impulse, which might immediately have evaporated, whenever they have been called to account concerning it they have constantly stood firm to their profession. In the meantime, however, they were cruelly harassed. After they had been exposed for some time to the savage tyranny of their enemies, they obtained at length of the King that he would appoint a commission, who might hear evidence and report truly upon the whole case. The King commissioned two persons, whose duty was to make inquiry; he wished to take the entire cognizance of the cause to himself, and so to pronounce an award. The tenor of the commission was, that the persons who were to be sent were to inquire particularly, and take special knowledge concerning their doctrine and morals, both in public and private. This the brethren have no dread or anxiety about. For they have so conducted themselves toward all around them as to have an unexceptionable testimony to their sterling worth, even from their adversaries.<sup>1</sup> As for their doctrine, they are about to present their confession of faith, clear and sincere, to the King as he has required, which document comprises, and that distinctly, far more points than can be alleged against them. At this present time, both the bishops, the royal officers, and even the parliament itself, are striving with all their might to set aside the royal commission; if it be quashed; they will then be exposed to the fury of lions and wolves, that they may spend their rage upon them.

<sup>1</sup> William du Bellay, in his quality of lieutenant of the King at Turin, charged with the duty of making a report to Francis I., renders a very striking homage to the piety and purity of the Vaudois.—De Thou, *Hist.*, lib. vi. They obtained the same testimony from the pious Bishop Sadolet, who took them under his protection, and pleaded in vain their cause at the Court of Rome.—De Thou, *ibidem*.—*Hist. des Martyrs*, lib. iii. p. 140. A doctor of the Sorbonne, having put some questions to some of the children in one of their villages, upon the Catechism, was so struck by their answers, that he acknowledged, says Beza, “never to have derived so much benefit in all the disputations he had been engaged in, as he had learned from these little children.”—*Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 42.

Indeed, their adversaries are mainly desirous that they may have full license to discharge all their fury upon these wretched people. If the commission be received and acted upon, even in that event they will not have escaped the danger. For in three small towns,<sup>1</sup> and in very many of the villages, they profess the pure doctrine of the Evangel. In one little town they have thoroughly cleansed the parish church from all its defilements, and there they celebrate the Supper and Baptism in the same manner as we do. The more immediately the danger is impending over them on either side, they are all the more on that account to be succoured by us; in this their wonderful steadfastness, especially, to which should we be found wanting, we would be chargeable with the basest cowardice. You must also take into account that it is not their cause alone which is here concerned; but either a way will be opened by their destruction to the cruel persecution of the godly throughout the whole kingdom, or, according to this method, he will assault and break up the Evangel. What can we do, therefore, but strain every nerve that these godly brethren may not, through our short-coming in duty, become the victims of such cruelty, and that the door may not for a long time be shut against Christ? I have desired beforehand to warn you of the likelihood of this coming to pass, that if sooner or later they fly to you, you may have inclined the hearts of all your friends to render them all the help they can. One or other of these two things will have to be done, either the King must be sought unto, that he may allow them to enjoy the benefit which has been already granted, or his anger must be appeased, if it shall have begun to wax hot against them.

I hear that Luther has at length broken forth in fierce invective, not so much against you as against the whole of us.<sup>2</sup> On the present occasion, I dare scarce venture to ask

<sup>1</sup> Cabrières, Mérindol, et Lourmarin, in the present department of Vaucluse.

<sup>2</sup> In a recent publication, entitled, "Short Confession concerning the Supper," (*Kurzes Bekenntniss vom Abendmahl*,) Luther, renewing his invectives against the *adversaries of the Sacrament*, had insulted the memory of Zuingli, and had not even respected that of the learned and pious Ecolampadius.—Hospinian, *Hist. Sacrament.* tom. ii. pp. 326-331. Grievously annoyed by these violences, Melanchthon would have fled into retirement to get rid of the sad spectacle of the disorders which rent

you to keep silence, because it is neither just that innocent persons should thus be harassed, nor that they should be denied the opportunity of clearing themselves; neither, on the other hand, is it easy to determine whether it would be prudent for them to do so. But of this I do earnestly desire to put you in mind, in the first place, that you would consider how eminent a man Luther is, and the excellent endowments wherewith he is gifted, with what strength of mind and resolute constancy, with how great skill, with what efficiency and power of doctrinal statement, he hath hitherto devoted his whole energy to overthrow the reign of Antichrist, and at the same time to diffuse far and near the doctrine of salvation. Often have I been wont to declare, that even although he were to call me a devil, I should still not the less hold him in such honour that I must acknowledge him to be an illustrious servant of God. But while he is endued with rare and excellent virtues, he labours at the same time under serious faults. Would that he had rather studied to curb this restless, uneasy temperament which is so apt to boil over in every direction. I wish, moreover, that he had always bestowed the fruits of that vehemence of natural temperament upon the enemies of the truth, and that he had not flashed his lightning sometimes also upon the servants of the Lord. Would that he had been more observant and careful in the acknowledgment of his own vices. Flatterers have done him much mischief, since he is naturally too prone to be over-indulgent to himself. It is our part, however, so to reprove whatsoever evil qualities may beset him as that we may make some allowance for him at the same time on the score of these remarkable endowments with which he has been gifted. This, therefore, I would beseech you to consider first of all, along with your colleagues, that you have to do with a most distinguished servant of Christ, to whom we are all of us largely

in pieces the Reformed Churches. He wrote to Bucer, the 28th August 1544, "I have written to you about our Pericles, who has again begun to thunder most vehemently on the subject of the Lord's-supper, and has written a fierce attack, in which you and I are beaten black and blue. I am a quiet peaceable bird, nor would be unwilling if I may depart out of this prison-house, if our disturber shall constrain me."—Ph. Melancthonis *Opera*, edit. of Breitschneider, tom. v. p. 464.

indebted. That, besides, you will do yourselves no good by quarrelling, except that you may afford some sport to the wicked, so that they may triumph not so much over us as over the Evangel. If they see us rending each other asunder, they then give full credit to what we say, but when with one consent and with one voice we preach Christ, they avail themselves unwarrantably of our inherent weakness to cast reproach upon our faith. I wish, therefore, that you would consider and reflect on these things rather than on what Luther has deserved by his violence; lest that may happen to you which Paul threatens, that by biting and devouring one another, ye be consumed one of another. Even should he have provoked us, we ought rather to decline the contest than to increase the wound by the general shipwreck of the Church. Adieu, my much honoured brother in the Lord, and my very dear friend. Salute reverently in my name all the brethren in the ministry. May the Lord preserve you, and more and more increase His own gifts in you. My colleagues very kindly salute you.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.—Opera*, tom. ix. pp. 239, 240.]

### CXXIII.—TO MELANCHTHON.<sup>1</sup>

Explanations relative to the publication of the book "Against the Nicodemites"—appeal to the authority of Melanchthon and Luther—troubles arising from ecclesiastical discords—announcement of the Council of Trent—policy of Charles V. and of Francis I.—convocation of a Synod at Melun.

21st January 1545.

In few words I will explain the reason why this young and pious nobleman<sup>2</sup> has, at my request, undertaken this journey

<sup>1</sup> See the two preceding letters. Roused by the Lutheran intolerance, kept up by a hot controversy, the quarrel about the sacraments disturbed the reformed Churches, and furnished weapons to their adversaries. While Calvin deplored these excesses, addressing himself by turns to Bullinger, to Melanchthon, to Luther himself, he made vain efforts to bring about an accommodation between the parties.

<sup>2</sup> Claude de Senarclens, of a noble Savoyard family, which had settled in the Pays de Vaud, after having embraced the Reformation.

to you. I had published a little treatise in the French language, wherein the dissimulation of those persons was reprov'd, who, notwithstanding they have been privileged in having the light of the Evangel, yet nevertheless do not abstain from any of the Popish rites which they know to be accursed and full of sacrilege.<sup>1</sup> You would perhaps rather prefer that I remitted somewhat of that too precise severity. But you will recognise the justice of my treatment of the point when you shall have well weighed and considered the question. When I heard that many persons complained about my strictness, and especially persons of that class, who consider it a proof of superior wisdom to care for their personal safety, I wrote an Apology,<sup>2</sup> which has made their ears tingle even more severely than did the former book. Many other persons, with whom religion serves instead of philosophy, look down with serene contempt upon the whole of this. Such others, however, who are earnest God-fearing persons, are at least so far advanced, that they begin to feel dissatisfied with themselves. But since the question seems to them to be perplexed, they remain somewhat in doubt as to this point, until they shall be confirmed by your authority and that of Dr. Luther. And indeed I am rather afraid that they consult you on this account, because they expect that you will be more indulgent to them than I.<sup>3</sup> Whatsoever may be their motive for doing so, because I feel thoroughly persuaded that you will give them faithful and wholesome counsel according to your sincerity, and in conformity with your singular prudence, I willingly undertook to do what they asked me, which was, that I would take the trouble to send a fit person to you. Because, moreover, I concluded, that it would be of great importance that you should know accurately what my views are, but also, that the reasons which have induced me to come to

<sup>1</sup> This is the *Traité de fuir les Superstitions*. Geneva, 1544. Inserted in the *Recueil des Opuscules*, p. 758.

<sup>2</sup> *Excuse aux Faux Nicodemites*. Genève, 1544. *Recueil des Opuscules*, p. 789.

<sup>3</sup> The German theologians were indeed less strict. However, says Bèze, they admitted, with Calvin, that it is impossible to serve two masters, and therein condemned those who were called Nicodemites.—*Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 49.

these conclusions might not be unknown to you, I have taken care to have the treatises turned into Latin.<sup>1</sup> And although it may have been somewhat forward in me to set about this, yet, notwithstanding, I would request you as a friend, that you do not refuse to submit to the trouble of perusing them. So highly do I esteem your judgment, as indeed is proper, that to me it would be very disagreeable to set about anything which you would not be likely to approve. I know, indeed, that with your benign courtesy, you allow of many things in the practice of others which you do not permit to yourself, but we must look well to it, that what we do is lawful, and that we do not set loose where the Lord has bound. Neither, truly, do I ask you to agree with me in all things, which would certainly be impertinent; or that on my account you should turn aside from the free and simple statement of your own opinion, but merely that you would not refuse the trouble of a perusal. Certainly I do desire that we were so entirely agreed, that not even in the most trifling expression there may seem to be any disagreement. But to you it rather belongs to lead the way, than to have respect to what may be pleasing to me. You see how unceremoniously I treat you; nor indeed am I under any apprehension that I may exceed the bounds of due respect; for by the experience I have had of your special kindness and good-will toward me, I know how far I may go.

With regard to Dr. Martin there will be somewhat more of difficulty.<sup>2</sup> For so far as I could understand by report, and by letters from different persons, the scarcely pacified temper of the man might, on very slight occasion, break out into a sore.<sup>3</sup> On that account, therefore, the messenger will

<sup>1</sup> This is the title:—*De vitandis superstitionibus quæ cum sincera fidei confessione pugnant, una cum J. Calvini excusatione ad Pseudo-Nicodemos, cum duabus epistolis ad ministros Ecclesiæ Tigurinæ.* Geneva, 1545. The second edition of this work appeared in 1549, enhanced by the approbations of Melancthon, of Bucer, and of Peter Martyr.—*Calv. Opera Omnia*, tom. viii.

<sup>2</sup> See note 2, p. 408.

<sup>3</sup> In a letter written at this period, Bucer made a humble remonstrance to Luther, representing to him, that if the theologians of Zurich had somehow incurred his indignation, he ought, however, to have had some consideration for the

shew you the letter which I have written to him, that on examination of the contents, you may proceed as you think advisable, that nothing may be attempted therein either rashly or unadvisedly, which may hereafter produce unpleasant consequences. I am aware that you will do all that you can worthily accomplish to the utmost of your power, in every thing seemly and befitting. But what may have been the contentions which have exercised you there, and what may have been the result of them, I have never been able to learn with certainty, except that I hear an atrocious libel hath gone forth, which would prove like a lighted torch to kindle a new conflagration, unless, on the other hand, the Lord restrain within bounds the resentment of certain parties, who would otherwise be more fierce and fuffy than they ought to be, as you well know. But what else can we expect, when they are provoked to such a degree? When I reflect how much, at so unseasonable a time, these intestine quarrels divide and tear us asunder, I almost entirely lose courage. A merchant of Nuremberg, who was travelling this way, shewed me lately a certain apology of Osiander,<sup>1</sup> of which, on his own account, I felt greatly ashamed. For what good purpose could it serve to assault the Zuinglians every third line, and to attack Zuingli himself in such an unmannerly style? and not even to spare Cœcolampadius, that holy servant of God, whom I wish that he resembled, even in being half as good, in which case he would certainly stand far higher in my esteem than he does. I do not demand that he should allow his name to be defamed with impunity in silence; but I would like that he might abstain from contemptuous reproaches of those men whose

imperial towns of Upper Germany, and the cantons of Berne and Basle, who had given him no ground of complaint, and who had always remained faithful to the thought of a Christian alliance.—Hospinian, *Hist. Sacramentar.* tom. ii. p. 331.

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Osiander, professor of theology at the University of Königsberg, was of a presumptuous and violent spirit; he put forth rash doctrines on the nature of Christ, on justification, and exaggerated, in the Roman Catholic sense, the Lutheran dogma of the Supper. He died in 1552. Melchior Adam, *Vitæ Theolog. Germ.*, pp. 226-240.



memory ought to be held in honourable esteem by all the godly. Therefore, for the same reason for which I blame the impudence of that fellow by whose verses he complains that he has been slandered,—therefore, also, I desire to see in himself some moderation and prudence, or rather a more sound and correct judgment. O God of grace, what pleasant sport and pastime do we afford to the Papists, as if we had hired ourselves to do their work! But I make myself disagreeable by recounting these evils to you, and increase your sorrow when you are not able to get them healed. Let us, notwithstanding, mourn together, since it well becomes us to take earnestly to heart the misfortunes of the Church. In the meantime, let us cheer up our spirits with this hope, that to whatsoever extent we may be oppressed and harassed, we cannot be utterly overwhelmed among the great sea billows.

Everywhere throughout France the minds of men are raised to great expectation from the talk of a Council,<sup>1</sup> nor is there any doubt that the King himself entertained at first some hope, and some intention of assembling a Council. For the Cardinal de Tournon,<sup>2</sup> on his return from the Emperor, had persuaded the King that the Emperor had so intended. Meanwhile he recommended, in the name of the Emperor, that the King should call to him two or three theologians of your number, and that separately, so as thereby to draw somewhat out of each of them by his cajoleries, or that he might somehow or other squeeze out of each what he could never be able to obtain from the whole of them in a body. The Emperor promised that he, on his side, would do the same. The aim of all this was, that fettered, as it were, by these flattering preliminaries, you should have less power whenever you should get the length of a serious discussion of the question. For because they cannot succeed in discouraging or defeating us by a direct, straightforward, and

<sup>1</sup> Transferred successively from Vicenza to Mantua, and from Mantua to Trent, the Council opened in that latter town the 13th December 1545.

<sup>2</sup> Francis de Tournon, Archbishop of Lyons, and a Cardinal, one of the fiercest persecutors of the Reformed under the reigns of Francis I., of Henry II., and of Francis II. He introduced the order of the Jesuits into France, set himself steadily in opposition to the establishment of religious liberty, and died in 1562.

simple dealing with the case, they see no more summary method of going about it, than to have the princes at their mercy, and that *they* may hold their liberty captive and dependent upon *them*. As this advice was well liked by the King, Chatelain<sup>1</sup> declared that it would not do to send French theologians to attend the disputation, unless they were well disciplined and trained beforehand; that you were men thoroughly acquainted with the subject and used to this warfare, nor could you be made, so easily as they supposed, to waste your strength to no purpose; that by betraying the ignorance of his theologians, the King ought to be upon his guard lest he should expose the whole kingdom to derision. The vain-glory of the King gave the preference to this opinion. Twelve French theologues have been commissioned to dispute at Melun on the controverted points, and to report at length to the King what they shall have concluded upon. They have bound themselves by oath to secrecy. But all their silence notwithstanding, I am thoroughly well assured, that every thought will be directed to the oppression of the truth.<sup>2</sup> Though they may pretend to seek some sort of reformation, nothing is more certain than that they have only this one object in view, how to bury the light of sound doctrine, that they may establish their own tyranny. It is my belief, that God defeated the counsel of the Cardinal de Tournon, that they might not ensnare a single man of us, even when we had not the slightest suspicion of such a thing. You can remember having yourself been tempted by the same artful policy on the part of Langey. If, however, we look to the Lord, they shall in vain assault us with all their contrivances.

<sup>1</sup> Chatelain, Bishop of Mâcon, Reader to the King, Francis I., who partook of his taste and disposition. Favourable to the Reformation, which, however, he dared not to profess openly, this prelate, at a later period, betrayed the hopes of the Reformed by taking up his position among the persecutors of the Gospel.—See Beza, *Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. pp. 79, 80.

<sup>2</sup> These theologians actually did assemble at Melun: "but there was," says Beza, "such division among them, that they only exchanged words and abuse, and were on the point of coming sometimes even to blows; the more ignorant who had been mixed up with the others not being willing to suffer those who were more learned to touch upon the abuses, however gently."—*Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 48.

Adieu, most excellent sir, and my ever to be respected friend ; may the Lord be ever present to you and long preserve you safe and sound for the good of His own Church.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. Copy—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 106.]

#### CXXIV. To LUTHER.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin submits to Luther several of his writings, of which he desires to obtain his approbation.

January 21, 1545.

To the very excellent pastor of the Christian Church, Dr. M. Luther, my much respected father,

When I saw that my French fellow-countrymen, as many of them had been brought out from the darkness of the Papacy to soundness of the faith, had altered nothing as to their public profession, and that they continued to defile themselves with the sacrilegious worship of the Papists, as if they had never tasted the savour of true doctrine, I was altogether unable to restrain myself from reproving so great sloth and negligence, in the way that I thought it deserved. How, indeed, can this faith, which lies buried in the heart within, do otherwise than break forth in the confession of the faith? What

<sup>1</sup> A peculiar interest attaches to this letter, the only one which the French Reformer had written to the German Reformer. Inspired by the deep conviction of the unity of the reformed churches, written with as much moderation as respect, the message of conciliation was not even listened to. Soured by the quarrel about the sacraments, in which he took too great a share during the latter years of his life, Luther evinced daily more and more irritation against the theologians of Switzerland, and Melancthon did not even venture to present the letter of Calvin, to whom he wrote in sadness: "I have not shewn your letter to Dr. Martin, for he takes up many things suspiciously, and does not like his replies to questions of the kind you have proposed to him, to be carried round and handed from one to another. . . . At present I am looking forward to exile and other sorrows. Farewell. On the day upon which, 3846 years ago, Noah entered into the ark, by which God gave testimony of His purpose never to forsake His Church even when she quivers under the shock of the great sea billows."—Melancthon to Calvin, *MSS. of Geneva*, vol. 106.

kind of religion can that be, which lies submerged under seeming idolatry? I do not undertake, however, to handle the argument here, because I have done so at large already in two little tractates, wherein, if it shall not be troublesome to you to glance over them, you will more clearly perceive both what I think, and the reasons which have compelled me to form that opinion. By the reading of them, indeed, some of our people, while hitherto they were fast asleep in a false security, having been awakened, have begun to consider what they ought to do. But because it is difficult either casting aside all consideration of self to expose their lives to danger, or having roused the displeasure of mankind to encounter the hatred of the world, or having abandoned their prospects at home in their native land, to enter upon a life of voluntary exile, they are withheld or kept back by these difficulties from coming to a settled determination. They put forth other reasons, however, and those somewhat specious, whereby one may perceive that they only seek to find some sort of pretext or other. In these circumstances, because they hang somehow in suspense, they are desirous to hear your opinion, which as they do deservedly hold in reverence, so it shall serve greatly to confirm them. They have therefore requested me, that I would undertake to send a trusty messenger to you, who might report your answer to us upon this question. And because I thought it was of very great consequence for them to have the benefit of your authority, that they might not fluctuate thus continually, and I myself stood besides in need of it, I was unwilling to refuse what they required. Now, therefore, much respected father in the Lord, I beseech you by Christ, that you will not grudge to take the trouble for their sake and mine, first, that you would peruse the epistle written in their name, and my little books, cursorily and at leisure hours, or that you would request some one to take the trouble of reading, and report the substance of them to you. Lastly, that you would write back your opinion in a few words. Indeed, I am unwilling to give you this trouble in the midst of so many weighty and various employments; but such is your sense of justice, that you cannot suppose me to have done this

unless compelled by the necessity of the case ; I therefore trust that you will pardon me. Would that I could fly to you, that I might even for a few hours enjoy the happiness of your society ; for I would prefer, and it would be far better, not only upon this question, but also about others, to converse personally with yourself ; but seeing that it is not granted to us on earth, I hope that shortly it will come to pass in the kingdom of God. Adieu, most renowned sir, most distinguished minister of Christ, and my ever-honoured father. The Lord himself rule and direct you by His own Spirit, that you may persevere even unto the end, for the common benefit and good of His own Church.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 196.*]

### CXXV.—TO AN UNKNOWN PERSONAGE.<sup>1</sup>

Difficulties in the way of a reunion, and doubts of the efficacy of a General Council under present circumstances—deplorable state of the Church—motives which prevented him from going to confer in person with the German Reformers—his proposals to them.

*January 1545.*

And so, just as if the day for holding the Council had been appointed for the next month, you make already arrangements for your departure.<sup>2</sup> This, however, is of itself a proof how rashly and at haphazard everything is done among you, and

<sup>1</sup> A Letter without address and without date, probably written to one of the friends of the Reformer in France,—perhaps Louis du Chemin, or Francis Daniel,—who, while sincerely adhering to the doctrine of the Reformed, kept up in appearance their connexion with the Roman Catholic Church. It is to this enlightened but timid class of men that two writings, submitted by Calvin to the approbation of Luther, were specially addressed. See two preceding Letters. “These writings,” says Beza, “were the cause of a great blessing, several persons having resolved to devote themselves to God’s service, who had formerly been asleep in their uncleanness.”—*Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 49. But we know not who is the individual to whom Calvin addresses warnings against the seductions of the Court of Rome, and in the absence of certain knowledge, we are only left to conjecture.

<sup>2</sup> See note 1, p. 414.

nothing set about prudently or after deliberation, that when the most able persons in the whole kingdom should be selected, the matter has been entrusted to such incapables; except, perchance, that while on other occasions they are the most sluggish of all, they are not the less on all occasions but too well prepared for mischief. Besides, I have an opinion that the expectation of a council, which is said to be at its height among you, will prove to have been unfounded. The Diet of the Empire will meet in February. No serious deliberation, however, will begin before March. I know by experience the German method of doing business. Of this I can as certainly assure you, as if I had been actually present. Our friends will insist from the first that, excluding Antichrist, they may at length establish somewhat of order among themselves. On the other hand, those who are enchained in willing bondage to their Romish idol, will deny that this is lawful or allowable for them to do. The Emperor, that he may in part give some sort of satisfaction to our side, will promise fair, that he is ready to do everything, and may, perhaps, make a show of doing somewhat; but as soon as possible after having made a beginning, upon some pretence or other, which is never wanting to men of that sort, he will break away altogether. This will certainly be the final deliverance, that it is not lawful to determine anything in the matter of religion except by authority of the Pope. As for the calling of a Synod, when that shall have begun to be mooted, by and by our side will begin to remonstrate, that it is disgraceful that the settlement of religion should be entrusted to the professed enemies of God. They will cite Antichrist as a criminal and defendant: certainly, they will never permit him to be the judge. But by what means do you think they can be induced to come to Trent? If even there were to be no let or hindrance on our side, since there is nothing that would be more agreeable to the Emperor, than, having turned the attention of every one to the Turkish war, to leave the state of the Church for a while in suspense,—will he not then, in this matter which accords so perfectly with his own views, be only too well inclined to make concessions which will gratify the Pope? Even were we to

suppose, for instance, that a council has been summoned, that already every thing is in readiness and all prepared, do we reckon that the idol<sup>1</sup> will be any way at a loss for some artifice or other, whereby he may interrupt and throw all into disorder? What will then become of religion, torn and rent asunder and laid waste; what will become of the wretched Church rushing forward apparently to destruction; what will become of the Christian name; what will become of the glory of God? Assuredly, we must ask of Him, that himself alone would take the entire charge of all things, and uphold the Church. Our friends are drowsy, nor is there any hope of their more vigorous and cordial action, unless the Lord awaken them from some quarter or another. Howbeit, the ungodly give them occasion enough of beginning to think of taking some heed to themselves. The canons of Cologne, with the whole rabble of the clergy, have done their utmost to get their Archbishop degraded<sup>2</sup> from his station. They have called meetings of the States, that they might have their allowance to substitute another in his place. This has been refused. They made the same application to the Emperor; his answer was that he would not be found wanting on occasion, provided they themselves did their duty. He was unwilling to grant their request openly. However, one may easily prognosticate from these roundabout proceedings, that he would not be at all unwilling that they should make some disturbance about it, and should they proceed to any greater length, war is certain, in which the whole of Germany throughout, will be much weakened and shaken to the foundations; for this also, the Lord will provide and see to. This to my mind is the only consolation, that death can never

<sup>1</sup> It is the same thought confirmed by the events which the Reformer expressed six years later, in the preface of the Commentary on the Canonical Epistles, dedicated to the King of England.—“But although the venerable fathers had begun to dazzle the eyes of the simple with some Will-o'-the-Wisp stories about the sitting of a Council, all this shining deceptive appearance having been dissipated by a secret whisper suddenly mooted by the See of Rome, vanished in smoke, except, that in order to keep up the excitement, a little cloud hovered for a season over Bologna.”—*Dedication to King Edward VI., 26th January 1551*, édit. de Genève, 1562.

<sup>2</sup> See Sleidan, lib. xvi., pp. 455, 456.

be a misfortune to a Christian man. In the meanwhile, I will lament as I ought for the calamities of the Church, and make myself wretched when I think of the condition of the godly; only, however, in so far as not to be in despair. Were we only well agreed among ourselves, I would be much less anxious; but in the midst of those hostile preparations on the other side, that certain persons should find leisure enough for senseless quarrelling with one another, looks rather portentous. Upon the other hand, too, some one or other, in an elegy, has attacked Osiander,<sup>1</sup> a person who is himself rather wanting in good sense. In desiring to clear himself, he has so besprinkled his book with rancour, that for myself I was mightily ashamed of him; but nothing has given me more vexation, than that he insults the Zuinglians in every third line. It is even after such a sort as this that we seem to have hired ourselves, both hand and tongue, to the ungodly, that we may afford them sport and pastime by tearing one another to pieces. Who is there that would not lose heart entirely where so many stumblingblocks are thrown in the way? I do most readily acknowledge, that there is no one so iron-hearted who would not be utterly cast down, unless he look continually unto the Lord. And, therefore, I so read the meaning of all this, that it appears to be the Lord's will, by every possible means, to try us whether our dependence is placed on men; and, for my own part, it is so far from overwhelming me, that, on the contrary, no slender confirmation thence arises of my faith. For while I see the Church marvellously steered by the Lord in the midst of those mighty waves, so that it cannot be overwhelmed; while these very tempests are at their height, until everything would seem as if about to mingle in wild disorder, yet I see that the noise of the waves is stilled, and in a moment they are calm; wherefore, then, may I not thence conceive good hope of the future? Let us therefore haste forward in the race of our calling, leaning upon this confidence, that the Church, which has God for the perpetual Guardian of her safety, will at length surmount these perils; but because every one has not the same strength of mind, the more familiarly I repose these matters in

<sup>1</sup> See the note 1, p. 413.



your confidence, all the more on that account you will be careful as to the few to whom you may communicate them.

With regard to what you asked in your last letter, I felt some sort of hesitation whether I ought to undertake the matter ; for the journey is long, rugged, and toilsome. The post on horseback does not reach Wittemberg in less than twenty days. To send any one, as it might happen, without choosing a fit person, would be dangerous. On light-headed fellows and vagabonds one can place no dependence, and few others are to be found. To a person unacquainted with the language the road will prove very toilsome, and there is scarcity everywhere on account of the late dearth. I myself am altogether unfurnished as to money ; besides, although the season is not inconvenient, I am unable to sustain the burdens which already press upon me without being entirely exhausted. For in this time of the dearth, with which for the last two years we have had to struggle, I found the incurring of debt was unavoidable ; however, I do not speak of this for the sake of complaining. God hath dealt very kindly with me, so much so, that I am quite content with what I have. But I mention it that you may understand that it is not easy for me to find persons here from whom I can take up money upon loan : they are indeed all of them merchants, and themselves almost starving. Add to this what I have already said, that the time is unseasonable for consulting Luther, because his anger has scarce settled down from the heat of contention. Since, however, you insist so earnestly, and press me with so many protestations that I would do so, my first and chief desire was to comply with your wishes. I have accordingly requested and obtained of an honourable, and a not unlearned young man,<sup>1</sup> that he would take this trouble on my account. My two treatises I have translated word for word into Latin, which have been sent along with my letters, that so they might be able to form an opinion. Nor have I asked any other favour, except that they would express freely and without reserve whatever they may think upon the question : only adding, that it would be noway agreeable to me, should they feel any delicacy in so far as concerned myself. The messenger will

<sup>1</sup> See the note 2, p. 410.

scarcely have returned before two months; for he must be forty days upon the road: I assign four days for rest, the remainder of the time for consultation.—Adieu.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 235.]

## CXXVI.—TO VIRET.

Intelligence of France and Germany—Synod of Melun.

GENEVA, *February 2, 1545.*

I have sent the pamphlet of Chaponneau,<sup>1</sup> together with the answer, lately to Neuchatel, to Farel and the rest of the brethren. You can ask to have it from them if you wish to read it. I have sent besides to Farel the letter of Robert,<sup>2</sup> in which he mentioned what was the advice which Cardinal Tournon had brought along with him from the Emperor's court, to wit, that he might call forth four or five from our side, one after the other, and so deal with them separately, that they might either be wheedled by fair speeches, or might be moved by threats, liberally to abate somewhat in their demands, so as that might be turned to our prejudice. You are aware that this was in time past the artful policy of Langey.<sup>3</sup> There happened to be a messenger very opportunely upon the spot, by whom I have warned Bucer, as being the person I was most alarmed about, because he lies more in their neighbourhood, and would be among the first to be chosen by our adversaries. After that, also, I have written particularly to Melanchthon by Claude de Senarclens, whom I was sending to

<sup>1</sup> See the Letter to the Ministers of Neuchatel, p. 386.

<sup>2</sup> This was, doubtless, the celebrated printer of Paris, Robert Etienne, who retired in 1551 to Geneva.

<sup>3</sup> William du Bellay had died in 1543, without realizing the hope which the reformers of Germany and Switzerland had rested on his character and talents, for the spread of the Gospel in France. (See note 1, p. 34.) Th. de Bèze accuses him of double-dealing, and stigmatizes him as "rather the servant of the king than of God."—*Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 22. Sleidan is less severe; witness the fine *éloge* he has written of the Lord of Langey, lib. xv. pp. 424-426.

Germany on another account. For at the request of some friends I have asked of Luther, of Melanchthon, and of Bucer, that they would write us their opinion upon that treatise of mine which treats of a similar question to that upon which you have written,<sup>1</sup> not so much because I was very much set upon consulting them, or that there was any hope of its being successful. But when the Frenchmen had once got that into their heads, I knew that they would never rest till they had got it done. I therefore preferred that they should form a judgment with the evidence before them rather than without a hearing of the cause.

If, however, the king has not immediately complied with the advice of the Emperor and Tournon, that has so fallen out, rather through the ambition than from any prudent forethought of Chatelaine,<sup>2</sup> although I have no doubt whatever, but that the Lord hath driven him on thus far, that so He might thwart this very artful policy, so full of danger, and that our friends might not be utterly outdone before they were aware of it. He shewed the king that it was to be feared that if he should commit his doctors unprepared to cope with men well trained and exercised in that kind of warfare, he would expose not themselves merely to disgrace, but also the whole kingdom. That, therefore, it would be better that some learned men should be named by the king, who, uniting their efforts, might arm themselves for the onset against us. There are twelve at Melun, out of which number two are thought to be passing good;<sup>3</sup> I know not whether I ought to admit that there is a single one of them who answers even this description. Certes, they are meditating no good; but He who sits in heaven shall have them in derision, and also make them a laughing-stock in the earth. Adieu, may the Lord

<sup>1</sup> The work of Viret which is here alluded to, is without doubt, the following:—*Deux Discours adressés aux Fidèles qui sont parmi les Papistes*, in 8vo, Genève, 1544.

<sup>2</sup> See note 1, p. 415, and *Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> Of this number was doubtless the learned Danes, Professor of Greek in Paris, who at that time manifested favourable dispositions towards the Reformation. At a later period he became the preceptor of Francis II., a bishop, and a persecutor.—*Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 48.

preserve you and your family, whom pray salute for me and mine.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### CXXVII.—TO VIRET.<sup>1</sup>

Election of new magistrates at Geneva—struggles of Calvin.

GENEVA, 12th February 1545.

See how I am not even yet ashamed of my remissness! I have found out a method by which I can relieve myself from the trouble of writing. I send you a copy of the letters which I have written to Luther and to Philip, that you may thence understand why I have sent Claude to them. I have added a third, addressed to him who had made the request to me concerning that question. The day before your letter arrived, Textor had brought from Christopher the book of Farel to Girard: it can be printed in a short time. I have not yet spoken to Louis Bernard. He has twice already slipped away from me from the sermon, but to-morrow or next day I shall make your excuse to him. I can hear about Le Comte when you shall come; for as I perceive, my ears are spared for the present, that they may not be compelled to hear evil of others; and certainly I am abundantly tormented when I am thinking and meditating on our concerns; for, as usual, I have to wrestle in darkness with hypocrisy. Amblard Corne hath moved the Senate that he might lay down his office;<sup>2</sup> for he has discovered to the commonalty matters which had hitherto lain concealed in the secret counsels of the Senate. They suspect, moreover, that this had taken place not without my being

<sup>1</sup> Written to Viret in the outpouring of an unconstrained friendship, and pilfered from his master by an unfaithful valet, this letter became the subject, in 1548, of a formal accusation brought against Calvin before the Seigneurie of Geneva, by Eremite Defrique Trolliet, one of the chiefs of the party of the Libertines. See on this affair the Correspondence of the Reformer with Farel and Viret, September 1548.

<sup>2</sup> He had resigned the office of Syndic and of Lieutenant of the Police of Geneva.

aware of it, though, nevertheless, they do not venture openly to make a noise about it, and do not even shew any token whatever of indignation. I perceive, however, how evil-disposed they are, and already I have broken ground upon the subject of the internal state of the city, in ten sermons. Wherefore, however, should I enter into this labyrinth? Come, then, and see with your eyes those things which you cannot know by the hearing of the ear. The Syndics have been appointed—Amy Curtet, Amy Perrin, Domeine Arlot, Jacques de Tortonne. Louis Bernard, Peter Verne, and two others, have been induced to enter the Senate. They give us good hope concerning themselves. I know not, however, what we may hope, for, under the pretext that Christ reigns, they wish to rule without Christ. Adieu, my brother and very dear friend in the Lord. All our friends salute you and your household. Greet Ribitti and Imbert, from whose wife I wish you would ascertain whether she has anything she wishes to send to Perrot, for the good man waits, not without the greatest anxiety.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### CXXVIII.—To VIRET.

Mention of Clement Marot's metrical versions of the Psalms—persecutions in France.

GENEVA, 15th March 1545.

What alone Hector asked, he obtained of me without any difficulty whatever, that in reference to his smaller pieces we would be guided by your decision. Certainly you will pardon me for having laid this charge upon you, for indeed I could not otherwise satisfy both of you; because you wished him to understand that you had written to me expressly and anxiously. This, however, was the only method by which I could make that evident to him, unless I would refuse the one thing which he pressed. For who can seriously believe, that you had requested

anything on my part which I would not grant? In so far as regards himself, if I was willing to comply with his wish, it behoved him to be made aware of that. I have not yet conferred with Girard. If they can come to an agreement, there shall be no delay on our part, although I would have certainly preferred that he had applied himself to the translation of other psalms than to those which had been rendered by Marot;<sup>1</sup> but neither shall that stand in the way of the publication. Besides the book which he shewed me, he mentioned that he had several hymns which he requested me to submit to you for the same purpose, with a view to publication; only I have warned him that he must not on all occasions handle the princes so roughly, because I remembered that seven years since something of the kind was done by him, but you can easily be upon your guard should you meet with anything which it may not be fitting should go farther.

Of late we have nothing out of Germany. In some parts of France the disciples of Antichrist rage at will. There has been no further rage of persecution at Lyons, except that a few are detained in prison. Many have escaped by flight. May the Lord stretch forth His arm of might for the safety of the godly. When you shall arrive, we will converse freely on all subjects. Adieu, my very dear brother; may the Lord have you in His keeping. Salute Ribitti, Celio, Imbert, and the others respectfully, together with your own family.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 106.]

<sup>1</sup> In retirement at Geneva in 1543, the celebrated French poet, Clement Marot, had been charged, at the request of Calvin, with the translation of the Psalms in verse. Extracts of *Registers of the Council*, 15th October: "Calvin offers to engage Clement Marot to put the Psalms of David in verse." The same year fifty Psalms were printed at Geneva, with a preface by Calvin, which is found at the beginning of the subsequent editions of 1551, 1556, 1563. The work of Clement Marot was finished by Theodore de Bèze.

CXXIX.—TO OSWALD MYCONIUS.<sup>1</sup>

Discovery of a conspiracy for the spreading of the plague at Geneva—  
punishment of the conspirators.

GENEVA, 27th March 1545.

Accept my best thanks for your communication about what you had heard concerning the Emperor and the Imperial Diet;<sup>2</sup> with regard to your opening my letter by mistake, I do not forgive you for that, since you have been no way to blame. The Lord is sorely trying us in this quarter.<sup>3</sup> A conspiracy of men and women has lately been discovered, who, for the space of three years, had spread the plague through the city, by what mischievous device I know not.<sup>4</sup> After fifteen women have been burnt; some men have even been punished more severely; some have committed suicide in prison; and while twenty-five are still kept prisoners;—the conspirators do not cease, notwithstanding, to smear the door-locks of the dwelling-houses with their poisonous ointment. You see in the midst of what perils we are tossed about. The Lord hath hitherto preserved our dwelling, though it has more than once been attempted. It is well that we know ourselves to be under His care.—Adieu, most accomplished Sir, and my much respected brother.

This noblenian, who is not unknown to you, will explain the great straits and difficulties with which at present our brethren

<sup>1</sup> Oswald Myconius had written on the 6th March to thank Calvin for sending him the book intituled, “*Supplex Exhortatio ad Cæsarem Carolum V. et Illustriss. Principes aliosque ordines Spiræ nunc Imperii Conventum Agentes, ut Restituendæ Ecclesiæ curam serio suscipere velint, Genève, 1543.*” Translated into French in 1544; a writing much praised by Bucer and Beza. See the Letter of Myconius to Calvin.—*Calv. Opera*, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> The Imperial Diet was then met at Worms. The Roman prelates were preparing for the celebration of the approaching Council by a life of gaiety and dissipation:—“*Larvati ut non cognoscantur domos intrant civium; ibi edunt, bibunt, ludunt, saltant, Libidinantur, &c., præparationes dignæ sive ad comitia, sive ad Concilium.*”—*Myconius Calvino*, 6th March 1545.

<sup>3</sup> The plague had then broken out afresh and was raging at Geneva.

<sup>4</sup> See Spon, *Hist. de Genève*, tom. i. p. 283;—the details relating to that fearful conspiracy.

of Provence are oppressed.<sup>1</sup> Because I am aware that, as one might expect, you have their welfare at heart, I only ask that when the time for assisting them shall arrive you will be ready prepared, as we hitherto always found you. But, in the first instance, as seemed right, I have stated the case to Bucer, that he may consider maturely whether any seasonable or likely access will be practicable to the King. Salute particularly your wife and friends.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

CXXX.—TO THE QUEEN OF NAVARRE.<sup>2</sup>

Calvin vindicates himself from the charge of having intended to attack her in his book against the Libertines.

FROM GENEVA, *this 28th April 1545.*

MADAME,—I have received a letter from a man of this town, written, as he said, by your command, by which I understand

<sup>1</sup> See notes, pp. 406, 407, 408.

<sup>2</sup> The name of the Princess of Navarre has already appeared several times in this collection, pp. 12, 183, 318. Th. de Bèze does not hesitate to place her among the most illustrious witnesses for the truth in the sixteenth century. Endowed with the noblest and most brilliant qualities both of the head and heart, which rendered her the idol of her brother Francis I., and an object of admiration to all her contemporaries, she was long a steady friend of the Reformation, whose early representatives she protected in the persons of Lefevre d'Étaples, Bishop Briçonnet, and Gérard Roussel, and whose ministry she encouraged in the kingdom of Navarre. She died in 1549. In the later years of her life her piety gradually degenerated into a kind of contemplative mysticism, whose chief characteristic was indifference towards outward forms, uniting the external ordinances of the Romish Church with the inward cherishing of a purer faith. We find numerous proofs of this in her poems, published during her life, as well as in her letters, published for the first time in Paris by M. Genin, under the following title:—*Lettres de Marguerite d'Angoulême*; 8vo, 1841.—*Nouvelles Lettres de la Reine de Navarre*; 8vo, 1842.

Calvin corresponded at different times with this Princess, whose character and talents he admired, while, with holy boldness, he censured her infirmities. Unfortunately only one of these letters has been preserved, and is here presented to the reader as a testimony of the faithful courage of the Reformer.—Bèze, *Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 49.



that you are very ill-pleased with me because of a certain book by me composed, the which I have intituled against the Libertines.<sup>1</sup> I am sorry to have saddened you, except in so far as it was for your welfare ; for such sadness, as saith St. Paul, is so profitable that we have no occasion to repent having caused it. But I do not know, Madame, wherefore or how this book has been able to make you so angry. The man who has written to me alleges as the reason, that it is forasmuch as it is composed against you and your servants. So far as you are concerned, it has not been my intention to touch your honour, nor to lessen the reverence which all the faithful ought to bear you. I mean in addition to the reverence which we all owe to you, because of the royal majesty in which our Lord has exalted you, the house whence you are descended, and all the excellence that is in you, as regards the world. For those who are acquainted with me are well aware, that I am neither so barbarous nor so inhuman, as to despise, nor to go about to bring into contempt the principalities, the worldly nobility, and what belongs to human policy. Besides, I know the gifts which our Lord has put on you, and how He has engaged you in His service, and has employed you for the advancement of His kingdom, which affords reason enough for honouring you, and holding your honour in estimation. Likewise, Madame, I pray you do not allow yourself to be persuaded by those who excite you against me, seeking neither your advantage nor my damage, but rather to estrange you from that good-will and affection which you bear to the Church of God, and to discourage you from the service of our Lord Jesus, and of His members, which you have rendered to this hour. As regards your servants, I do not think that you value your household so highly as to reckon it more precious than that of our Lord Jesus, of which one member is called a devil, yea, forsooth, a servant who had been seated at his Master's table, and appointed to so honourable a condition

<sup>1</sup> This was the treatise, *Contre la Secte Fantastique et Furieuse des Libertins qui se disent Spirituels*. 1544, in 8vo. This sect spread more particularly in the Netherlands, denied the authority of the written Word, and, by a false spiritualism, overturned the foundations of all Christian truth. Two of the principal leaders, Quintin and Pocquet, were attached to the household of the Queen of Navarre.

as to be ambassador of the Son of God. But although I have not been so inconsiderate as to name your household, rather, indeed, concealing that those of whom I have to speak are any way attached to you, I have spoken in truth, and as before God. It remains for you to consider whether I have taken pleasure in casting reproach upon them, or whether I have been constrained by great and just occasion, yea, even of necessity, to tax them in this way. Now, Madame, if you have been well informed of the whole, I think so well of you, that not only you will excuse what I have done, but you will reckon my simplicity worthy of praise.

I see a sect the most execrable and pernicious that ever was in the world. I see that it does much harm, and is like a fire kindled for the general desolation and destruction, or as a contagious disease to infect the whole earth, unless some remedy is applied. Since, then, our Lord has called me to that office, my conscience constrains me to resist it so far as it is possible for me. And, more than that, with strong and earnest entreaties, I am seriously importuned by the poor believers, who see with concern the Netherlands of the Emperor altogether corrupted, that as soon as possible, and without delay, I put my hand to the work. Nevertheless, even after such requests, I have put off a whole year, to see whether the malady would be lulled asleep by silence. If any one should allege that, I could well, indeed, write against the wicked doctrine, letting the individuals alone, I have my more than reasonable excuse; it is that, considering what ruin *Messieur Antony Pocquet* has spread in the country of *Artois* and of *Hainault*, according to the relation of the brethren who have come hither expressly on that account, having heard the same repeated here, and considering that *Quintin* pretends no other object than to draw the poor simple souls to that more than brutal sect, and not so much by the report of others as having heard with my ears, understanding that they are always very bitter in opposing the doctrine of holiness, to draw poor souls into perdition, to beget in the world a despising of God, judge, Madame, whether it would have been lawful for me to dissemble? A dog barks and stands at bay if he sees any one assault his master. I should be indeed remiss, if, seeing

the truth of God thus attacked, I should remain dumb, without giving one note of warning. I am quite persuaded that it is not your mind, that in order to favour you I must betray the Evangel which God has committed to me. Wherefore I do beseech you, Madame, not to be offended, if, being constrained by the duty of my office, under penalty of incurring the offence of God, I have not spared your servants, without, however, addressing yourself.

As for what you have said, that you would not like to have such a servant as myself, I confess that I am not qualified to render you great services; for I have not the ability, and besides, you do not need my services. It is most sure, however, that the inclination is not wanting, and as long as I shall live, please God, I shall always persevere in this purpose; and howsoever you may disdain my service, that will not prevent my being at heart your humble servant, and with a good will. For the rest, those who know me are well aware that I have never aspired to gain access to the courts of princes, the more that I have never been tempted to court worldly honour. Even had I made the attempt, possibly it might have been in vain. But I render thanks to our Lord that I have never been tempted; for I have good reason to be content to serve so good a Master, who has accepted me and retained me in His household, yea, forsooth, in appointing me to an office of such dignity and excellency, however contemptible it may be according to the world's reckoning. I would be above measure exceeding in my ingratitude did I not prefer that situation to all the riches and honours of the world.

As to the reproach of inconstancy which you make against me, in so far as I have retracted anything, I assure you, Madame, that you have been misinformed; for our Lord would never have brought me thus far without having required the confession of my faith. Had it pleased himself to try me in that respect, I do not vaunt about what I would have done; but I do not doubt, that since He bestowed that constancy upon me to expose my life to danger for another, out of respect solely to His Word, that He would have stood with me in His strength, had there been any question about the glorifying of

His name. Howsoever, He has so preserved and kept me from this reproach, that never have I unsaid, neither directly nor indirectly. What is more, I have ever contemplated with horror such faint-heartedness as to renounce Jesus for the saving of life or of property. I have said the same from the time when I was in France, of which there are many witnesses. But in order that you may be more confidently certain, that those who have made such a report of me have abused your too unsuspecting confidence, I refer to Monsieur de Clerac,<sup>1</sup> who can tell you that it is a false calumny which they lay upon me, which I ought by no means to bear, inasmuch as that by submitting to it the name of God would thereby be blasphemed. For although I am nothing, yet seeing that it has pleased God to make use of me, as one of His instruments for the edification of His Church, I see what consequence such an imputation would draw along with it, if it should stick to me to the discredit of the Evangel. But I praise the Lord, who has not so far permitted Satan to have his will over me, and has even supported my infirmity in that he has never proved me either by trial or imprisonment.

I beseech you to excuse the brevity and the confusedness of my letter; for immediately on receiving the news of your displeasure, I have resolved to exert myself with all my might to satisfy you in so far as I could, were it for no other reason than to avoid my being the cause of your growing cold, or being

<sup>1</sup> Gerard Roussel, preacher to the Queen of Navarre, one of the earliest missionaries of the Reformation at Paris. Appointed Abbot of Clerac and Bishop of Oleron, he continued to preach the new doctrines without breaking with the Roman Catholic Church, and thus he drew upon himself the most severe censure of both Farel and Calvin. This latter addressed a letter to him in 1536, concerning the duty of a Christian man in the administration or the rejection of the benefices of the Papal Church, and urged him in vain to separate from the Romish Church, to which he remained attached until his death in 1550. "His life," says a Roman Catholic writer, "was without reproach; his kennel of dogs and of greyhounds was a great crowd of poor people; his horses and his train a flock of young children instructed in letters. He had much credit among the people, upon whom he stamped by degrees a hatred and contempt for the religion of their fathers."—Florimond de Rémond, *Hist. de l'Hérésie*, lib. vii. pp. 850, 851. See especially the ingenious and learned Biography of Gerard Roussel, by M. Charles Schmidt, Strasbourg, 1845, in 8vo.

turned away from that kind inclination which you have shewn hitherto toward the poor faithful brethren. And for that, Madame, after having very humbly commended me to your kind favour, I beseech the Lord Jesus to guard and guide you by His Spirit, to uphold you as well in prudence as in zeal to follow forth your holy calling.

Your very humble and obedient servant in the Lord,  
JOHN CALVIN.

[Fr. copy—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.]

### CXXXI.—TO FAREL.<sup>1</sup>

Massacre of the Waldenses of Provence—Calvin entreats the sympathy of the Swiss Churches in their behalf.

GENEVA, 4th May 1545.

After those two brothers about whom I had written, on my suggestion were returned to their friends, the one of them has returned to us with the melancholy intelligence, that several villages have been consumed by fire, that most of the old men had been burned to death, that some had been put to the sword, others having been carried off to abide their doom; and that such was the savage cruelty of these persecutors, that neither young girls, nor pregnant women, nor infants, were spared. So great is the atrocious cruelty of this proceeding, that I grow bewildered when I reflect upon it. How, then, shall I express it in words?<sup>2</sup> On hearing of this dreadful tragedy,

<sup>1</sup> Misled by the false reports of the secret agents of the Cardinal du Tournon, and by the calumnious denunciations of the Baron d'Oppède, Francis I. at length was prevailed upon to carry into execution the sentence pronounced by the Parliament of Aix against the Vaudois of Provence, and to give the signal of the dreadfully atrocious massacres of Cabrières and of Merindol.—*Hist. des Martyrs*, lib. iii.; De Thou, lib. vi. On hearing the sad intelligence, Calvin set out from Geneva in all haste for Berne, to implore at Berne and Zurich the interference of the reformed cantons, even at the eleventh hour, in favour of these unhappy victims of intolerance and fanaticism.

<sup>2</sup> The Jesuit Maimbourg, in his *Histoire du Calvinisme*, lib. ii., states the number of these victims as amounting to 3600, and carries the number of the houses

and considering what ought to be done, it seemed advisable to the brethren, in the first place, that we should send a man to you with my letter, which recommends the cause of all the churches to the ministers; and, in the next place, we asked the advice of the Council, because we were not so clear among ourselves what measure ought to be taken. It was the opinion of the Council that I should go in person to the Swiss Churches. I shall therefore set out to-morrow on the journey. I can scarcely be able to reach Berne before Thursday. As soon as I can, I shall urge the consul to grant me an audience of the Senate. If you approve, you had better come to Berne on Friday. From thence we shall go together; but if otherwise, I can proceed alone. Because Bucer, in his last letter, has almost entirely cut off all hope, I almost fear that I may lose my pains by going to Strasbourg. Should the brethren at Basle advise it, I shall make the attempt for all that. It will at any rate be most refreshing to me to have a sight of you at Berne. Adieu, my dear brother; salute all. I write, worn out with sadness, and not without tears, which so burst forth, that every now and then they interrupt my words.—  
Yours,  
JOHN CALVIN.

My colleagues, who are all present, except Geniston who has gone into the country lately, salute you.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Basle. Epist. Apogr. tom. xxv. p. 49.*]

pillaged and destroyed as high as 900. According to De Thou, twenty-two *bourgs* and villages were reduced to ashes. The whole country, which had previously presented the aspect of a cheerful pleasure garden, was reduced to a desert and uncultivated wilderness.

CXXXII.—TO VIRET.<sup>1</sup>

Journey of Calvin in Switzerland—resolutions of the Diet of Arau in favour of the persecuted brethren of France.

GENEVA, 25th May 1545.

You will pardon my not having returned to Lausanne. For many reasons I hastened forward, but chiefly because Claude Farel had mentioned to us that the dwelling of Geniston might possibly be attacked with the plague a second time. I may shortly relate the result of our proceedings. The Bernese not only granted what we asked, but were also encouragers by their advice to others. The Zurichers appointed immediately an assembly at Arau, and called others thither by special messengers. They ordered intimation to be made by us to those of Schaffhausen and Basle. After that we set out for Strasbourg, where I could not even allow myself to spend one day, although I made the journey with the utmost expedition. At Arau, they did not pass such a decree as I had wished they might. Thereupon, at my request, the Council again took up the question, but I could not succeed in getting them to forego their first resolution, and to reconsider it. They resolved, that letters were to be despatched by a special messenger, in which they might intercede earnestly with the King, and on receiving the answer, that thereupon a solemn embassy should be sent; for they think that it would be more useful if, after having heard his excuses, they send an envoy fully instructed. They declare, in the mean-

<sup>1</sup> Calvin was already on his return from the journey which he had undertaken in Switzerland, and which he had accomplished with extraordinary despatch. In succession he had visited Berne, Zurich, Schaffhausen, Basle, Strasbourg, everywhere exhorting the magistrates to make energetic intercession in favour of their French brethren, so cruelly persecuted. Last of all, he had gone to the Diet of Arau, and had addressed the same entreaties to the deputies of the Cantons. These latter wrote to the King, Francis I., with much force of language; but their tardy interference had no influence upon the resolution of the monarch, blinded by perfidious counsels, and which were not entirely cleared away until two years afterwards upon a deathbed.—Extract from the *Council Registers* of Geneva, May 1545; Ruchat, *Hist. de la Réf.* tom. v. p. 253.

time, that they shall spare neither expense nor pains. Since they are thoroughly determined, let us await with patience the result of their epistolary experiment. I am moreover charged, if I shall hear any further news, to write forthwith to Berne. The Senate of Berne has promised to make intimation to others. I send a copy of a writing which, at their request, I presented, after I had explained all the circumstances more at large. I am afraid lest anywhere I may have been mistaken; and I fear all the more on this account, because it would be very perilous were my faithfulness to be undervalued or lightly esteemed among them, if I wish to be of any use in future. Nicolas can write you a summary of what has been done, or, if you think it fit, do you yourself write to Berne. Adieu, most beloved brethren. The Lord, may He preserve you. Let us depend wholly upon Himself.

JOHN CALVIN.

Nicolas des Gallars, your very loving friend, dutifully salutes you, and returns thanks for that you bestow such pains upon him. The affair is going to turn out well, with God's blessing.

[*Lat. copy—Library of Zurich. Coll. Simler, tom. lvii.*]

### CXXXIII.—TO MONSIEUR DE FALAIS.<sup>1</sup>

Directions for his conduct towards the Emperor Charles V.

GENEVA, 31st May 1545.

MONSEIGNEUR,—Although I cannot sufficiently thank God for having withdrawn you so opportunely from a place in which you were exposed to a surprise of all others the most painful, and in having conducted you, in a manner exceeding all human anticipation, to a spot where your mind can find some temporary repose from its anxieties, yet even now you have as much

<sup>1</sup> At the approach of the Imperial army, M. de Falais had withdrawn from Cologne to Strasbourg. When there, he received a visit from the Reformer in May 1545, when on a tour to Berne, Zurich, and Basle, which he had undertaken in order to rouse the Protestant cantons in favour of the unhappy victims of Cabrières and Mérindol.



need as ever of the Divine assistance, as well to enlighten you as to the course which it will be good and expedient for you to follow, as to strengthen your fortitude, so that you be not shaken, whatever attacks may be made upon you. For, being so near the place where the principal agent in the hands of Satan for your affliction<sup>1</sup> now happens to be, I do not doubt that you will have to resist many more temptations than you have yet experienced. I see no means of further prolonging matters by apologetic pleadings, since there is nothing which you will put forward which will serve for a pretext; at least such is my opinion. I speak with reference to those to whom you have to give satisfaction; for however ill you may appear, their minds are already so much pre-occupied by a contrary opinion, that it will have no weight with them, while the place which you have chosen for your retreat will dispel any doubt which they may still entertain. Besides, I am persuaded that they have kept too watchful an eye upon your movements not to be able to interpret them correctly.

The best thing, then, in my opinion, in such an extremity, will be to say nothing, and to remain passive, commending your cause to God, that he may conduct it without either advocate or attorney. Forasmuch, then, as among other points treated of in your letters, you express a doubt about the necessity of going to Worms, I beseech you before undertaking the journey to ponder it well, for above all, it becomes you to have in your heart a firm resolution unreservedly to confess our Lord unflinchingly. It will not avail there, as you well know, to use courteous phrases and fine words in place of more solid coin. What is worse, I fear that you may not have an audience to make the confession which you would desire. As to a safe-conduct, you will remember our plan in regard to that. Nevertheless, I expect there will be no great harm in asking it, for I am persuaded that you will meet with a refusal. One advantage will flow from it, that you will have declared yourself more fully. On this point, however, I believe there will be

<sup>1</sup> Allusion is made to the Emperor Charles V., who was then at Worms, with the intention of presiding at the Diet which was opened in that town in the following year.

no need of long deliberation, since God will open up the way before you, if I am not much deceived. Wherefore, the chief thing is to arm yourself with patience, praying God that it may please Him to glorify Himself in you more and more, as He has already begun to do.

It matters little what we have to endure in this world, considering the shortness of our life. And if length of days should be granted us, it is well that the Son of God be glorified by our sufferings, and we be participators in His glory. Since, for the love of Him, you have begun to die to the world, it will be necessary to learn henceforth what it is to be buried. For death is nothing without burial. This is the consolation which it becomes you to take, that you may not deceive yourself, but prepare to endure even unto the end. And yet the cross you bear is very easy compared with that of our Master. When it shall please Him to impose a heavier burden on you, He will give you, at the same time, shoulders to bear it.

On my return I found the good Seigneur David in a very poor state of health, as the bearers will inform you; and I fear very much that, after lingering long, he will find his last home here. We must pray God, nevertheless, to have compassion on him and on us; for it would be a great comfort to us all were it to please the Lord to spare him.<sup>1</sup> In conclusion, Monseigneur, commending myself to your good favour and to that of Madame, I implore our kind God to support you by His right hand, so that you may not falter or stumble on account of any obstacle which Satan may throw in your way.

Your humble brother, servant, and sincere friend,

JOHN CALVIN.

[Fr. copy—*Library of Geneva*. Vol. 194.]

<sup>1</sup> David de Busanton, a gentleman of Hainault, and a refugee, then residing at Geneva. He died in July 1545, in the most pious frame of mind, as may be gathered from a letter of Calvin's addressed to Viret. "When your letter was delivered to me our good friend David was just expiring. A short time after he delivered up his soul into the keeping of Christ with a rare and truly admirable composure. You will have an opportunity of reading his will when you come. . . ." July 1545. David de Busanton bequeathed 1000 crowns to the poor of Strasbourg, and as much to those of Geneva, appointing Calvin one of his executors.

CXXXIV.—TO JOHN CAVENT.<sup>1</sup>

Consolations on the death of his wife and mother.

[June 1545.]

VERY DEAR BROTHER,—I have no doubt that Master Christopher<sup>2</sup> will have done his duty by delivering to you the letters which contained information of the death of your wife and mother. If it be hard to bear their loss you have good cause to find consolation in our Lord, who enabled them to glorify His name in their death, and who gave them strength in the hour of need, and who, I do not doubt, will give you grace to view all these things aright. As to your children, there would have been some means of sending them to you, through M. de Falais, and he would willingly have undertaken the charge, for the honour of God, and at my request; but he himself is excluded from the country, and is now at Strasbourg, where I found him in bad health; for if weakness had not prevented him he would have come hither. It is, therefore, necessary to find out some other way of sending them, and, meanwhile, it behoves you to have patience, anxiously commending them to God, who will not permit them to remain long in this captivity. Moreover, I beg you to tell our brother, Master Peter, not to fail to visit me some day. And now, after affectionately commending myself to both of you, and to all our friends, I pray our gracious God to have you in His keeping, directing you by His Spirit, so that your labours be acceptable to Him and useful to His Church, which has great need of them.—Most sincerely your good friend and brother,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Library of the Comp. of Neuchatel.*]

<sup>1</sup> On the back is written:—"To my brother and friend Master John . . . deacon of the Church of Lausanne, or to Master Peter Viret, to put into his hands." Below, in Viret's hand:—"Calvin to John Cavent, deacon of Lausanne." Letter not dated, but written shortly after Calvin's journey to Strasbourg and his visit to M. de Falais, that is, in June 1545.

<sup>2</sup> Christophe Fabri, minister of the Church of Thonon.

## CXXXV.—TO MONSIEUR DE FALAIS.

Information regarding a house to be sold at Geneva.

*22d June 1545.*<sup>1</sup>

MONSEIGNEUR,—I write you in haste because not forewarned in time, but, please God, I shall soon make up for this fault. At present, I shall only say, that after having considered the subject in which you requested my assistance, I find that a seller will not be wanting when it pleases you to buy.<sup>2</sup> But we see no great advantage in making any purchase, or even entertaining any offer till you are on the spot to judge what will suit you, in which circumstances, it will be best, in my opinion, to look about us without committing ourselves till your arrival; although, at present, there are two places, one of which may change masters if we do not interpose at the proper time. But I have no doubt that when you have made up your mind to come, you will set out immediately after the hot weather is past, if God throws no obstacle in your path.

I dare not say how overjoyed I should be if you finally decided to come hither, for fear of being suspected by you in the event of my offering advice. I am, nevertheless, able truly to affirm that any desire I might have to enjoy the pleasure which I expect from your presence would not prevent my considering what would be best for yourself. And, indeed, the chief cause of my desire to see you here is that you may be among people who long for an opportunity of doing you service. It had occurred to me, that if M. de Fromont<sup>3</sup> had come, and had thought of making a pleasure-trip thus far, as he is in better travelling condition than yourself, his journey might serve as a guide to you. In the event of his doing so, I should beg him to come direct to our house.

<sup>1</sup> On the back is written in M. de Falais's hand—"Answered, 18th July 1545, at Strasbourg."

<sup>2</sup> Calvin refers to the purchase of a house at Geneva for M. de Falais.

<sup>3</sup> Jean, Seigneur de Fromont and Han-sur-Sambre, brother of M. de Falais.

As to the good Seigneur David, it is all over, if the Lord do not interpose, and, by a miracle of mercy, deliver him from the grave. But I shall say nothing more to you on this subject till God shall have brought it to a final issue.<sup>1</sup>

Humbly commending myself to you, Monseigneur, and to Madame, and presenting to you the respects of my wife, I pray our Lord to strengthen you both, in body as well as in mind, so that without fainting or failing we may all accomplish the journey which lies before us.—Your servant, humble brother, and sincere friend,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

### CXXXVI.—TO MELANCHTHON.<sup>2</sup>

He complains of Luther's tyranny, and affectionately exhorts Melanchthon to manifest greater decision and firmness.

28th June 1545.

Would that the fellow-feeling which enables me to condole with you, and to sympathize in your heaviness, might also impart the power in some degree, at least, to lighten your sorrow. If the matter stands as the Zurichers say it does, then they have just occasion for their writing. Your Pericles allows himself to be carried beyond all due bounds with his love of thunder, especially seeing that his own case is by no means the better of the two. We all of us do acknowledge that we are much indebted to him. Neither shall I submit myself

<sup>1</sup> See note 1, p. 439.

<sup>2</sup> Hurt at the new attacks which Luther began to direct against their doctrine in his Short Confession upon the Supper, (see Letter CXXII.) the ministers of Zurich published in 1545 an Apology, intitled :—"Orthodoxa Tigurinæ Ecclesiæ Ministrorum Confessio, una cum æqua et modesta responsione ad vanas et offenculi plenas D. Martini Lutheri calumnias, condemnationes et convitia, etc. . . ."—Hospinian, *Hist. Sacrament.*, tom. ii. p. 354. Provoked by Luther's violence, this reply irritated the zealous Lutherans, afflicted Melanchthon, delighted the adversaries of the Reform by the unseemly divisions which had got the upper hand among them.

unwillingly, but be quite content, that he may bear the chief sway, provided that he can manage to conduct himself with moderation. Howbeit, in the Church we must always be upon our guard, lest we pay too great a deference to men. For it is all over with her, when a single individual, be he whosoever you please, has more authority than all the rest, especially where this very person does not scruple to try how far he may go. Where there exists so much division and separation as we now see, it is indeed no easy matter to still the troubled waters and bring about composure. But were we all of that mind we ought to be, some remedy might, perhaps, be discovered; most certainly we convey a mean example to posterity, while we rather prefer, of our own accord, entirely to throw away our liberty, than to irritate a single individual by the slightest offence. But, you will say, his disposition is vehement, and his impetuosity is ungovernable;—as if that very vehemence did not break forth with all the greater violence when all shew themselves alike indulgent to him, and allow him to have his way, unquestioned. If this specimen of overbearing tyranny has sprung forth already as the early blossom in the springtide of a reviving Church, what must we expect in a short time, when affairs have fallen into a far worse condition? Let us therefore bewail the calamity of the Church, and not devour our grief in silence, but venture boldly to groan for freedom. Consider, besides, whether the Lord may not have permitted you to be reduced to these straits, in order that you may be brought to a yet fuller confession upon this very article. It is indeed most true, as I acknowledge it to be, that which you teach, and also that hitherto, by a kindly method of instruction, you have studiously endeavoured to recall the minds of men from strife and contention. I applaud your prudence and moderation. While, however, you dread, as you would some hidden rock, to meddle with this question from the fear of giving offence, you are leaving in perplexity and suspense very many persons who require from you somewhat of a more certain sound, on which they can repose; and besides, as I remember I have sometimes said to you, it is not over-creditable to

us, that we refuse to sign, even with ink, that very doctrine which many saints have not hesitated to leave witnessed with their blood. Perhaps, therefore, it is now the will of God thus to open up the way for a full and satisfactory declaration of your own mind, that those who look up to your authority may not be brought to a stand, and kept in a state of perpetual doubt and hesitation. These, as you are aware, amount to a very great number of persons. Nor do I mention this so much for the purpose of arousing you to freedom of action, as for the sake of comforting you; for indeed, unless I could entertain the hope, that out of this vexatious collision some benefit shall have arisen, I would be utterly worn out by far deeper distress. Howbeit, let us wait patiently for a peaceable conclusion, such as it shall please the Lord to vouchsafe. In the meanwhile, let us run the race set before us with deliberate courage. I return you very many thanks for your reply, and at the same time, for the extraordinary kindness which Claude assures me had been shewn to him by you.<sup>1</sup> I can form a conjecture what you would have been to myself, from your having given so kind and courteous a reception to my friend. I do not cease, however, to offer my chief thanks to God, who hath vouchsafed us that agreement in opinion upon the whole of that question about which we had both been examined; for although there is a slight difference in certain particulars, we are, notwithstanding, very well agreed upon the general question itself.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 33.]

<sup>1</sup> Claude de Senarclens returned to Geneva loaded with testimonials of affection from the German Reformers. In the Town Library of Geneva there is an Album preserved, containing pious inscriptions of several of the Reformers, which he had brought away with him in the course of his travels.

CXXXVII.—TO BULLINGER.<sup>1</sup>

Defence of the Waldenses of Provence—artifices of their enemies—oppression of that unfortunate people.

GENEVA, 24th July 1545.

So far as I understand, from the correspondence of friends, the object which I had obtained through your kind endeavour, and that of all good men,—I mean that of sending a deputation to France, will stagnate after all, unless the business is pressed a second time on their attention. The King's pensioners have so far attained their object by falsehood, that we, forsooth, must not judge worthy even of compassion those whom we behold cruelly slain for the same cause which they maintain in common with ourselves. It was quite apparent to me, while I was at Arau, that there were certain of them not so very favourable to us, or, at least, they were not so warm and friendly as not to be affected by underhand reports. A most false accusation had been forged, in order to overwhelm our unfortunate brethren. They are said to have been treated with such savage rigour, because they have refused to pay tithes,<sup>2</sup> although it is quite certain that this has never been charged against them, even by their enemies. Yea, and more than that, it is quite well known that they had voluntarily promised that they would give as much to the priests for doing nothing, as they were accustomed to exact

<sup>1</sup> The sentence of the Parliament of Aix had been carried into effect, and those of the unfortunate Vaudois who had escaped the massacre which befell their brethren were pursued as heretics, buried alive in the dungeons, or condemned to the galleys. Some of them arrived at Geneva, and there found a generous refuge and assistance. 14th May 1545.—“The minister of Merindol, with some others, arrived in this town, flying from the persecutions, and in great misery. Resolved to help them.” 18th May.—“The refugees of Provence are occupied on the fortifications, and that in accordance with Viret's request.”—*Registers of Council*. Calvin, addressing both earnest and eloquent entreaties to the ministers of Zurich, of Schaffhausen and of Basle, adjured them to employ their whole credit to promote new exertions in favour of their suffering brethren.

<sup>2</sup> The intractable savage D'Oppède, and the Royal Commissioners, pursued by the cry of conscience, tried to give a colour of rebellion, and to represent the Vaudois as rebels, those whom they had cowardly assassinated.—See De Thou, lib. vi. p. 215.



when they discharged their functions; for they had always modest and prudent men among them, by whose sound advice they suffered themselves to be guided. You can therefore assert, on my authority, that this has by no means been the cause of the persecution which has been set on foot against them. And not even Grignan,<sup>1</sup> who is now the King's ambassador at Worms, has attempted to put forward this pretext for abating the odium of this atrocious business. And must he not have known best of all the facts of the case, when it was by his own perfidy that the whole of this fire of persecution has been lighted up? For when he was summoned by the King himself from Provence, where he was governor, he promised to our brethren that he would faithfully plead their cause at Court; and yet, to flatter Cardinal Tournon, under whose patronage he hoped for an embassy, he stirred up the King to a height of fury hitherto unheard of. Now, it is of great importance to know correctly what may be the state of matters, and how it fares with our godly brethren. The King, that he might give some satisfaction to the Germans, wrote thither lately that he had sent a Commissioner to make inquiry concerning the massacre which had been perpetrated.<sup>2</sup> But what good can be expected to come of that? There is no one hitherto who has even dared to mutter a word in favour of succouring and defending the unhappy sufferers; their cause, therefore, lies prostrate beneath oppression. There are, even at this present, four hundred and upwards bound in iron; for even the lower hold of the ships are also full of prisoners in chains. They make daily incursions from the Comtât d'Avignon upon those who yet remain, which, although it is done without the express command of the King, takes place, nevertheless, as is quite certain, by his permission. For he would not thus con-

<sup>1</sup> The Count Aymar de Grignan, deputy of the King at Worms and governor of Provence, one of the most savage persecutors of the Vaudois.

<sup>2</sup> This Commissary was a creature of the Cardinal de Tournon. The 23d August 1545, the authors of the massacre obtained, by the credit of the Cardinal, letters of approbation from the King, who afterwards, says Beza, "being at the point of death, had amazing remorse on account of this business, and charged his son, with strong protestations, to do justice in the matter."—*Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 47; De Thou, lib. vi.

nive if he did not approve; and the Legate would not take so much upon him, if he did not clearly perceive that it was according to the King's desire. Wherefore, now is the time for rendering them all the assistance we can, whatever we may have been able to do aforesaid. There are very many, besides, who have been scattered hither and thither in their flight; others lie concealed with worthy men, who have not hesitated to place their own lives in jeopardy by harbouring them, so as to snatch them away from death. What the King promises secures no remedy, nor even a mitigation of the evil, but, as it were, a sort of cavern in whose darkness the misfortunes of our brethren may be entombed. And shall we thus only look on and be quiet while innocent blood is shed? Shall the savage fury of the ungodly trample down our brethren perpetually? Christ will then be held up to ridicule and mockery. All this will happen, unless you bestir yourself anew along with others who ought to feel an interest in what concerns the Kingdom of Christ. I hear, indeed, that at Berne and Basle they have grown cold, unless, indeed, they now begin again to become more earnest in the cause. We shall not cease to strive with all our might. Do you also, with your colleagues, do your utmost, that your friends may seriously take up the case. Adieu, most accomplished Sir, fellow-labourer in the ministry, and my very much respected friend. Salute reverently, in my name, the learned Masters Pellican, Megander, Theodore, Gualther, Collin, and others. May God preserve you all the day long in safety, and govern you perpetually by His own Spirit. Amen.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Archives of Zurich. Gallicana Scripta, p. 2.*]

CXXXVIII.—TO THE PASTORS OF SCHAFFHAUSEN.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin exhorts them to redoubled efforts for the deliverance of their persecuted brethren.

GENEVA, 24th July 1545.

Of the energy with which you have espoused the cause of the brethren in Provence, I am myself the very best witness. Because I have no doubt that you continue still of the same mind and resolution, I shall not waste words by endeavouring at greater length to stir you up, that I may not seem to distrust your promise and your hearty desire to help them. But I shall merely warn you, and that briefly, that our labour in what we have been doing hitherto is lost, except you press the matter anew with fresh energy. For, indeed, I hear the pensioners of the King have succeeded in estranging the affections of many from their cause. They charge the brethren with a crime impudently cooked up by themselves, as if it were not all on account of the Evangel that they were suffering this calamity, but because they refused tithe to the bishops. This is so contrary to the true state of the case, that not even Grignan, the King's ambassador at Worms, who was the author of all the mischief, and has incensed the King by his perfidious counsel, and led him to perpetrate such enormous wickedness, has ever ventured to put it forward. I hear, besides, that others had already begun to cool upon the subject, so as not to be very anxious to alleviate the miseries of the brethren. It will, therefore, be your duty to stir up the torpid or inactive, and to win back to an interest in the cause such as upon the representation of false informers have become adverse. Neither let it any way move you from your purpose, if the King shall now make some deceitful show of moderation. Perchance he has sent a commissioner. But there is nobody there who dare speak a word in favour of the wretched brethren. Very many are pining and wasting away in prison; others are

<sup>1</sup> See preceding letter.

scattered about everywhere in their flight. There is no one who has ventured to breathe a word about visiting his family. They also make daily inroads from the Comtât d'Avignon, not without the King's permission, as if in an enemy's country. The parliament of Aix, which sanctioned by edict that massacre, has not grown any milder, neither must we only have their unhappy case at heart, but that of all those who are everywhere harassed on the same account throughout the kingdom. They are carried from all quarters bound as prisoners to Paris, and unless effective means are taken, you will shortly hear that great fires have been lighted in various places, nor will it then be the time to extinguish them. Do you, therefore, set yourselves to work with all your energy, that an imposing and weighty deputation be sent which may seriously demand of the King that those who have been imprisoned be discharged; that the fugitives be restored to their possessions; and lastly, that due inquiry in a lawful method may be had concerning the faith, as well as the morals of the godly. But let the deputation urge that argument, especially, which we did not omit to mention when present with you, that it is very easy to form some conjecture how the King is disposed towards the Swiss, when we see him persecute with such fury the same faith which they hold, in the persons of his own subjects. Adieu, most right-minded and trusty brethren. The Lord, may He preserve you and bless you in your ministry.—Amen.

Your own,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

### CXXXIX.—TO OSWALD MYCONIUS.<sup>1</sup>

Pressing entreaty in behalf of the Waldensers of Provence.

GENEVA, 24th July 1545.

Now is the time for vigorous measures, so that we may not have expended in vain so much labour in behalf of our unfor-

<sup>1</sup> See the two preceding letters.

tunate brethren ; and now, if never before, they themselves, though silent, implore our aid. For, though I have learned from Germany, the King pretends that he will exercise some degree of moderation, for that a commissary had already been despatched to inquire into their affairs, yet that no relief could be expected from that quarter. Their most bitter enemies, they say, will take part in the inquiry. No one dare utter a word for the truth. Our unfortunate brethren, either are confined in chains in the holds of vessels, and in subterranean dungeons, or are dispersed in scattered flight, or are in concealment among their friends. The king will therefore have to be asked first to set free those who are in confinement, and to give them all full restitution. Then to send as commissioners just and humane men, who may take the inquiry out of the hands of the furious men who now carry it on. Do you strain every nerve to attain this end ; see that the accusation which is laid upon them do not harm them. For it is an impudent fabrication, and I have some suspicion of the authors of it. I only wonder that any trust at all is reposed in worthless men, to whose falsehoods the ears of your people must have long since grown callous. They pretend that this rumour was brought hither by merchants. But their enemies have never dared to allege that, for they would have to do so without a colour of reason. The King's legate, Grignan, who by his treachery caused this massacre which took place, does not employ this futile pretext. As far as you can, therefore, prevent the minds of good men from being diverted by false information from their efforts to aid them.

Farewell, my brother and honoured friend ; may the Lord preserve you with your colleagues, whom remember to salute in my name. My colleagues also respectfully salute you.

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 33.]

CXL.—TO JOACHIM WADIAN.<sup>1</sup>

Excuses for the long silence which he had observed towards Wadian—allusion to the controversy regarding the Sacraments—lively entreaties in behalf of the Provençal brethren.

GENEVA, 24th July 1545.

Although for some time I have often proposed to write you, yet I was hindered by this one thing, that after such a long interval I felt almost ashamed to begin. Lately, when I was at Zurich an opportunity offered itself, certainly by no means happy, but still convenient. But there again Dr. Bullinger stood in the way, for owing to the very great hurry of business, he prevented me from accomplishing it. Then at Arau, when I had put off writing until I had arranged something definitely with the legates concerning the business about which I had set out, so sudden was our departure after the answer had been returned, that I had considerably less time there than at Zurich. Only I begged your deputy to carry my salutations to you, and to promise that I would write on the very first opportunity. Before I knew you personally, my dear Wadian, I always loved and respected you; for you had become known to me by your excellent writings, in which both a wonderful candour, rare among learned men of the present day, and a pious zeal of no common

<sup>1</sup> Joachim Wadian, Burgomaster of Saint Gall, one of the most learned men of the 16th century. Educated at the University of Vienne, he there distinguished himself by an extraordinary aptness in the cultivation of literature and the sciences, and cultivated with equal success, poetry, eloquence, medicine, and mathematics; he travelled the principal countries of Europe, and returning to Saint Gall, his native country, corresponded with some of the most illustrious persons of his time, who honoured his genius and his virtues. United by the ties of friendship to the Swiss and German reformers, he powerfully contributed to the establishment of the Reform in his country. An upright magistrate, a conciliatory theologian, an able statesman, he formed the connecting link of important negotiations between the different Swiss Churches, and died in 1550, leaving an illustrious name and revered memory. His books and his manuscripts, carefully preserved in his native town, form the principal basis of the Town Library of Saint Gall, called sometimes after his name, the *Library of Wadian*. See Melchior Adam, *Vitæ Germanorum Medicorum*. Edit. 1706, p. 24.

character, as well as your solid erudition, shine forth. But when at Basle, many testified to your astonishing love to me, and when you, yourself, too, in receiving me, gave me such abundant proofs of it, how could it be otherwise than that there should be some accession to my former feelings towards you? For, as before I should have been a wicked man had I not regarded with love, as well as reverence, one who had deserved so well of the Church of God, so I should have been heartless had I not returned the love of one by whom I had been so courteously and kindly entreated. Add to this, that I saw that your friendship would be no small honour to me, and those very virtues, which, when I merely pictured them to my mind had bound me to you, the more they became known and manifested by converse with you, the more they tended to increase my love. This relationship, consecrated, as it were, by such auspices, I have hitherto religiously cherished. But how I have so little fostered it by writing, and attested it to you by other common offices, I will here briefly explain. When wicked men drove us out by violence and sedition from Geneva, and we had set out for Zurich in order to report upon the condition of this Church, or rather its unfortunate dispersion, of which some traces still remain, I had no difficulty in perceiving that you had been induced, by the unfavourable language of certain persons, to suspect us of something which was not the case. But neither did I think that your mind was alienated from us, whatever might be whispered into your ears by those who endeavoured by every means in their power to render us odious. But rather I remember that I perceived how anxiously you wished that our interest should be consulted, nor have those friendly exhortations of yours, which you employed in your *Epitasis*, fallen from my memory. But the event shewed with what unjust prejudices we were loaded.

But wherefore this old story now? you will say. In sooth, just that I may excuse my neglect of the duties of friendship in the past, and that you may not reasonably accuse me either of sloth, or pride, or ingratitude, if you think me to have been so negligent without cause. Nay, when the same reason, which had led me to withdraw from your intimacy, had induced

me also to abstain from correspondence, because I feared you might not think very well of our cause, and when afterwards access to you seemed to be precluded to me by the very length of my silence until some fresh opportunity should open it again, now, after such a silence, so far from having nothing to write about, more subjects offer themselves than could be easily comprised in a letter. Waiving others, I may surely be allowed to deplore with you the ruinous mischief of internal strife<sup>1</sup> which has broken out afresh. I know what sorrow you feel. But since the wound is of such a kind that it can scarce be touched without being further irritated, what resource have we but with continual prayers to invoke the aid of the Physician from heaven? As regards the alleviation of the French persecution,<sup>2</sup> there is great danger that I have in vain lately spent much labour and been troublesome to you, unless those, who desire the safety of Christ's kingdom with their whole heart, put their hands to the work afresh. I am given to understand that there is not much zeal, not to use stronger language, at Berne and Basle. For, as the old proverb runs, *Tears soon dry up*, so we see many for a moment moved by the calamities of the righteous, and soon after begin to grow cold. Then a serious report affecting the brethren has got abroad, that the king is violently inflamed against them, because they refused to pay the tithes of the bishops. When this was made known to me at Arau, I boldly, and without any hesitation, asserted that it was an impudent fabrication. For they never denied their penny to the priests even when they remitted their former duties. Now, if the King, to satisfy us, says that he has sent the commissary, I reply, that he lately cajoled the Germans at Worms with the same reply; and know that it is a pure fiction. For our brethren are persecuted continually by freebooters whom the Legate

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the quarrel about the Sacraments. While he freely admitted an interpretation opposed to that of Luther in regard to the Supper, Joachim Wadian had always shewn great deference for the Reformers of Germany, and, animated by the desire of bringing about an accommodation between the Churches divided upon that fatal question, he published in 1536, a book entitled, "*Aphorismorum Libri Sex de consideratione Eucharistiae*," which he sent along with a respectful letter to Luther.—See Hospinian, *Hist. Sacrament.*, tom. ii. pp. 270, 271.

<sup>2</sup> See the preceding letters.



of Avignon fosters in his domains. But it is surer than certainty itself that they are playing into each other's hands. The officials of the King relax nothing of their usual cruelty. The King may send commissaries as he will, but there is no one who dares to open his mouth for the truth, such terror is inspired into all, and besides, it is not allowed to any one to present himself and hear what the decree really is. Application must be made for the liberation of those who are prisoners, and for the reinstatement of exiles in their possessions: then let the King begin to make an inquiry, as he had promised long ago to them to do. Since, owing to your high authority in your senate, this may be very easily obtained by you, and I am indeed convinced that you are of yourself inclined to this cause, I shall be content with this humble exhortation, lest, if I advised more particularly, I should seem to distrust you.

Farewell, most illustrious Sir, most highly honoured friend; may the Lord long preserve you to His Church, and continue to govern you by His own Spirit. I beg you will not think it too much trouble to salute the ministers in my name.

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Gotha. Vol. 404.*]

#### CXLI.—TO MONSIEUR DE FALAIS.

Report of the near arrival of M. de Falais at Geneva—details relative to the acquiring of a house in that town.

GENEVA, *5th August 1545.*

MONSEIGNEUR,—I thank our gracious God in that He has rejoiced our hearts with the good news of the restoration of your health, without permitting us to be made sorrowful by a knowledge of your illness. If we had been informed of it in time we would have offered up our prayers to Him as in duty bound. But since He has cared for you so well without your having required our aid, we have double cause to thank Him. The joy, too, is increased by learning that this visitation has been almost like a medicine in rendering you more robust than before.

However that may be, since we have a God who can in a moment, and without difficulty, call His own from the tomb, He can also, surely, lead them to the very brink of the grave without permitting them to fall into it, till the time has come.

Had I leisure to write Madame, I would tell her that her letters have taught me that it is well to read to the end before judging; for I had allowed myself to be surprised in the second line, in which she informed me of the danger in which you had been, although her prudent consideration helped me to restrain my feelings, so that, in truth, I may say, that I was singularly comforted before I had time to be grieved.

As to the matter to which you referred in your letter, your intention of coming hither has not been divulged by us. But rumour flies, and we know not whence, or how it comes, unless the wind carry it. When they speak to me on the subject, I let their words pass, without being at the pains to contradict them. There came a traveller from Strasbourg who spoke as if he knew your intentions. I therefore thought that it would be lost labour to deny it, but that the best way was to let every one think as he pleased. Some one came to me and told me that a gentleman named so and so, who had retired to Strasbourg, &c., &c., as if he knew much more about you than I did. When he asked things which were known to all, as it would have been barefaced to affect ignorance of them, I assented so far as was necessary. In this way we shall practise reservation in so far as we shall see it to be profitable. Meanwhile, lay your account with this, that people will prattle about your affairs in your absence without having commission from you.

With respect to the house, Monsieur Nicolas and I shall do what we promised. There is only one difficulty, namely, what is to be done if the owners fix the price, not above its proper value, but above what he is willing to give. We consider that they might reasonably ask two thousand five hundred crowns; Nicolas is unwilling to go beyond two thousand two hundred, or thereabouts;—not because he thinks the property worth no more, but because his purse will not admit of his giving more. This difficulty already perplexes us. If that place should not

suit, there is another under consideration, full two leagues distant. I fear it is too far away, for it is a great convenience to be near the town, and the place I refer to is pretty near the lake. In short, if it were a rational desire, I should wish that some one here lent you his eye, lest through delay good opportunities escape us.

I understand from your letters what it is that detains you, but I am persuaded the difficulty will now be removed. When I consider everything, my desire is, that, at your very first arrival, you should be well lodged, and your affairs all well arranged. But in your absence it is extremely difficult to purchase a place for you. Lodgings can be easily hired in the town; but the more important matter [of a settled dwelling] cannot be satisfactorily arranged without your personal presence. For our pleasure may not be yours. May it please God that you may be here in time to take advantage of the opportunity while it lasts. I expect, however, that if we do not succeed in one case, we shall fall back upon another.

I fear to retard your setting out, if I tell you that our Lord afflicts us somewhat with a pestilence.<sup>1</sup> But I think it better to inform you of it in good time, that you may come with confidence, than to allow you to be taken by surprise. Of other things you have no doubt been duly informed, for I begged Maldonad<sup>2</sup> and Saint André<sup>3</sup> not to withhold anything; although, indeed, you yourself know what it is important to attend to better than all our warnings and admonitions can instruct you. Since we seek Jesus Christ, we must expect to find Him crucified afresh wherever we go in this world. I hope, however, that our kind Father will give you as much repose here as will be needful for your health of body. We shall expect some definite information from you by the earliest messenger, and important directions what we are to do.

And now, Monseigneur, humbly commending myself to your favour and to that of Madame, and presenting to you both the

<sup>1</sup> It ceased to ravage Geneva only in 1546.

<sup>2</sup> A gentleman of Hanover, a refugee at Geneva.

<sup>3</sup> Another refugee, from Besançon. He was admitted to the ministry in the following year.

respects of my wife, I shall supplicate our gracious God to keep you under His protection, guiding you always by His Spirit, and sending what He knows to be for your welfare.

Your servant, humble brother, and sincere friend,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

## CXLII.—TO OSWALD MYCONIUS.

Letter of recommendation for Ochino.

GENEVA, 15th August 1545.

The bearer of this letter to you is Bernardino de Sienne,<sup>1</sup> a man not long since of high repute in Italy, and deserving of high esteem everywhere. Though I did not doubt that straightway, upon hearing his name, you would, in your kindness, receive him as his singular piety and erudition deserve, yet I was unwilling to let the opportunity pass of adding my own recommendation also; nor would I view it in the light of his need of it only, but also of my duty. Give him, therefore, to understand, as I know you will do of your own accord, that he is beloved by all the servants of Christ. Yet this, too, will be agreeable to me, if you should shew him that my recommendation weighs somewhat with you. Farewell, most reverend father in God. The Lord be ever with you and your colleagues, to whom, and to your wife likewise, convey my salutations.

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Archives of Zurich. Gest. vi. 111, p. 1423.*]

<sup>1</sup> From this letter it would appear that Ochino had not yet professed those opinions which soon thereafter alienated from him the affection of Calvin. Having retired to Geneva in 1542, Ochino quitted that town in 1545, to go to Basle. The same year we find him again at Strasbourg, which he left in 1548, to seek an asylum in England.

## CXLIII.—TO MADAME DE FALAIS.

Use of affliction—preparation for the arrival of M. de Falais at Geneva.

GENEVA, 15th August 1545.

MADAME,—It is reasonable, that after having received four letters from you, I should send at least one in return. But I beseech you to treat me leniently on this occasion, as the letter carrier, who promised to give me notice two days before his departure, has been more hurried than he anticipated, and I have had, consequently, less time than I expected. But I shall refrain from further apologies, knowing, that to a person of your good sense, a word will suffice.

Your letters have been a source of double gratification to me, which, indeed, I need scarcely tell you, since you will believe it without a word from me to that effect. It is, because it has pleased our gracious God to restore Monsieur to good health after so troublesome an illness, and because he is now more robust than he was previously to this attack. From this we should learn not to consider it wonderful that God should bring spiritual good out of bodily affliction, since, even for the body itself, a disease has become a cure. We must now pray, that as He has commenced to restore him to health, He may be pleased fully to confirm it, and give him a body so vigorous that he may feel disposed to take recreation, and make up for the weary imprisonment of the last three months.

I send you herewith the letters which the sister of Monsieur David had written to him, not because they can afford you any consolation, but because I thought it improper to suppress them. I expect, please God, that we shall have more certain information through the servant of Monsieur Bernardin, of your own health and that of Monsieur, as well as of your affairs, that we may know when to make provision of wood: as to the new wine, we are attending to it. It is true, that if you are very much afraid of the epidemic, that might be some reason for delay; and yet I assure you, that you ought not to be influenced by

mere rumour, which gives a very exaggerated account of the reality.

And now, humbly commending myself to your good favour and that of Monsieur, I will supplicate our Heavenly Father to keep you both in all prosperity, filling you with joy through His grace, and giving you an equanimity of soul which will raise you above all earthly troubles, making you worthy to be the means of glorifying His name more and more.—Amen.

Ever your servant and humble brother,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

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