

THE LIFE
OF
WILLIAM FAREL,
THE SWISS REFORMER.

FROM THE GERMAN OF THE
REV. MELCHIOR KIRCHHOFER,
OF STEIN ON THE RHINE, IN THE CANTON OF SCHAFFHAUSESEN.

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Hic ille est, qui nullis difficultatibus fractus, nullis minis, convitiis,
verberibus denique inflictis territus, Monbelgardenses, Neocomendes
Lausanenses, Aquileienses, Genevenses denique Christo lucrificet.
BEZAE ICONES.¹

Source: http://archive.org/stream/lifeofwilliamfar00kirciala/lifeofwilliamfar00kirciala_djvu.txt

*Formatting, modernization, and notes (in blue) by
William H. Gross www.onthewing.org February 2013
British spellings retained; syntax occasionally revised.*

¹ He is the one, who unbroken by difficulties, threats, insults, or inflicted blows, finally alarmed Monbelgardenses, Neocomendes, Lausanne, and Aquileia: proofs Christ finally won. – from *Beza's Portraits* (1580).

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THE LIFE
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CHAPTER 1. FAREL'S BIRTH AND EDUCATION.

WILLIAM FAREL was born at Gap, in the province of Dauphiny, in the year 1489. He belonged to a family of rank, and possessed a good fortune. He had three brothers, Daniel, Gautier, and Claudius, and at least one sister. Of his very earliest years nothing is known. Dauphiny had recently been added to the crown of France, and shared in the paternal care of Louis XII., whose reign, notwithstanding its wars, was held in remembrance by his subjects as a golden age. It was the patriotic wish of this prince that his nobility should cultivate an acquaintance with literature and science, instead of devoting their chief attention to field sports and other pastimes. With these enlarged views, the bent of young Farel's mind perfectly coincided. It was not, however, without much difficulty that he prevailed on his parents to gratify his thirst for knowledge. But his distinguished attainments appear to have led them in the issue to fully approve of his choice, since they bestowed on the younger branches of the family the same advantages of education. Nothing is known of his first

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preceptors,¹ except that they were but indifferently acquainted with the Latin language; but their deficiencies were, in some measure, compensated by his removal to the university of Paris, which took place before the year 1512.

Precept and example united to confirm Farel in the errors of popery in which he had been brought up. The authority of the church and the discipline of the schools combined to fix him in a state of mental bondage. The philosophy then prevalent served rather to darken than enlighten the human mind. The teachers of theology were the slaves of tradition, and imbued with an hereditary hostility to taste, science, and literature. The instruction which they imparted, if it might be called such, served only to confirm their unfortunate disciple in ignorance and error – unless he was rescued by some extraordinary occurrence, by meeting with one of those forerunners of the reformation who were raised up by Providence in various parts of Christendom, or by receiving an impulse from the general agitation of the public mind. Farel was placed in a situation ill-adapted to receiving Divine truth; and almost the only favourable circumstance was that a general uprightness of intention marked his character.

His attachment to the popish system proceeded neither from the hope of worldly emoluments, nor from an inclination to those licentious practices in which so many of its adherents indulged. It proceeded rather from the firm belief that the pope was ordained by God as

¹ [Teacher at a university or college.](#)

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the visible head of the church, and was in fact a God upon earth, whose commands were to be held sacred and essential to salvation. However arrogant and impious the claims of the Roman pontiff might be, they fell short of the devotion and reverence of Farel, of whom it might be justly said that he was more popish than the pope himself. Dazzled by the false splendour of the Romish church, he looked with abhorrence on every attempt to impugn its authority. He was ready to hazard his property, his life, and even his soul in its defence. Highly applauded by those who were involved in the same errors, he was led to entertain the vain idea that he was one of God's true worshippers, while he was wandering further and further from the truth.

Farel read much but without discriminating truth from falsehood. The legends of the saints inflamed his imagination; his superstitious reverence for the Virgin Mary was extreme; he knelt before the images of the saints, invoked them as intercessors, celebrated their festivals, considered pilgrimages to their shrines as meritorious, and trusted in the efficacy of their relics. The consecrated wafer, which he received from the hands of the priest, he did not doubt was the true God. He held those religious orders in the greatest reverence which were distinguished for the severity of their discipline; and he visited with profound awe the retired and gloomy cells of the Carthusians. His tutor, James Faber, was his model in the adoration of the saints. At his

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command, [Farel] adorned their images with flowers; and when joining with him in repeating the appointed prayers, he felt it an honour to have so distinguished and devout a fellow-worshipper.

All these observances, however, gave no repose or satisfaction to his mind; nor were his studies better adapted to promote true piety. His aim was to become a real Christian, and Aristotle was recommended as a guide! In the vain attempt to pluck good fruit from a corrupt tree, he became increasingly unhappy; and before he obtained true peace, he had to pass through a course of severe mental suffering. On turning from the pages of the philosopher to the inspired volume,¹ he was struck with astonishment at the discrepancy between its doctrines and precepts, and those of the Romish church. But whom was he now to believe and follow?

Being able neither at once to throw off his shackles, nor to reconcile the plain letter of Scripture with the tenets in which he had been educated, he strove to maintain an implicit belief in the authority of the pope and the church. He allowed himself to be persuaded that the real meaning of Scripture was different from the obvious and literal interpretation. Thus he repelled the first rays of truth which penetrated his benighted mind; but they were not wholly inefficacious. His soul was roused from its slumbers. Rites and ceremonies which he used to attend to with the fervour of undoubting belief, were now performed with scruples and misgivings. The first

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spark was kindled that, before long, would be fanned into a flame.

¹ That is, the Bible.

The illumination of Farel's mind was gradual. For a while he yielded to the suggestions of a learned friend who advised him not to enter on the study of the Scriptures till he had made greater progress in philosophy. But he was powerfully attracted to the sacred volume by various inducements, and especially by the example of his beloved tutor, Faber. This venerable man (in common with many sincere individuals) had not witnessed the aspect of the times and the state of the church, without many solemn emotions and presentiments¹ of approaching changes. While still practising the adoration of images and the service of the mass, he said to Farel, taking him by the hand, "God will renovate the world, and you will be a witness of it." And in a commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul, he thus expressed his hopes: "God in his great mercy will soon revive the expiring spark in the hearts of men, so that faith and love, and a purer worship, may return again." God is bringing his church from its state of infancy in our time, to spiritual manhood; and Faber himself, as he gradually emerged from error, contributed towards this glorious change. His extraordinary veneration for the saints and martyrs induced him to compile an account of their lives. And while the work was passing through the press, he was struck, while reading the prayers addressed to them, with the impiety of such homage. He renounced the study of the legends,

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and applied himself to the holy Scriptures. In taking this step, he was prompted by the example of many other learned men who, with still clearer views, had entered on the same path. Even the jealousy and harsh behaviour of his colleagues only served to stimulate his diligence. He carefully distinguished true religion from the superstitions which had been incorporated with it, and raised a warning voice against those who imposed heavy burdens on the people which Christ had not authorised. The merits of the saints, which he once so highly extolled, lost their lustre before the glory and efficacy of the work of Christ. "We will follow," was now his resolution, "what is certain, and abandon what is doubtful. We will cleave to Christ alone, and to the doctrine of the apostles, which points out to us the way of salvation. There is only one religion; it has one foundation and object, one Head, even Christ, who alone is to be worshipped and honoured!"

The progress of the truth in Faber's mind, and in society at large, had its effect on Farel, though at first he wavered between the ancient faith and the present views of his tutor. Another friend, however, assisted in bringing him to a knowledge that a Christian must approach and worship God through Christ alone, the only Redeemer of mankind. Thus he reached the port of safety, after having endured many a storm; and tranquillity was restored to his agitated mind. In allusion to his mental conflict, he thus expresses himself: "When the corruptions

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of the Romish church are unveiled to the soul that has been drawn aside by them, its sense of their enormity is so overwhelming that only the clear exhibition of the welcome doctrine of salvation by Christ can preserve a man from utter despair, or losing his senses."

¹ *Presentiment*: foreboding or premonition.

The study of ecclesiastical history, added to the perusal of the Scriptures, contributed to eradicate many deeply-rooted errors from Farel's mind. On investigating the faith of the ancient church, he found that in the liturgies, the prayers were addressed not to the saints, but to God. In the confessions of the early Christians, he sought in vain for purgatory, the mass, or the worship of images. Yet in consequence of having been so constantly addicted to the adoration of the Virgin Mary and the saints, he felt it difficult at first to worship God alone. It was a still harder task to abandon the mass, and to renounce the absurd idea of transubstantiation. For a long time he was reluctant to examine this last mentioned doctrine. Whatever arguments his reason might suggest to the contrary, he preferred resting in a blind acquiescence which was rather the semblance of belief than genuine conviction.

The better to understand the holy Scriptures, he applied very diligently to the Greek and Hebrew languages, without neglecting, however, his other studies on which he set a just value. The commencement of his religious change took place early in life, but he appears to have made the most rapid advances in the knowledge of the truth. [This was] when he was about thirty

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years old, between the years 1519 and 1522. It was when Luther had begun his career, and made a powerful impression in France, notwithstanding the decisions of the Sorbonne. As his belief in the doctrines of the gospel became settled, his attachment to the popish ritual declined. The numerous fasts and festivals, the injunction of celibacy, and the various rites of Jewish or pagan origin, became highly offensive to him. In the priesthood, he saw with abhorrence the substitution of external splendour for inward purity, and the prevalence of an assumed devotion, combined with a secret addiction to the grossest sensuality. The traditions of men had taken precedence over the Divine oracles. The spirit of devotion, the love of God, and the saving truths of the gospel were discarded to make way for the corrupt schemes of base self-interest.

Farel was astonished beyond measure when he saw the *legerdemain*,¹ the pretended exorcisms and disenchantments – in a word, the impious jugglery carried on with the relics of the saints. The veil was taken from his eyes, and a new world opened to his view. The word of God became clearer, the prophets and apostles more intelligible, and above all, he heard the voice of Christ more distinctly. In Christ he found that peace which he had so anxiously been seeking; and from a sense of gratitude for the blessings of salvation, he began to love God supremely, and his neighbour as himself.

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Having thus become convinced how widely the Romish church had departed from the doctrine of Christ, Farel forsook her communion with a feeling of abhorrence of himself, and of the errors in which he had been so long enthralled. This sentiment of self-reproach for his zeal in behalf of a corrupt system of religion, continued with him through life. Having been more deeply sunk in superstition than many others, his deliverance appeared a more signal miracle of Divine grace. He felt that he could never be sufficiently thankful for such a blessing. He aspired to serve God with true and living faith, according to his holy word, as zealously and fervently as he had

¹ *Legerdemain* – an illusory feat; considered magical by naive observers.

formerly served the pope. He no longer submitted to human authority in matters of religion; nor could he look up with the same deference as before to professed theologians, not even to his beloved tutor. He had witnessed with indignation the efforts made to repress the truth, and the persecution of Faber, whose indecision he deeply lamented at the same time. To him, indeed, from the earliest period of their intimacy, he felt indebted for the high moral tone of his example, and his paternal affection. These had a most beneficial effect on his pupil's mind, by exciting disgust at the prevailing depravity of manners. On his visits to his native place, he saw with grief the low state into which morals and religion had sunk, especially at Lyons. The possibility of their restoration seemed hardly conceivable, for the means which Providence was about to adopt for renovating Christendom were hidden from his view.

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Great as was the change which Farel had experienced, it was as little to be attributed to any interested motives, as to his previous attachment to popery. He was led to it by reverence for the Divine word, not by the love of innovation, animosity to the pope, or the prospect of worldly advantage. His zealous promulgation of Christian truth and the strenuous conflict he maintained against everything opposed to it, he considered as the only reparation in his power for having so long and ardently cherished a corrupt and erroneous system.

CHAPTER 2. FAREL AT PARIS AND MEAUX.

FAREL'S proficiency in his studies procured him not only the increasing respect of his tutors, but public marks of honour. Having taken the degree of Master of Arts, he was made, on Faber's recommendation, regent of the college founded by Cardinal le Moine. It was an office which had always been filled by men of eminence. His high character for integrity induced many persons of rank to entrust him with various sums of money for the support of poor students, which he distributed most conscientiously. He discharged with honour the duties of his office for the short time he filled it, and he was held in affectionate remembrance by his colleagues. He left Paris in order to reside with Faber, Girard Rufus (Roussel), and other persons of kindred views. About this time, Briconet, bishop of Meaux, had returned from an embassy to Rome; he was undazzled by the splendours of the Vatican, and he was intent on the fulfilment of his episcopal duties. Favourably disposed towards the doctrines of the gospel, he introduced them into his discourses; and he did so with greater acceptance from exhibiting their practical influence in his own

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Conduct. Thus, by his labours of love, which enforced his doctrinal statements, and wearied by the provocations of his colleagues at Paris, Faber hastened to join the bishop who was his chief benefactor and patron. Farel, with the two Rufuses and other studious individuals, were invited to Meaux. It was an invitation by no means unacceptable to the former, since from his change of sentiment, which was now no longer to be concealed, he had become the object of persecution and secret informations. It was the bishop's wish that his visitors should assist him in preaching and in educating the young. Besides other young persons, Jean Comte de la Croix, a nobleman of Paris, was trained by them for his future Christian career. The holy Scriptures were the principal object of their study. While at Meaux, Faber wrote his commentary on the four evangelists, and he also translated them into the vernacular tongue. This was a performance most obnoxious to his opponents, particularly to the monks. On one occasion, when [the bishop] was expressing to Farel his sanguine hopes that the unadulterated gospel would soon be spread throughout France, and human inventions be exploded, De Roma, a Jacobin monk,¹ rejoined, "I and the rest of the friars will raise a crusade, and drive the king out of his kingdom by means of his own subjects, if he permits what you call the preaching of the gospel."

By these pious exertions of the bishop of Meaux and his friends, many persons, especially among the common people, were induced to leave the Romish

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communion. The mendicant vocation of the Franciscans began to suffer, and their self-interest took the alarm. They sent word to Paris that their city and its environs were infested with heresy which had its origin in the episcopal palace. The bishop successfully warded off at the time the imputations cast upon himself; but his efforts to protect his friends were unavailing. He was obliged to withdraw the permission he had given them to preach, and persecution immediately

¹ *Jacobin* – name for the Dominican monks in Paris.

commenced against those persons who had embraced the reformed faith among the lower orders. Jean le Clerc, a wool-comber, was beaten for three successive days, and branded on the forehead, while his believing mother stood by. She exhorted him to remember the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. Others sought safety by flight. Among these was Farel, who seems to have been more intimate than many of his learned friends with his poorer Christian brethren. The courage of the bishop and his fellow-labourers was not yet daunted, notwithstanding the opposition they met with among the higher classes. He attempted to effect in other parts of his diocese what he could not accomplish in the city; and the steadfastness of those who had already suffered called forth fresh confessors. Farel left behind him many persons initiated and confirmed in the Christian faith, who did not dread the power of antichrist, with all its teachers and abettors, being armed with that Divine faith which the reproach of heresy could not shake, nor the fires of martyrdom destroy.

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Nothing is known with certainty of the place of Farel's residence for the next ten months. Some suppose that he repaired first of all to Paris, where adherents of the gospel were to be found among all classes. Others infer, from the extraordinary solicitude which he manifested at a later period, for the Christian society at Metz, that he resided in that city for a time. It is also stated that, after his departure from Meaux, he returned home and preached the gospel there till he was prohibited by the bishop, not being in holy orders. As he was in the habit of taking frequent journeys, there is reason to believe that he was the instrument of leading many persons in his native province to adopt a purer form of worship. It is certain that the gospel was disseminated in Dauphiny at an early period, and with considerable success. Among its most zealous adherents, were Farel's brothers, the Minorite¹ Peter de Seville, and particularly a knight by the name of Anemund de Caet, lord of Chastellar.

No longer secure in France, Farel sought asylum in Switzerland, to which he had been preceded by his friend Anemund from Grenoble.

¹ A member of the Franciscan Friars Minor.

CHAPTER 3. FAREL AT BASLE.

AT an early period, the doctrines of Zuinglius¹ were disseminated in France, owing to the close connexion which existed between that country and Switzerland; and afterwards a constant communication was kept up, either by letter or personal intercourse, between that reformer and those who adopted his views, with the happiest effects. Francis Lambert, a Minorite of Avignon, and Anemund, whom we have already mentioned, may be noticed as having derived much instruction and encouragement in their Christian course from their visits to Zuinglius.

The first Swiss town which Farel entered on leaving his native land (probably on the recommendation of the bookseller Baugus, whom he had known at Lyons,) was Basle, a place celebrated for its promotion of literature, and rendered illustrious by the residence of Erasmus and Œcolampadius.² Here he met with his friend Anemund, and several other fugitives from France and Lorraine, among whom were the Chevalier d'Esche, and Peter Touissant (Tossanus) a native of Metz. He was received in the most friendly

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manner by Œcolampadius, and became his guest. The occurrences at Meaux had excited universal attention. Farel's fame had preceded him, as a corrector of religious abuses, nor was he backward to maintain such a reputation. The evangelical doctrine had already gained many friends in the senate, and among the inhabitants of Basle. On the other hand, the members of the University, encouraged by Rome, were intent on suppressing it by means of public deputations. Not only were these attempts abortive, but they promoted the cause of truth, by suggesting to the friends of the gospel the use of the same instruments in its defence. Œcolampadius posted up four important propositions, and invited all who had taken offence at his doctrine, either to refute it, or yield to the force of his arguments. After the public defence of his propositions, which was rather apologetical than polemical, the general respect for his character increased. The people felt a growing interest in such discussions, which related not to metaphysical subtleties, but to subjects of the greatest practical importance. The use also of the German language on these occasions, contrary to the ancient custom, was an additional circumstance in their favour, and it appeared suitable to men who were not afraid lest the light should expose the weakness of their cause.

A second disputation soon followed, occasioned by the marriage of Stephen Stoer, a priest of Liestall. He was much beloved by his congregation. In hopes of being allowed to retain him, they asked the

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¹ Zuinglius (Zwingli) 1484-1531; father of the Sacramentarians; he opposed the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the elements of the communion and considered it a mere memorial.

² John Œcolampadius (1482-1531) – Protestant theologian of Basle, His family name was Heusegen or Husegen. At Tübingen he became friendly with Melancthon; and at Basle in 1515, he aided Erasmus with his annotations on the NT. Between 1520-1523 he wrote papers in support of Luther, justification by faith alone, and marriage for priests; he wrote against the confessional and transubstantiation, favoring Zwingli's view on communion.

senate that he might be permitted to defend the step he had taken publicly, by an appeal to the Scriptures. A disputation, in the German language, was accordingly held in the hall of the university. But neither deputies from the bishop nor any of the professors were present. They were greatly mortified at being unable to prevent its taking place, and quite enraged when they found that Stoer's five propositions were approved of, not only by Œcolampadius and the majority of the preachers, but by the friars themselves. Farel then requested permission of the rector and prior of the university to exhibit and defend certain theses, more (as he modestly represented it) for his own information, in case he was in error, than in order to teach others. His request was denied, being most violently opposed by Dr. Lewis Baer who was the principal professor of divinity, an able scholar, and the intimate friend of Erasmus. Farel then applied to the senate, and submitted to them the theses translated into German by Œcolampadius. The senate granted leave to hold the disputation, and declared "that the theses were framed in becoming language, that the sentiments were scriptural, and conducive to general edification." The university, which was under ecclesiastical as well as civil jurisdiction, perceiving that it was impossible to prevent the discussion, endeavoured to lessen its efficiency. With that view, they applied to Henry Von Schonau, the vicar-general, for his interference. Accordingly, in conjunction with the heads of the

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university, he issued an order to all the priests, students, and others, prohibiting them from attending the disputation, under pain of excommunication and banishment. The senate, jealous of what they considered an unwarrantable assumption of authority on the part of the university, issued an edict which declared that, notwithstanding the prohibition, "the pastors, preachers, priests, students, and other persons connected with the university should attend the disputation, under penalty of being deprived of their benefices, and the protection of the laws."

The propositions brought forward by Farel on this occasion were as follow:

1. "Christ has given us a perfect rule of life, which we are not at liberty to alter, either by adding to it, or taking from it.
2. "We must faithfully obey the commands of God; for it will lead to ungodliness, if we adhere to any party or faction, or govern ourselves by any other precepts than those of Christ, who has ordained that those who cannot contain [themselves] should marry.
3. "The distinction of meats and drinks, as well as a variety of ceremonies, is Jewish, and not agreeable to the light of the gospel.
4. "Long, wordy prayers, which are not in accordance with the precepts of the Lord, and the model which he has given, cannot be safely prescribed or used. It is better to give to the poor the money which is paid for prayers on behalf of the dead, and not to accumulate it as an incitement to much evil.

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Every effort should be made to promote unity, which is best accomplished by enjoining the people to read the Scriptures, that they may no longer consider distinctions in dress as important.

5. "The vocation of a Christian teacher requires that he should apply himself to the study of God's word with such devotedness, as to esteem it above everything else. His mind should not be diverted by other objects from the Divine word. Employments which are secular, rather than religious, should be committed to other persons. An extremely culpable and pernicious carelessness is often shown in this respect.

6. "No one should impiously regard the precepts of Christ simply as good advice; nor exalt the advice of his fellow-men to a level with Christian precepts: this is the devil's work. Equally culpable is covetousness, which, for the sake of gain, induces the Christian to neglect that which he ought to perform, and to perform what he ought to leave undone

7. "He that treats the gospel as doubtful, does all in his power to suppress it; and he that does not in sincerity instruct his brother, and [does not] fear God rather than man, is ashamed of the Lord.

8. "He that hopes to be saved and justified by his own power and merits, and not by faith, exalts himself and, blinded by unbelief, he makes a God of himself. "

9. "We ought to pray most earnestly for what

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the Holy Spirit imparts to us. Christians must present their offerings to God alone.

10. "Those who are in health, and who are not devoted to the work of the ministry, are under obligation to labour according to the decision of the apostle.

11. "A Christian ought to refrain both from heathenish festivals, and from Jewish hypocrisy in fasting and other things, which do not proceed from the Holy Spirit. He must especially beware of idolatry.

12. "Jewish ordinances and burdensome ceremonies which infringe on Christian liberty, ought not to be tolerated by a Christian people.

13. "Jesus Christ must be our polar star, by whose power all things are governed, and not by the constellations, or the elements. We trust that this will be the case in the future, when everything will be conformed to the evangelical model; when all strife (so abhorrent to every Christian) will be done away with, so that the peace of God, which passes all understanding, may dwell in our hearts."

In these propositions, Farel did not attack by name any particular doctrines or set of men, though they are directed against all doctrines which do not emanate from the word of God; and they

indicate, with sufficient distinctness, the classes whom he especially wished to reform. He stated the import and intention of the articles to be the promotion of Christian liberty, and the abolition of the tyranny of human

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Ordinances; so that the civil powers might retain their authority without being encroached upon by ecclesiastical dispensations. He introduced the subject in a manner worthy of a defender of the true religion: "It is my opinion," he said, "that every Christian cannot do better than make himself thoroughly acquainted with the truth, which Christ has declared himself to be." He called on all those who were concerned for the welfare of their fellow-men, (the pastors and teachers of the church especially; both those who were pledged to advocate the reformed faith, and those who still adhered to the church of Rome,) "to state, with clearness and precision, the grounds of their belief, as children of the light, without fear of doing wrong in making such a public avowal." He closed with saying, "Hasten, then, as the Lord enjoins, with a pure heart, and strive that the word of God alone may gain the victory. This I entreat and exhort, for the sake of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who has so strictly commanded us to seek the welfare of our fellow men."

The disputation began in Latin: Œcolampadius acted as interpreter, as Farel, on account of his French accent, was not easily understood. For the purpose of trying Farel's skill, and confirming the points in debate, Œcolampadius brought forward the views of their opponents with no inconsiderable show of argument. Their adversaries, who had been so violently opposed to the meeting, did not make their appearance, but contented themselves with boasting

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in private how much they could have done, had they been there! The documents relating to the disputation no longer exist, but the results were, beyond all doubt, very beneficial. The opposition made by the members of the university and the priests, tended strongly to lower the estimation in which they were held by the people, who felt convinced that their sole object was to prevent the gospel from reappearing in its ancient lustre and purity.

The attachment of the friends of the reformation to Farel was much increased by his conduct on this occasion, and by their continued intercourse with him. His learning, piety, and scriptural knowledge, combined with undaunted courage and fervent zeal, were so conspicuous that, in the judgment of Œcolampadius and others, he was more than a match for all the doctors of the Sorbonne. Among his warmest friends were the preachers Jacob, Imeli, and Boniface Wolfhard. He was also the instrument of confirming in the faith of the gospel the learned Franciscan, Conrad Pellican, with whom he formed an intimacy from the time of the first disputation.

Farel's zeal sometimes betrayed him into an intemperance of language, which his best friends acknowledged and lamented. Œcolampadius, in particular, sought to correct this infirmity by admonishing him in the hours of social intercourse: and since his own temper was also hasty and hot, entered into a mutual engagement with him to cultivate meekness and humility: while, at the same time,

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he recognised in Farel's ardent zeal an invaluable virtue, which was, on many occasions, of as much importance as meekness.

The opposers of the evangelical doctrine persisted, after the disputation, in showing the same arrogance as before, and endeavoured by public mandates, or secret intrigues, to suppress the gospel, and crush its adherents. They were publicly reproached by Ecolampadius, in a letter to the bishop, for refusing to appear in defence of their faith, under pretence of obedience to the Roman pontiff; by which they insulted their colleagues, and disappointed the just expectations of the people.

Farel remained several months at Basle, and during that time visited Zurich twice with some of his friends from Lyons, and also formed connexions at Schaffhausen and Constance. In later years he looked back with great pleasure to this period of his life, when he was received, though young and a new convert, with so much kindness by Zuinglius, as well as by Myconius, Conrad Grebel, and others.

CHAPTER 4. FAREL AND ERASMUS.

THE prominent part taken by Farel in the public disputation at Basle, while it was of essential service to the cause of the reformation, and secured him the esteem of his friends, rendered him more than ever obnoxious to the abettors of the ancient system. The freedom of his animadversions¹ on the pope, the clergy, and the general constitution of the church, gave great offence to many persons, and, among others, to the celebrated Erasmus, a man averse from all bold and decisive measures, and particularly sensitive of whatever affected his own reputation and influence. He would have been better pleased had Farel visited Basle in order to pay him personal respect, or to engage in literary pursuits, instead of employing his undivided energies in the service of religion, and against the corruptions of popery. Farel, on the other hand, had imbibed a dislike for Erasmus for his haughty and contemptuous treatment of his venerated instructor Faber. Indeed, it was scarcely possible that two men whose characters were so very dissimilar, should be brought near each other without exciting irritation and variance.

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Farel, an enemy to all hypocrisy, and unaccustomed to dissemble, freely expressed the universal opinion of the reformed party respecting Erasmus, that he knew what was right, but did not have the courage to avow it. This provoked Erasmus, and Farel chose an unfortunate juncture for urging him to act up to his convictions. He had lately been engaged in a controversy with Ulrich von Hutten, to whose attack he had replied with considerable acrimony; and after Hutten's decease, his feelings were still more deeply wounded by Otto Braunfelt's unsparing exposure of the weak points of his character. As all these unwelcome animadversions proceeded from members of the evangelical communion, it strengthened his prejudices against the whole body. It flattered his vanity, indeed, that the friends of the gospel were ready to avail themselves of his wit and learning in their warfare with popish corruptions, but it wounded him deeply when they turned his own weapons against himself. The depreciating terms in which he usually spoke of the reformers, and particularly the pledge he had given to the pope to write against Luther, were very offensive to Farel.

The breach between them was widened by the propagators of scandal, who repeated certain harsh and violent expressions said to have been made use of by Farel; such, for instance, as that he would rather suffer martyrdom daily than desist from attempting to lower Erasmus' reputation, and that Erasmus was like Balaam, who accepted bribes to curse God's chosen

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people. On calling Farel to account for using such language, Erasmus found that it was a merchant at Lyons who had uttered these reproachful expressions. He quickly turned the conversation to another topic, and asked Farel why he objected to the invocation of saints. Was it because it was not expressly enjoined in the holy Scripture? On receiving an answer in the affirmative, he demanded scriptural authority for the invocation of the Holy Spirit. Farel replied,

¹ Harsh criticism or disapproval.

“If he be God, he must be invoked.” As Erasmus, however, insisted on a direct proof from the Scriptures, (not because he doubted the truth of the doctrine, for in this they were agreed,) Farel quoted the passage, “These three are one,” 1John 5.7. Erasmus objected to this text, that it was of uncertain authority, and of dubious meaning, and had never been adduced by the warmest advocates of the doctrine. The conversation lasted to the close of the day, but seems to have had no other effect on the parties engaged, than to exasperate their feelings, and to confirm the mutual antipathy which ceased only with their lives.

From that time Erasmus designated Farel by a most opprobrious epithet, frequently indulged in unfounded suspicions against him, and scarcely ever spoke of him but in terms which evinced the depth of his resentment. “He calls himself a friend of the gospel,” said Erasmus, “would that he were so in reality! But never during my whole life did I see such a proud, calumnious, and shameless man. In short, from what I know of his character, I wish to

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meet him neither as friend nor foe. Even the Lutherans cannot endure his incessant forwardness. Œcolampadius and Pellican have often reprovèd him, but all in vain; his faults are too deeply rooted. Nothing gives him greater pleasure than to circulate anonymous libels. If Luther knew him, he would chastise him severely.” Nor was he content without venting his spleen on Farel’s countrymen. “Some Frenchmen,” he complains, “carry matters further than the Germans. There are five words which are for ever on their lips, ‘the gospel, God’s word, faith, Christ, and the Spirit,’ and yet I see many of them who are evidently possessed by the spirit of the devil.” In order to account to Melancthon for the acrimony of his style in his treatise against Luther, he pretended that the most severe passages were directed, not against Luther, but against Farel and his associates.

On the other hand, it must be confessed that Farel discovered no little warmth and bitterness of spirit. He termed Erasmus a weathercock, reproached him as being the gospel’s most dangerous enemy, and asserted that it was a duty to pray, either that he might be converted, or be deprived of those distinguished abilities which he so perniciously misapplied.

The senate found the opposition of the vicar-general and the university to be more formidable than they had anticipated, or they were influenced by the disagreement between Erasmus and Farel, and the freedom of speech which the latter

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adopted on religious topics beyond what the people were able to bear. For this or whatever other motive might have prompted them, they ordered Farel to leave Basle. His friends remonstrated in vain against this treatment as a violation of the laws of hospitality; while his antagonist Erasmus did not hesitate to affirm that his expulsion was necessary in order to prevent disturbances in the city.

CHAPTER 5. FAREL'S RETURN TO MONTBELIARD.

FAREL left Basle in company with a Frenchman of noble family, probably Nicholas d'Esche, his friend Anemund being at this time on a visit to Luther. As they intended travelling by way of Strasburg as far as Wittenberg, they were provided with letters of recommendation from Œcolampadius to Capito and Luther. If Farel really went to Wittenberg, his stay there was short, and he soon returned to Strasburg, the general asylum of the persecuted, where he met with a very friendly reception. Before he came to Basle, he had declined preaching, in the expectation that God would raise up men more able and worthy than himself. But as Œcolampadius solemnly and frequently urged him to undertake the ministerial office, his scruples were at length overcome, and he only waited for a suitable opportunity to enter upon this sacred employment. Having been invited by a Christian society in Montbeliard to become their pastor, he requested and obtained permission from Duke Ulrick, of Wertemberg (who resided there after being expelled from his hereditary dominions), to preach the gospel in that place.

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In July, he commenced his labours at Montbeliard with such astonishing success as warranted the expectation of still greater things. The duke and his court were much in his favour, and the people in general had a great desire to hear the word of God; though a few of the higher class were disposed to treat him with contempt, or apprehended unpleasant consequences from his residence among them. He lost no time in acquainting his friends at Basle of the favourable commencement of his ministry. Œcolampadius wrote to congratulate him and said, "I rejoice that the doctrine of Christ flourishes so much at Montbeliard through your instrumentality, and pray that he who employs you to plant, would also water the plantation, and preserve it alike from insidious attempts to injure it, and from open violence. It is gratifying to cultivate a soil in which the seeds spring up so rapidly; but let us not be satisfied unless we see the fruit matured and our hopes realized, or at least unless we have so fulfilled our office as to leave no occasion for any just reproach to be cast upon us. Be anxious to form not *learned*, but *good* men; I mean such as are well instructed in Divine truth and taught of God. It is not a difficult task to gain the attention of people to certain doctrines, and excite a zealous attachment to them; but to impress the heart aright is indeed a Divine work. We must first of all pray for the Holy Spirit, and put out our talents to [earn] interest. For this purpose we need meekness, patience, and love, and above all,

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faith. We require a holy wisdom which is not of this world, but imparted from above, and which will teach us to become, after the example of Christ, 'all things to all men.' But why do I remind you of these things, since I am confident that you are under the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

Tossanus also wrote to him in the following terms: "I exhort you, for Christ's sake, never to forsake the path in which you have entered so courageously, but to press forward with Christian confidence and unshaken resolution. I am glad that the duke and his court are on your side; but there is need of watchfulness, for you well know that the destroyer of our peace never slumbers, but employs every weapon to overcome his opponents; and the more so, whenever any

extraordinary attack is made upon his kingdom. To men of the world, many things are objects of desire which, on close examination, are evidently opposed to the spirit of the gospel. Be cautious, therefore, and try everything by the unerring standard of the Scriptures. The cause to which you have devoted yourself is too great to be profaned by human conceit. We may be tempted by offers of wealth, of worldly gratifications, or of secular aid; but, if we waver between these objects and the requirements of the gospel, we shall have fallen from Christ, and shall walk in darkness. However, I do not write thus to you because I think that you need to be admonished, but as a proof of my regard for you, and my desire that Christ may be planted in

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every heart." The chevalier Anemund was the bearer of these friendly epistles.

Scarcely had his friends dispatched these expressions of sympathy and encouragement, when Œcolampadius was informed of an occurrence, apparently disastrous, but which ultimately had a favourable effect on the progress of the gospel. The guardian of the Franciscans at Besancon, with the dean of the Priory, and some other persons, interrupted Farel while preaching, by giving him the lie, and denouncing his doctrine as unchristian, before the whole congregation. The hearers, Germans as well as Frenchmen, loudly expressed their disapproval of such a gross breach of decorum. The duke's attendants, fearing a tumult, hastened with the intelligence to the castle. The duke came down, reprimanded the dean, and desired him to use his authority in preserving the peace. If the preacher, he added, had inculcated anything unchristian and erroneous, he might note it down and controvert it at a suitable time and place, and in so doing, might depend on his (the duke's) protection. The dean took the admonition in good part, but not so the guardian; he came forward in another church in the afternoon, and not only contradicted and abused Farel's sermon, but endeavoured to excite a tumult in the town. The duke put both the guardian and Farel under arrest; the guardian was required either to show on good grounds that Farel's discourse was erroneous and heretical, or to retract what he had

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said respecting it; he chose the latter alternative, and confessed from the pulpit, before the whole congregation, that Farel had spoken the truth, and that his opposition proceeded from undue heat of temper and inconsideration. This acknowledgment was committed to writing. The guardian having complied with all the conditions required, was dismissed: and to prevent the circulation of false reports, an official statement of the whole affair was published in Latin and German.

Farel's zeal appears to have been increased by this opposition; and as the clergy had been very active in the business, he attacked them with great vehemence and acrimony, in a manner not altogether consistent with the dignity of his office. He began also to preach against the sacrifice of the mass, regardless of the wise advice of Œcolampadius, that his first object should be to banish antichrist from the hearts of his hearers. The course he pursued served rather to exasperate than to conciliate. His faithful monitor heard of this from a mutual friend, of whom he significantly inquired, "how fared it with Farel's meekness?" The friend bore the strongest testimony to his activity, faithfulness, and success, but mentioned at the same time how violently he attacked the priests, particularly on the subject of the mass. Œcolampadius, fearful lest Farel's

zeal should carry him too far, reminded him of the resolutions which he formed at Basle, and endeavoured to temper his zeal with meekness and modesty. "Mankind,"

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he said, "must be led, not driven. We must keep one object in view, to win souls for Christ, and consider how we ourselves should wish to be taught, if we were still enveloped in darkness, and bound in the fetters of antichrist.

"The image of Christ must be visible in your life and doctrine. It is true that the Saviour at times spoke harshly to obstinate Pharisees, though more meekly than his words are generally rendered; at one time full of compassion, at another, in a way of warning, and again with earnestness, blended with meekness, so that his benevolence was never more conspicuous than in his treatment of his most violent persecutors and enemies. But let this suffice; I know that you wish to be a healing physician, and not a tormentor of your fellow-men." On another occasion he thus expressed himself: "You will not be able to gain over to Christ every Ananias and Sapphira who resist the Holy Spirit; therefore, let them alone, and assist the weakness of others. It is not enough that you are friendly to your friends; you must spare no pains to win even your enemies. Noble minds express their anger only on proper occasions. We know the zeal of Elijah, but before we adopt him for our model, let us consider the circumstances in which he was placed, and whether he always glowed with the same fire. Above all, I wish you to copy the meekness and gentleness of Christ, and follow in the footsteps of 'the Good Shepherd,' who 'laid down his life for the sheep.'"

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Tossanus also wrote to him as follows: "I thank God that he has employed you for the purpose of making known his beloved Son to the world. Do not, however, be elated on this account; distrust yourself, and study to show yourself a faithful teacher, who not only instructs the people to despise things which have little connexion with Christian truth, but so trains and fortifies their minds, that they may bid defiance to every storm." Farel was sensible of the heart-felt affections from which these admonitions flowed; he also acknowledged the excellence and necessity of meekness, but the opposition he met with, combined with his compassion for the ignorant and deluded, led him frequently to employ expressions of indignant zeal.

During the winter, a friar of the order of St. Anthony came into the neighbourhood of Montbeliard, and employed a monk to publish and recommend from the pulpit an assortment of relics, for which he hoped to find purchasers. After the announcement of these wares, Farel and John Gailing (the court preacher, and a disciple of Luther, who first preached the gospel in the duchy of Wirtemberg) appealed to the senate to put a stop to such blasphemy and imposture. Farel represented in strong terms how much evil had been caused by designing men who, by such traffic, had destroyed souls, robbed God of his glory, and the poor of the produce of their labour. The senate, however, did not have the courage to act in accordance with the wishes of the

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preachers, and alleged that cognizance of such matters did not belong to them, but to the duke. Therefore, application was made to him, that he would dismiss the obnoxious individual. But that no one might charge the duke or the adherents of the reformed faith with injustice, in dismissing a person unheard, it was further requested that, though the friar should not be allowed to preach or sell his relics, he might be allowed to prove from the holy Scriptures, if possible, the propriety of his conduct.

Farel by his preaching and careful oversight of every class, both old and young, excited great attention in Montbeliard and its neighbourhood. But we are not to suppose that his zeal met with no obstacles. His old antagonist, Erasmus, described him to a friend at Montbeliard, and to the bishop's ordinary at Besancon, as a lying, impertinent, worthless fellow; hinting at the same time that some severe measures should be employed against him. These outbreaks of long-cherished resentment were not concealed from Farel, nor could he refrain from complaining of them to his friends. Anemund beseeched him not to lay them to heart, and reminded him that Christ, the crown of our glory, suffered far more; but even when on the cross, he neither reviled nor threatened. "But why do I exhort you," he said, "to exercise a patience which I myself find impracticable? [It is] solely from the wish to see you, who are the chief mark of our enemies, free from all occasions of just reproach."

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Farel's exertions in the cause of Christ were not limited to the sphere of his personal labours. By means of an active correspondence, he kept up a constant intercourse with his friends at Meaux and Basle, which was mutually beneficial. "I thank you, my brother," writes Tossanus to him, "for admonishing me, like a prudent friend, not to allow myself to be seduced by persuasion, or deterred by threats, from the study of the holy Scriptures. You thus show yourself to be not only a cordial friend, but an assiduous and circumspect general, who encourages such of his men as are pressed by the enemy, and are not veterans in the warfare." Tossanus was at this time in a most painful situation. His relatives, whose affection had been changed almost into hatred on account of his attachment to the gospel, recalled him from Basle, and insisted on his removing to Paris in order that all connexion with the Lutherans might be cut off. Even his mother, at the instigation of his other relatives, wrote an impassioned letter and threatened him with her curse. To pacify her in some degree, Œcolampadius advised him to leave his own house and reside at a popish priest's, where he could not be suspected of the infection of heresy. This, however, appears to have been of little avail; for shortly after he received the news of his being banished for life; on hearing this, he exclaimed, "The will of the Lord be done!" It is singular that he recollected having often in boyhood heard his mother say, "that antichrist would

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come with great power, and seek to destroy those who should be converted by the preaching of Elias."

Farel's modesty had up to now prevented him from appearing as an author. He had assumed the pastoral office in compliance with the exhortation of Œcolampadius; and it was owing to the encouragement of the same friendly adviser that he attempted to enlighten his countrymen by

means of his evangelical writings. He drew up, with all possible brevity and plainness, “A summary of what a Christian ought to know, in order to trust God, and serve his neighbour.” The book was well received, and went through several large editions. After this first successful attempt, he sent several small treatises to the press, some of which were his own composition, and the rest written by others. The printing also of a French translation of the New Testament was taken into serious consideration. In these undertakings he was zealously assisted by his friend Anemund, who was now approaching the end of his course. Oswald Myconius wrote to him, as if under the influence of a presentiment, “Continue stedfast! It will not be long before we reach the haven of repose!” The chevalier frequently changed his residence in order the better to promote the cause of the gospel, and his own religious improvement. He fell ill at Schaffhausen, in consequence of drinking cold water when overheated. He dispatched his servant to inform Farel of his situation, but died before Farel could reach Schaffhausen. In him evangelical

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truth lost one of its warmest adherents, and Farel, one of his most faithful friends. Myconius wrote to console his sorrowing friend as follows: “Anemund is gone to Him to whose cause he devoted himself. I doubt not but that he will receive the reward of his faith, and of the sacrifices he has made for the advancement of the truth. Let us so live, that when our earthly tabernacle is dissolved, we may arrive where, we trust, Anemund has entered before us.”

The spread of evangelical truth in Montbeliard met with unexpected opposition from the confederate cantons.¹ They urged upon the duke the dismissal of the two preachers. On his sending no reply, all the cantons (Zurich excepted) repeated the request; on which the duke’s ambassador, Everard von Reischach, assured them, that one of the preachers was no longer there, and that the other would probably be dismissed, if the cantons retained their present feelings towards him. Meanwhile Farel continued his Christian labours, without regarding the cantons, of which a part, secretly at least, favoured the duke. His colleague, Gailing, who was chaplain to the court, having been dismissed on account of the duke’s residence being unsettled, Farel discharged all the pastoral functions. The administration of the Lord’s Supper at first presented a difficulty; but the exigency of the case seemed to furnish him with a warrant. After many struggles, however, in which he endeavoured to regulate all things according to the will

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of God, he removed from Montbeliard. The immediate occasion of this step is said to have been the zeal he manifested at the passing of a procession. According to general report and an anonymous narrative, he snatched the pretended relics of St. Anthony from the priest who was carrying them, and threw them into the water, exclaiming, “You miserable idolaters, can you not cease from your idolatry?” He narrowly escaped the rage of the priest and the people, owing to someone’s calling out, “The image will be lost in the water!” which alarmed the multitude, and drew off their attention from Farel. The removal of the duke and his court from Montbeliard, and the consequent loss of his protection, was an additional reason for Farel’s going away. In the spring he left the town with sanguine but not ill-founded hopes of eventually witnessing a

¹ A canton is a small administrative division of a country, like a parish.

harvest from the seed of the gospel which he had sown; and during his whole life, the church in that place continued to be an object of his affectionate solicitude.

CHAPTER 6. FAREL'S VISIT TO STRASBURG.

FAREL in the first instance repaired to Basle (where he was at the time of Anemund's death,) induced probably by a communication from the rector of the university to Ecolampadius, his friend; but [Farel's] continued residence there not being allowed, he joined his friends, Capito and Bucer. He took up his abode with the former. He applied to the senate of Basle once more to sanction his return, but without success.

He remained at Strasburg about fifteen months, actively engaged in assisting his friends, and in preaching to a small congregation of his countrymen who had left France on account of their religion. Here also he met with his beloved tutor Faber, Gerard, Rufus, and other pious friends, who had been obliged to leave Meaux. He reminded [Faber] of his prediction of a reformation in the church; the reality of which was now before his eyes; and he encouraged [Faber] to labour for its further renovation.

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About this time, writing to Zuinglius, he remarks, "How deceived and destitute of piety are those who refuse to bear the cross of Christ!" We see how shamefully many go over from Christ to Antichrist, caring more for a life of ease and self-indulgence than for the glory of God. We see into what destructive errors men are led, who endeavour to conceal the truth, and would serve God and mammon at the same time. We know some, whom everyone believed to possess the Spirit of God, who have ended in the flesh, and drawn many along with them into destruction.

Though at times he was much dejected by the opposition made to the gospel, and the hardships inflicted on its adherents, yet he prayed for the persecutors, that God would change their hearts, so that in the end Christ might be glorified. He consoled himself and others by considerations such as the following: "He that is truly pious is never cast down from his excellency by his adversaries. However violent may be the rage of our enemies, it will be for our benefit; their insults will promote our humility, and threatened death will diminish our self-confidence. Our persecutors teach us to supplicate with earnest aspirations our Father in heaven, whose wonderful goodness and grace are manifested to his children, in constraining them by the cross, to pursue their course with circumspection, remembering how precious a treasure they bear in earthen vessels." In this manner he wrote to his friend

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Zuinglius, commending him for maintaining his faith and Christian stedfastness in the midst of so many dangers, exhorting him to acknowledge the grace he had received, and to devote his distinguished talents still more to the service of Christ.

The controversy respecting the Lord's Supper began about this time. The Swiss reformers were not hasty in giving their decision on so important a subject, but they discussed it in private conferences with one another. Before Carlstadt began the controversy with Luther, or published his work on "The Anti-christian Abuse of the Lord's Bread and Cup," the friends of the

reformation in France had also canvassed the question, and were on the whole more inclined to the views of Zuinglius than of Luther; partly influenced, it is probable, by their more intimate personal connexion with him, and partly by many things in the popish system having been opposed from the commencement by Zuinglius, which Luther had conceded in his earlier writings. One of the first who sided with the Swiss reformer was Anemund, whose elevated and refined mind was secure from whatever seemed to attach it to visible and outward objects. He communicated the satisfaction he felt to Farel, who made a large collection of the opinions of eminent men upon the subject. Francis Lambert, on the other hand, adhered to Luther, and carefully informed him of whatever passed at Basle and Strasburg on this subject. The friends of the gospel in France were much

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grieved at the difference between the two reformers; and to prevent the dangerous consequences which were likely to arise, it seemed desirable that Luther should be entreated, either by the preachers in the imperial cities (Strasburg particularly), or by some individual of eminence, such as Bucer, to act more dispassionately than the vehemence he had already displayed led them to apprehend. Farel was requested to be an agent in this business. He was thus addressed by Tossanus, a man who would willingly have laid down his life for the sake of maintaining Christian unity: "Think of the confusion which will arise, if these differences of opinion are employed to make the world believe that Strasburg has one creed, and Nuremberg another! Would not secular princes seize the opportunity of prohibiting novel doctrines, in order to bring us back to the ancient superstition and idolatrous worship? But O Lord, do come to our aid! And my dear brother, do use your utmost efforts to prevent so sad a catastrophe!"

The wishes of Tossanus were fulfilled. The Strasburg people exerted themselves to quench the rising flame. To prevent mere verbal disputation, or a tedious investigation of ecclesiastical antiquities, they referred to the important signification of the rite, "to the main point, faith and love; or to the consideration and remembrance of Christ, for the invigoration of our hope, since Christ must be internal and invisible, and not necessarily connected with what is external, be it a sign or anything else." Such was

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their decision; and in this manner they attempted to reconcile Luther and others who had entered the lists of controversy. Farel wrote in the same strain.

This letter reached Wittenburg about the same time as the reply of Zuinglius to Bugenhagen's epistle with which, from the similarity of feeling and sentiment in the two writers, it almost verbally agreed in many passages.

While Farel's friends in Basle endeavoured to moderate the ardour of his zeal, and warned him not to be overhasty, he was dissatisfied with their remissness in reference to points on which they were fully enlightened, and urged them to act up to their convictions. It was very offensive to him that Pellican should continue to attend mass and wear the habit of his order. When his strong remonstrances were unavailing, and one of his friends, who had laboured for the same purpose,

complained how hard a task it was to change a monk into a Christian, Farel requested Luther, through Bugenhagen, to use his influence with Pellican. The following year he had the pleasure of seeing his friend renounce the badges of popery in order to teach the Holy Scriptures in Zurich.

Several of Farel's friends, who endeavoured to spread the gospel in their native land, caused him much anxiety. The chevalier d'Esch had gone to Metz, where the presence of a man of firmness and courage was much needed. Tossanus resolved to follow

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the chevalier. But on reaching Louvain, he was betrayed and arrested by his former friend, Theodore de St. Chamond, abbot of St. Anthony, an inquisitor, and one of the greatest enemies of the reformation. [Tossanus] was even put to the torture, so as to endanger his life. When set at liberty, he was sent on a mission to France, in order to ascertain the disposition of the court to the reformed religion. While there, [Tossanus] enjoyed the protection of the duchess D'Alençon, who frequently conversed with him on the spread of the gospel, and offered him various advantageous situations, which he declined. The cardinal of Lorraine also appeared favourable both to him and the protestant cause. The Parisian divine, on the contrary, told him plainly, that as a heretic he was never secure of his life, wherever he might be. But his courage rose with the perils of his situation, and he requested Farel, when he wrote to him at Paris, to write his address without concealment, since he was not ashamed of his correspondence, nor afraid of the consequences which might ensue from its being publicly known. He even invited him to Paris, and assured him of the assistance of his tutor Rufus; but not long after, he removed from that city to reside at the mansion of a noble lady, of the name of D'Entraigues, where he waited till things should take a favourable turn.

CHAPTER 7. FAREL'S JOURNEY TO BASLE, AND APPOINTMENT TO ÆLEN.

IN October 1526, Farel left Strasburg for Basle. On arriving there, he found the plague raging, which, added to the continued hostility of the senate, rendered him cautious of appearing in public. In private, however, he conversed much with Œcolampadius, especially on the means of providing the church with faithful pastors. He urged on Wolfgang Weissenburg, in reference to the Lord's Supper, if he were not fully convinced of the reformed doctrine, at least to abstain from controverting it publicly, and for the sake of the church, to satisfy himself with inculcating the practical uses of the sacrament. Wolfgang expressed his readiness to accede to this, till God should grant him further light.

One object of Farel's visit to Basle appears to have been, to obtain the cooperation of his friends, in making known the gospel at Berne, where it had already obtained an entrance. In reference to the opposition and difficulties he met with on this and other occasions, he thus expressed himself: "I was

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not ignorant of them, but I viewed them without dismay, since my only aim (as far as God has vouchsafed his grace) has been, to remove the ignorance of the people. Sufferings, persecutions, and the devices of Satan, have not been lacking, and have often assailed me with almost overwhelming violence. But a loving Father has upheld and will continue to sustain me, since his promises to those who trust him can never fail. At first I was attacked by avowed foes; afterwards I was in peril from false brethren, and exposed to the most dreadful calumnies and threats, in order to deter me from preaching the gospel."

While at Basle, his friend Tossanus wrote thus to him from Paris: "I rejoice that you are called to extend the kingdom of God. Nothing has been so gratifying to me as this intelligence; and I entertain the best hopes, from my knowledge of your exalted sentiments, that you will not decline this call." At the close of the year, Farel entered on his new scene of labour in the lordship of Ælen. This district lies on the confines of Valais. It extends from the inhospitable summits of the Alps to the fruitful vineyards on the banks of the Rhone, and it had been subject to Berne for about fifty years. The religious instruction of the inhabitants had been neglected as a consequence of the superior clergy being pluralists, and the duties in the respective parishes were indifferently performed by curates hired for the purpose. For a while, Farel assumed

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the name of Ursinus, but he could not long remain concealed. Soon after his arrival, he received the congratulations of Œcolampadius, who exhorted him to be firm and prudent, and to arm himself with Christian knowledge and apostolic vigour.

After some months, when the good effects of his pious exertions were apparent, the senate of Berne granted him permission to preach in Ælen until the incumbent of the living, Nicolas von

Diesbach, should appoint a suitable minister. At the same time a fresh order was issued against the long tolerated immorality of the clergy and laity, and measures were taken to punish offenders, more particularly those of the former class. The inhabitants of the place, galled by these novel restrictions, and the freedom with which Farel attacked their vices and the superstitions of the church, endeavoured to put a stop to his preaching. Yet Farel had not excited this opposition by intemperate vehemence; for with due consideration of the rudeness and ignorance of the people, he had cautiously touched only one or two subjects, such as the doctrine of purgatory and the worship of saints. Since no valid ground of complaint could be sustained, the senate was justly displeased at the rejection of the preacher whom they had selected, and issued their commands to the governor of Roverca and all the magistrates, that Farel should preach without molestation. They also appointed him to be minister and schoolmaster at Ælen.

The opposition he met with, occasioned no relaxation

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in his efforts. In one of his letters he remarks, "The father of lies counterworks me through his agents, and daily tempts me to be ashamed of the gospel, and to desert that Sovereign, whose kingdom is not of this world, in order to follow the prince of this world, and thus, by apostatizing from Christ, to promote the interests of the kingdom of darkness. But Christ, my King, Lord, and Redeemer, to whose service I have devoted myself, is far more powerful than Satan. Trusting in him, I shall be prepared to tread my foe underfoot, to assail his kingdom, and rescuing from his tyranny those whom the Father is pleased to draw, bring them to Christ. Thus I shall glorify my God, exalt his commandments, depress human authority and tradition, and, supported by faith, and instructed by the Scriptures, lead the weary and heavy laden to the Saviour. Such persons I exhort to pray to the Father for the Spirit of Christ, that through him the love of God may be shed abroad in every heart, that thus the authority of the Divine law may be established above all mere human ordinances, and that the true worship of God, "in spirit and in truth," may nourish. "Not at Jerusalem, or on any mountain," must we worship the Father, but in our hearts, offering up ourselves to him, devoting ourselves wholly to the promotion of his glory, denying our own passions and will, without being intimidated by those who would rob us of our property, injure our good name, or even seek to take away our lives."

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The doctrines of the reformed faith had up to now been confined to those districts in which the German language was spoken. Farel's labours attracted, therefore, considerable attention, and in some parts, Lausanne particularly, a strong opposition was excited. Among others, Natalis Galeot, one of the bishop's chaplains, denounced Farel's zeal against fast days and other observances of the Romish church, as absolutely immoral. As, however, Natalis was more enlightened than many of his brethren, some persons indulged the hope that he might be won over to a purer faith. Farel was persuaded to address a letter to him, in which, after a very modest and conciliatory introduction, he detailed his own history, and the means by which he had been brought from a state of ignorance and darkness into the light and knowledge of the gospel. He then animadverted¹ on the character of erroneous teachers of religion, and of such as were

¹ Express one's opinion openly and without fear or hesitation; it also means to censure, or be blunt.

induced to enter the sacred office from interested and worldly motives; and after describing the melancholy state of the church in general, added “Surely we ought to lay to heart the dishonoured glory of God, and the ruined state of the church, its broken walls and profaned sanctuary. If we are not lost to all sense of our obligations; if we really believe that Christ died for us; if our hearts are at all affected by the shedding of his blood; if the Holy Spirit has taught us anything of the goodness of God; if the gifts which God has so richly bestowed upon us have attracted

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us to himself; if we have the hope of eternal life; if we must give an account to God of the talents committed to us; if we believe that if we neglect to warn the wicked, God will require their souls at our hands; we ought to lose no time in making known the praises of God among the people. Let us preach Christ as our great aim and pattern, both in speaking and acting. If his doctrine is not perfect, what else can be so? If this does not point out the way of salvation, what else shall do it? If this does not call sinners to repentance, what else shall affect them? If this does not produce the fruits of godliness, what else shall produce them? If this does not furnish motives to piety and Christian practice, from what other quarter can we derive them? In short, Divine wisdom is complete in itself, and needs no other wisdom.” In conclusion, he avowed his firm resolution to cleave to God alone, without troubling himself about the doctrines of men, to acknowledge only one Master, and to obey the clear and obvious dictates of the Divine word. At the same time he entreated Natalis to set an example worthy of imitation in all these points, and to contribute, according to the gifts he had received from God, to the instruction and edification of the people. As Natalis made no reply to this letter, Farel, suspecting that he had not the courage to avow his convictions, again addressed him. He urged the duty of renouncing everything for the sake of Christ and his doctrine, even our dearest friends and relatives

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whom otherwise it becomes us, agreeably to the Divine precepts, to honour and cherish. He reminded him that no loss, trial, or affliction should be shunned on this account; that the Christian ought to go wherever the Lord calls him, though the whole world should rise against him, nor allow himself to be deterred by anything, not even by death itself, from professing and making known the gospel. In reference to fasts, angels’ and saints’ days, Farel did not express himself as wholly opposed to their observance, but wished that every man should regulate his life with that moderation and watchfulness which Christ had enjoined, and that no one should lay a heavy burden on his fellow-Christians. For as he remarked, “Christ has nowhere told us to imitate him in fasting forty days, or in walking on the water, but to be meek, humble, and devout, without pride and presumption.”

“Grow,” said this faithful monitor to Natalis, “in the knowledge of God; search the Scriptures diligently with increasing assiduity; approach Christ in fervent prayer; and though for a while he may not seem to hear you, only persist in seeking him so much the more frequently, until you are assured that your prayers are answered. Do not be anxious for the bodily presence of Christ, but seek after the Divine ‘Word,’ ‘the power of God,’ who heals by faith all the diseases of the soul.

Acknowledge Christ as the true Son of the living God, who will grant to you eternal life, and you will be a member of that

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church, which is his body. Take heed not to forsake the holy flock which listens to no voice, save that of Christ, the true Shepherd. The Scriptures alone instruct us in that true piety which proceeds from faith, that fasting which is holy and acceptable to God, mutual love, readiness to good offices, benevolence towards all, and abstinence from sin and destructive lusts." Finally, he conjured¹ Natalis, by the boundless love of the Father, and by Christ, who shed his precious blood for the redemption of mankind, to espouse the cause of the gospel, and by faith to quench the fiery darts of the adversary; to shun the artifices and inventions of men, however sanctioned by authority or antiquity; and not to allow himself to be moved by the applause of the multitude, or by the union of earthly potentates, and the fury of the people against the cause of Christ.

As Natalis persisted in maintaining silence, Farel wrote a third letter to him in which he urged that the manifestation of the love of God to men in Christ ought to excite everyone to gratitude, and to love and serve God supremely, even with the sacrifice (should circumstances demand it) of health, property, and life. "Let us not act," he said, "like those who seek only transitory riches; but let us place our trust in more durable possessions, pressing forward to the mark set before us, relying entirely on the mercy of our heavenly Father who invites us to himself, and allowing no inferior object to mislead or keep us back." As he had not written from a love of controversy,

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but for mutual edification and the glory of God, he called upon Natalis to explain his views with the same frankness, to concur in these sentiments as far as he thought them just, and to point out wherein they were erroneous.

The reply which at last was reluctantly given showed no symptoms of a friendly disposition, but was full of intemperate abuse. The writer (who seems to have found it difficult even to read Farel's letters or to mention his name) reproached him for undervaluing fasting, mortification, and the worship of saints, and asserted the reality of transubstantiation in the most unqualified terms. To this Farel rejoined; and thus terminated a correspondence which, though the immediate object was not attained, appears to have been conducted on Farel's part with an exemplary union of gentleness and energy. The depth of his own piety was evinced by the sacrifices and sufferings to which he submitted for Christ's sake; and if his requirements from others were strict, they were only such as his own example enforced.

The opposition which Farel met with at Ælen was kept up by foreign influence, particularly by the mendicant friars in the neighbourhood. One of them publicly declared at Neuville that Farel's doctrines were unscriptural, and that all who listened to him would be damned. Farel accidentally met with this monk when he visited Ælen in the autumn to buy wine for his convent. He asked him in a friendly manner whether he had preached at Neuville. The

¹ *Conjure*: summon into action.

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terrified monk replied in the affirmative. Farel then inquired whether the devil could preach the gospel; and whether those who listened to it would be damned. The monk said, "Certainly not." On which Farel rejoined, "Then, why have you publicly spoken against me in such terms? I request that you will point out and prove the errors which I am charged with preaching; for I would rather die than teach erroneous doctrine to the poor people whom Christ has redeemed by his blood. May the Lord never permit me to see the day when I shall preach any doctrine but what he approves."

Instead of adducing any proof, the monk said to him, "I have heard that you are a heretic, and that you unsettle and seduce the people by your doctrine." "That is not enough," replied Farel, "you must make good what you asserted in your sermon; for I am ready to stake my life in defence of my doctrine."

The monk now began to be irritated, and said, "What have I preached against you? Who has heard it? I have not come here to dispute with you, but to collect alms. You know best if you have preached sound or erroneous doctrine." Upon this, Farel represented to him that a regard to the Divine honour ought to take precedence over every worldly consideration, and that he was in a place where he might feel certain of meeting with justice. If he had spoken the truth, he (Farel) could do nothing against him, for falsehood could not stand before the light of truth. The Lord had promised to give utterance and

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wisdom to the friends of truth, so that their adversaries' mouths should be stopped. Therefore he ought to boldly defend his sermon; or if he had misled the people, he ought to lead them back again into the right path. The people up to now had been unacquainted with the holy Scriptures, and were strangers to its Divine doctrines since, instead of faithful shepherds, wolves had been the pretended guardians of Christ's flock; and instead of evangelical food, they had been presented with dreams and human fabrications.

Pressed by this remonstrance, the monk again charged him with being a heretic, and leading the people astray from sound doctrine.

During the conversation, some people came from their work, with whom Farel was acquainted. He said to them, "Behold this good father, who has publicly declared that my doctrine is deceit and vanity, and that those who listen to me will be damned. He has also just told me that I am a heretic, and I am leading you astray."

The monk now broke out into a passion, and exclaimed, "What have I said? Who has heard it? Where are your witnesses?" Farel reminded him of the Omniscient Witness, and again called upon him to prove his assertions, assuring him that he should suffer no injury, and even be heard in preference to himself.

Not to be wholly silent, the monk adduced¹ Farel's opposition to offerings and sacrifices as being contrary

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to the Divine will, though presented from gratitude and a regard for the glory of God. Farel in reply, explained what the glory of God and gratitude for his mercies required, namely, assisting the poor, obeying the Divine commands, worshipping God in spirit and in truth, the sacrifice of a contrite heart, repentance, a regard for God's will in our mode of worship, a pious and truly Christian deportment, and seeking forgiveness for the many violations of our baptismal vows. On Farel's making some additional remarks respecting the only rule for the faith and practice of a Christian, the monk seemed almost beside himself. He took off his cap, threw it on the ground, trampled it under his feet, and exclaimed, "I wonder that the earth does not open and swallow us up!" While behaving in this irrational manner, one of the bystanders took him by the sleeve, saying, "Listen to him, as he has listened to you;" on which he called out, "You are under excommunication, and do you lay your hands upon me?" "What!" said the other, "are all excommunicated who touch your cowl? Do you have a different God? Or are you baptized into a different name? Are you not to be spoken to?" Farel added, "You seem much astonished at being addressed so freely; but in truth, I have long been astonished at the goodness of God, which still allows those to live who pay so little regard to their baptismal vow, and show more reverence for a poor fellow sinner than for their Maker."

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This noisy debate was ended abruptly by the appearance of a magistrate, who put both Farel and the monk under arrest, and confined them apart from each other in the prison belonging to the castle. On the Saturday morning, they were brought before the court. Farel, in addressing his judges, reminded them that they sat in God's stead, and had received power from him in order to punish the wicked and protect the good; that their office required them to keep in view the glory of God without regard to person or rank, like the pious kings and judges of old. He then brought forward his complaint against the monk, and maintained that he ought to be compelled to prove his assertions respecting his (Farel's) doctrine. For himself, if it were found that he had preached anything contrary to the word of God, he was willing to suffer the severest punishment, as a warning to others against propagating erroneous doctrine. He concluded by beseeching the judges to put a stop to the present disputes, by making a suitable provision for the religious instruction of the people.

The monk then fell on his knees before his judges, and very humbly begged pardon of God and them. In the same manner he entreated Farel's forgiveness, declaring him to be an honourable man, and his doctrine to be true; thus retracting all he had said against him. Farel replied with much emotion, "My friend and brother, do not ask forgiveness of me. Before I saw you, I had forgiven you as well as others, who

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¹ *Adduced*: cited, or gave evidence of.

have spoken against me, and have prayed to God both for them and you. I am only a poor sinner like other men, and do not trust in any works or righteousness of my own, but in the death of Jesus.”

He then requested that the monk might not be subjected to any further punishment; and expressed his hope that neither he nor his brethren would venture to say anything of him behind his back, which they were not prepared to maintain to his face.

In conclusion, it was agreed that the monk should be present next day at Farel’s sermon, and if he found it good and true, should acknowledge it before all the people, but if otherwise, he should give a statement of his own sentiments. The monk signified his assent to this, but notwithstanding his solemn promise, and though he concurred apparently in a friendly manner with Farel after the trial in the castle-yard, yet he never showed his face again in *Ælen*.

As the monks frequently visited the nunnery of St. Clara at Vevey, Farel wrote a faithful account of the whole affair for the use of the nuns, and took the opportunity of urging them to follow the holy doctrines of the evangelists and apostles, to regulate their lives by the example and precepts of the Saviour, and to try all things conscientiously. His exhortation, however, appeared to have little or no effect; and after the reformation had been established in that part of Switzerland, the convent was removed to the territories of Savoy.

While separated from his friends, Farel neglected

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no opportunity for self-improvement and of gaining that knowledge which would tend to establish himself and others in the truth. He diligently read all the writings of Zuinglius and his friends. He particularly valued that reformer’s “friendly explanation” of the Lord’s Supper, for the simplicity of its views, combined with learning, moderation, and charity.

CHAPTER 8. THE DISPUTATION HELD AT BERNE, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES IN ÆLEN.

ON the 1st of January, 1528, a meeting was convened at Berne for the purpose of settling the points in dispute between the friends and the opponents of the reformed faith, and of instituting a scriptural form of worship. Farel, along with the other ministers of his canton, attended and we may imagine with how much pleasure he met Zuinglius, Œcolampadius, the Strasburg divines, Sebastian, Hofmeister, and other friends, and united with them in advocating the cause of sacred truth.

On account of Farel's imperfect acquaintance with the German language, he took no part in the chief disputation, but was appointed to defend ten propositions against the clergy of Valais.

The senate had invited the bishops of Lausanne, Basle, and Constance, either to attend in person, or to send deputies. The bishop of Lausanne, on receiving the application, replied that he had no one under his jurisdiction sufficiently acquainted with the Scriptures to undertake so important

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an affair as an examination of religion. At length, however, he sent deputies. Four Parisian doctors in theology were also present and about 350 priests. Of the competency of the former we may form some notion from a fact attested by Bullinger that one of them, in order to defend authority in matters of religion, declared that if we must obey the laws of devils, then how much more the ordinances of men or of the church. To prove the first part of his assertion, he gravely adduced Matthew 5.25, "Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are in the way with him."

When called on to sign the theses, Farel was the only one of the Valais preachers who complied. The rest of the clergy of Ælen, the vicar of Neuveville, and the curates of Bex, Ormont, Olon, and Ælen went away, protesting against the propositions.

Scarcely had the convocation ended their labours, when an ordinance of the senate appeared. It declared that the return to the scriptural faith and the free use of the sacred volume was a right which belonged to the people, and called upon the churches throughout the canton to follow the example of the capital. In the district of Ælen, however, the people were not much inclined to comply with the ordinance, though the influence of the superior clergy was no longer to be feared there. Adrian von Riedmatten, bishop of Sitten, was an aged man and he acknowledged that many abuses existed contrary to the word of God. The inferior clergy were corrupt in their

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morals, rude in their manners, and extremely ignorant. As they were unable to support their cause by argument, other means were employed to injure the reformation and its adherents. Mischievous individuals were not lacking to circulate reports that the pope, the emperor, and the king of France, would join arms against the Bernese if they renounced the ancient faith. Ridicule and slander were unsparingly employed against Farel. Schemes for counteracting the reformation

were brought forward in tumultuous assemblies; and it was openly asserted that it did not become the senate of Berne to sanction such innovations. Some persons were so audacious as to tear the ordinance from the church-doors. The senate immediately dispatched one of their number whom we mentioned above, Nicholas von Grafenried, to Ælen to put a stop to these rebellious proceedings. He was the bearer of strict orders to Diesbach the governor to protect Farel, and to make suitable arrangements with him respecting the church property and the salaries of the preachers; but this measure only caused greater disturbance. The curate and syndic¹ of Ælen united to oppose Farel; the people were even called together by beat of drum to attack those who favoured the reformation. Fresh instructions were given to secure for Farel the liberty of preaching unmolested and envoys were sent who called a meeting of the four parishes. In Ælen, Olon, and Bex, a majority were in favour of the reformation. Hopes were then entertained that a

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foundation was laid for religious concord. It was desired of the envoys to express the senate's approval of the churches who had relinquished the mass; orders were also given to pull down the altars and burn the images.

Farel visited Berne to give an account of his partial success and of the obstacles that still prevented the full accomplishment of his pious efforts. He received many presents, having up to now lived at his own charge. He was sent back to Ælen under an escort, with injunctions to the governor to allow him to preach in all the parishes, to remove the images from the priory, and to urge the inhabitants of Bex to complete the reformation which they had begun.

Very unexpectedly, deputies from the four parishes, with messengers from Neuveville and Chesse, appeared before the senate of Berne, and requested that they might be allowed to retain the mass and other ceremonies. The senate commanded that the three churches which had already received the reformation should carry it fully into effect; and thus far refused to grant their petition. Ormont still adhered to its ancient creed. The senate exercised forbearance with the uninformed people of this district, and allowed them time for deliberation till Whitsuntide² on condition, however, of their hearing the word of God, and allowing no one to speak from the pulpit against the orders that had been issued.

At Olon, very disorderly proceedings occurred. While Farel was preaching, William Jajod fell upon him

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and excited others, both men and women, to join in the assault. The senate was astonished that the governor would have allowed this outrage to pass unpunished, and ordered him to arrest the rioters, to protect Farel with greater care, to attend more minutely to the fulfilment of their orders, and to prevent the intrusion of foreign preachers.

¹ One appointed to represent a city in business transactions.

² The week following the seventh Sunday after Easter, commemorating Pentecost.

But these measures were of little avail, though the governor had full power to punish offenders, and send the contumacious to Berne. Peter Chappelet, one of the churchwardens of Bex, was maltreated while attempting to remove the images. Farel appointed Simon Robert to be minister of Bex. But the warden of the place would not allow him to preach. And Columbo, the curate, refused to leave, being forbidden by the incumbent though the latter had no real authority, having been deprived of the livings at Ælen and Bex by the law against pluralities. The inhabitants of Olon also would not receive the minister appointed by Farel.

Commissioners were again sent to put an end to these irregularities. The period allowed for deliberation to the parish of Ælen having expired, the inhabitants were ordered to dismiss the curate, and receive the reformed preacher; but they remained disaffected. Farel was frequently interrupted while preaching, and on one occasion the pulpit was overturned. Many of the clergy continued to lead an impure and immoral life. At Easter, mass was again performed by John Brolloy, and many persons went to other parishes

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to hear mass, confess, and have their children baptized.

Such being the state of things, it seemed necessary to appoint a governor favourable to the reformed doctrine, and disposed to carry into effect the commands of his superiors. Hans Rudolf Nageli was chosen to this important office, and he amply justified their choice by his firm and prudent conduct. Deputies accompanied the new governor, who were ordered to urge the reception of the reformation on the parish of Ormont, thus assuring them of the special protection of the senate. Besides orders similar to those given to former deputies, they were directed to raze to the ground the altars that were still standing, to burn the images, to deface the paintings, and to accomplish whatever yet remained to complete the overthrow of the ancient system.

The deputies faithfully discharged their commission, and their energetic measures were effectual. Tranquillity was restored; the number of the friends of the reformation and their courage increased. The ancient superstition retained its firmest hold on the people of Ormont. But at length its influence was destroyed even there by the exertions of the ministers, and the strict enforcement of the orders of government. The progress of the reformed doctrine made a considerable impression on the inhabitants of the Pays de Vaud, and they were gradually convinced that what had been so much decried was the simple gospel divested of all human additions.

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Farel's position in Ælen was for a long time one of great difficulty, since at first he stood alone; and the more respectable part of the population were strongly prejudiced against the gospel. Under such circumstances, many would have despaired of success. But he trusted in God who could bring the most untoward events to a favourable issue. As the senate had authorised him to appoint preachers in the place of popish curates, he wrote for that purpose to his friends at Strasburg and Basle. Œcolampadius recommended to him Simon Robert (a man trained in the school of affliction), who immediately left a sick wife, and relinquished superior worldly

prospects, to join Farel. He also obtained another assistant of the name of Deodatus. Two others were appointed to neighbouring parishes. Many others followed as soon as it was known in France that he was in need of pious fellow-labourers. But there were also some who sought only their own advancement, and not that of the Lord's kingdom. In reference to such characters he remarked on one occasion, "How much light would rise upon the world if all sought to promote the honour of God, and the love of their neighbour! But how many attack the brethren for the purpose of treading down the pasture and troubling the waters."

In the midst of these arduous engagements, he did not forget his native land. "I know not," he said, "how any good can come to my countrymen under an infatuated king who allows the people to be prohibited

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from reading the New Testament, so that no way is open for them to obtain a knowledge of the truth either by means of religious books, or personal instruction." But he consoled himself with the reflection that "the Father had reserved the times and seasons in his own power," and would interpose when he saw fit.

CHAPTER 9. FAREL'S EVANGELICAL MISSION.

THE peace that was concluded in June 1529, between Zurich and its evangelical confederates and the five central cantons, gave free admission to the word of God into the territories of each. The reception of the reformation was to be decided in all cases by the majority. This rule was adopted at Berne and Friburg for the parts under their jurisdiction which already contained many secret friends of the reformed faith. The Divine word only needed a more unrestricted promulgation in order to increase the number of its adherents.

Farel received an open letter of recommendation to all the lordships, towns, and parishes of the cantons which were in alliance with Berne, to permit him to preach the gospel. The first place he visited was Murten, where only a few years before the avarice of the bishop of Lausanne had attempted to impose a tax upon the people at the celebration of mass. In a short time, the new preacher was listened to by many with great approval, and gained over to the Protestant faith not only many of the laity, but also some of the priests. The good effects of his exertions

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began to appear in the Pays de Vaud. At Lausanne a considerable number of persons had abandoned popery. But after several attempts, Farel was obliged, in consequence of the determined opposition of the bishop and his partizans, to abandon this important sphere of labour. Before he left Murten he visited several places in the vicinity. In October, he preached at Neustadt. Notwithstanding the attempts of the bishop of Basle to exclude him from this place, he persisted in his efforts to introduce the gospel, and chose for his assistant in the work, John Bosset, who preached there not without success. In a short time, he was able to announce to the senate of Berne, that the inhabitants were ready to profess publicly the reformed faith, which accordingly took place in the presence of their deputies.

After preaching with great acceptance in Neufchatel, Farel returned by way of Murten to Ælen. The inhabitants of Murten would gladly have detained him till after Christmas, but the senate of Berne refused their consent. This decision, however, was speedily revoked; for scarcely had he reached Ælen, when news was brought that Murten had adopted the reformed faith. But the opposite party mustered their forces in such strength that the presence of a wise and courageous minister seemed absolutely necessary to prevent a relapse to popery. Farel was therefore recalled in haste from Ælen by a special messenger. As he and the courier stopped for the

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night at St. Martin de Vaud, Ayino, the curate of the place, and two other priests, assailed them with the most opprobrious language. They reviled Farel as a heretic and a devil, and called the courier's badges an infernal mark. In acting thus, they probably reckoned on the approval of their master, Count John. He had said of Farel, "that the *Valais Luther* ought to be burnt!" On arriving at Murten, Farel not only frustrated the schemes of his opponents, but he entered with zeal on the reformation of the adjoining districts. He filled all Wistellach with his doctrine. The free burghers complained that he preached where no one was disposed to hear him. The senate of

Berne desired him to give an account of his proceedings, reminding him that Murten was his special charge, and that unless sent for by others, he ought to remain in a place where his instructions were listened to with eagerness.

Being in the neighbourhood of Biel, Farel visited that place also, which had followed the example of Berne. He then proceeded to the vale of Munster, the inhabitants of which were the more inclined to abandon popery on account of the heavy bondage under which they groaned. They had before their eyes the dissolute lives of the dean and canons of Munster, who were notorious for every species of vice. Taxes were levied upon them for expenses which the revenues of the abbey were originally designed to liquidate. Every year they were obliged

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to confess publicly; and whether they came voluntarily, or in consequence of being informed against, a considerable sum was to be paid as confession-money. The courts of justice were very expensive, and a tax was even imposed on the dead. In this state of spiritual and civil oppression, they applied to Berne for assistance; so that when Farel arrived, he found them prepared to give him and his doctrine a cordial reception. During the mass, he preached at Tavannes against the conniptions of religion with such energy, that the people demolished the altars and images on the spot. The officiating priest fled terrified from the altar. In a short time the whole valley was disposed to adopt the reformation. Farel was assisted here by two other ministers.

The bishop of Basle, who was also proprietor of the vale of Munster, witnessed with much displeasure the progress of the reformation in its numerous villages and hamlets, and endeavoured by every means in his power to counteract it. He complained loudly of Farel's intemperate zeal in destroying the images, and the abusive language which he had used in reference to himself. The senate of Berne expressed their regret and disapproval if such had really been Farel's conduct, and transmitted to him the bishop's charges and threats. They further reminded him, that his proper office was the preaching of the gospel, and not the destruction of images; and that to ascertain the sentiments of the majority relative

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to the reformed faith was a matter which belonged only to themselves. They also advised him to be prudent in preaching the doctrine of Christian liberty, that he might not countenance those lawless persons who, under pretence of Christian freedom, would claim exemption from all taxes.

CHAPTER 10. THE PROGRESS OF THE REFORMATION AT NEUFCHATEL.

FOR seventeen years, twelve of the confederate states had governed the province of Neufchatel. They had seized it in consequence of the Duke of Longneville's (to whom it belonged) having borne arms against them in the service of France. His widow Joanna, Margravine of Hochberg, was at last, through the mediation of Francis I., and of the cantons in alliance with her, reinstated in her rights in August 1529. Previous to this period, nothing was done to promote the reformation as the governors appointed by the cantons were, in general, its avowed enemies. Still, the spiritual domination of popery was not wholly unchecked. A priest having laid the parish of Courtelari under his ban, the local magistrate was instructed to arrest and confine him till he had put down this weapon of ecclesiastical warfare. The Bishop of Lausanne was recommended to annul the excommunication if he wished to prevent disagreeable consequences. The states also took the part of the oppressed people against the claims of the canons, who laid an impost on property which

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had been exempt for fifty or one hundred years. They also rendered assistance to the town when the abbey and nobility refused to pay a tax which was laid on all the inhabitants, and when the parish priest or his curate seized upon the alms given to the chapel of the hospital.

The corruption of morals among the clergy was very great. Several benefices were held by the dean, an illegitimate son of the reigning prince. Concubinage was so common that the founder of the chapel of St. William thought it necessary to specifically exclude those who practised it, or who were otherwise immoral, from officiating at the altar. The cathedral with its nineteen altars and twenty-nine chapels and its splendid ceremonial, formed a striking but melancholy contrast to the unholy character of its priesthood; it was a magnificent sepulchre of religion rather than her temple. Nothing was heard of the Scriptures or gospel history, except as burlesqued and travestied in spiritual comedies acted by the canons; these attracted such crowds that the magistrates were apprehensive for the safety of the town.

Such was the state of the country when the confederate cantons resigned the government to the margravine. She appointed as governor a nobleman of the Pays de Vaud, George de Rive of Prangius, who was in alliance with the Bernese, but zealous for the ancient faith, to which the princess was also attached. The superior clergy were rich, powerful,

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and corrupt; the people were untaught, rude, and warlike; so that the state of all classes presented formidable obstacles to the adoption of a purer faith. Farel, however, was not deterred from attempting to sow the seed of the Divine word; nor were favourable circumstances altogether lacking. Berne had obtained a preponderating influence, owing to its security and friendly disposition towards the princess. The margravine herself was absent; and throughout the

province an impression generally prevailed that some changes in religious matters were absolutely necessary.

On the borders, an evangelical minister had laboured even before the commencement of the reformation. Dr. Thomas Wyttenbach, who had been led to the study of the Scriptures by Zuinglius and Leo Juda, was minister of the church at Ino. And in that retired situation, he imparted the light of Christian faith which he afterwards diffused more extensively at Biel. Emer Beynon of St. Inuer, vicar of Sevieres, was another friend of the gospel to whom Farel repaired, confiding in the similarity of their views. He began to preach outside the church (not being allowed to enter the pulpit) and continued to do so, notwithstanding the opposition of the governor and the canons. Many persons from the neighbouring towns, whose religious anxieties were awakened, came to hear him and invited him to their houses, regardless of the offence it might give to their superiors. The whole town became his church.

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He preached in the market-place, in the streets, at the gates, before the houses, and in the squares, and with such persuasiveness and effect that he won over many to the gospel, as well as secured their personal attachment. The people crowded to hear his sermons and could not be kept back, either by threats or persuasions. Some of the lowest class, it is true, instigated by the opponents of the truth, threatened to throw Farel into a well; but this had no effect on the undaunted preacher. He published the gospel for several days to increasing multitudes. Surprised at his success, he wrote to his colleagues at Ælen, as follows: "Unite with me in thanking the Father of mercies, for so graciously enlightening those who were oppressed with the severest tyranny. God is my witness that I did not leave you with whom I would gladly live and die, in order to escape bearing the cross. The glory of Christ, and the attachment shown to 'his word by his disciples in this place, enable me to bear great and inexpressible sufferings; but, by the power of Christ, all my burdens are rendered light."

Farel remained only a short time in Neufchatel, and then returned by way of Murten to Ælen. He also visited Neustadt and Lausanne, and having established the reformation in Mistellach and the valley of Munster, he returned the following summer to Neufchatel. Upon his return, he found the place divided into two parties. Advocates for the ancient system were numerous, respectable,

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and powerful, possessing considerable influence over the lower classes. On the other side were the citizens of the middle class, inferior in numbers and strength, but more enterprising. Farel resumed his preaching labours in the public squares and in private houses. The number of his friends increased daily, and the chapel of the hospital was thrown open to him. In the first sermon he preached there, he expressed his hope that as Christ was born a poor and distressed infant in a manger, so the habitation of the poor in that city would be the birth-place of his gospel. He not only preached earnestly against the worship of images, but set the example of mutilating them. This profanation of what was so sacred in their eyes, exasperated his opponents. The senate at Berne attempted to conciliate the contending parties, by ordering that persons should be at liberty to attend the popish or reformed worship as they pleased, without

molestation or disturbance. They enjoined upon Farel moderation and prudence in preaching the liberty of the gospel, that the people might not receive it merely as freeing them from external impositions. These orders, however, appear to have widened instead of healing the breach. The canons, some of whom were not disinclined to the reformation, were called upon either to defend or renounce popery from the pulpit; but they refused to enter the lists of controversy, and the jealousy on both sides increased.

The example of the town was followed by the

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country parishes. For a considerable time, no mass had been performed at St. Blaise. On the 23rd of October, Farel remarked in the course of his sermon that the gospel was deserving of not less honour than the mass, and ought to be preached in the abbey church. The congregation, by a sudden impulse, rose up and led him to the church, regardless of the canons who attempted in vain to prevent his ascending the pulpit. He then preached with great earnestness on the popish doctrines. He proved so clearly and powerfully the accordance of his own sentiments with the Scriptures, that many persons were deeply affected and exclaimed, "We will obey the evangelical doctrines; we and our children will live and die in them." An ungovernable zeal now seized the multitude; it seemed as if they expected to annihilate popery by a single blow, and by removing idols from the sight to eradicate idolatry from the heart. Many images were destroyed or mutilated, not excepting that of the Virgin Mary which had been presented to the abbey church by the princess Maria of Savoy. The governor, finding remonstrance fruitless, saved the moveable pictures and images, and caused them to be conveyed to the castle. The soldiers who had just returned from the war in Savoy, instead of repressing the tumult, excited their countrymen to fall upon the canons. The next day they renewed the attack; and having armed themselves with hatchets, threw down the crucifix and demolished various images. The host was treated with the greatest indignity. The

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altars were demolished, and the church cleansed from the Romish worship.

As, however, only a small part of the citizens were actively engaged in these proceedings, the governor still believed that the majority were in favour of the ancient faith, and wished to ascertain the fact by calling a meeting of the parishioners; but the friends of the reformation insisted that this step should not be taken in the absence of the Bernese commissioners. He was therefore compelled to apply to the senate, which immediately dispatched the commissioners. The papists now wished for delay while their opponents were eager for a speedy decision. The governor would gladly have called in the aid of the three other confederate cantons, but the Bernese assumed a high tone, threatened him with their displeasure, and reproved him for his opposition to the pure word of God. On appearing before the arbitrators, the governor complained loudly of the demolition of the images, and demanded 'in the name of his sovereign the restoration of the church to its former state, together with the re-establishment of the mass, and of the usual ceremonies, in accordance with the will of those by whom it was originally founded and endowed. The opposite party replied that they were prepared to prove that the mass

was a great abuse, that it contributed to the destruction and not to the salvation of souls; that on many occasions they had remonstrated with the canons and other priests, who had only persisted

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the more in deceiving the people and leading them astray; that in order to stop corruption in its course, and to remove a stumbling-block from many who were still undecided, they had deemed it needful to demolish the images and altars, and were prepared to defend their conduct by an appeal to the Scriptures.

The commissioners, having heard both sides, proposed to ascertain the sense of the meeting. This was for a long time resisted by the popish party, some of whom went so far as to talk of resorting to arms in defence of their faith, or of dying as martyrs in the cause. But the governor, fearful of the consequences to himself, to the princess, and to the country at large, withdrew his opposition and was followed by the rest who expressed in strong terms, however, their allegiance to the princess, and their determination to support her authority. To this, the evangelical party also gave their assent, with the reservation of whatever might affect their religious obligations. The votes were then taken by mutual consent, and the friends of the reformation had at the close a majority of eighteen.

The 4th of November was the memorable day on which the return to the apostolic doctrine was formally decreed. For a long period the inscription was visible on the walls of the church, "On the 23rd of October 1530, the worship of images was abolished by the Citizens." The concluding act of the commissioners was to issue an edict by which the rights of the princess and of the citizens were defined

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and secured; obedience and unanimity were enjoined with an oblivion of party animosities; the reformation was established; and while the mass and all popish ceremonies were abolished, acts of violence against the priests and monasteries were forbidden.

This new order of things related only to the church at Neufchatel. No innovation was permitted to be made in the neighbouring abbey of Fontaine, nor in any of the other parishes or convents in the country. On the other hand, the governor was forbidden to persecute any of the country people who might be disposed to embrace the reformed religion. He was also pledged not to injure any of those persons who had voted for the recent change. In all these transactions, the citizens referred to the holy Scriptures and not to the preachers; nor did the governor make any allusion to Farel in the full statement of the events which he made to the princess.

Mass continued to be performed in the castle, but it was absolutely forbidden in the town. The canons Chambrier, Baillod, and Pury, acceded to the reformation; the rest withdrew along with the choristers to the priory of Motier in the Val Travers. The governor, to check the spread of the reformation, sent for the churchwardens of the country parishes and obtained from them assurances of their attachment to the ancient faith. He also held communications with persons

both of the higher and lower orders in the hopes of being able to reverse the recent decision. Mass was privately performed, and children brought

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for baptism to the priests who manifested more strongly than ever their hatred to the word of God, and to the new regulations. When the senate of Berne was informed of these clandestine proceedings, they immediately reprimanded the governor in strong terms, and gave the town council strict injunctions to see to it that the recent enactments were maintained inviolate.

Emer Beynon and the parish of Serrieres followed the example of Neufchatel, while the curate of St. Blaise endeavoured to restore the mass, which had not been performed for six months. On this occasion, the governor professed neutrality and declared that he would neither forbid nor command it. The popish party laid a plan for attacking their opponents on Christmas day and restoring the ancient ritual; but was prevented from executing their design by the prompt interference of the Bernese.

The hopes of the disaffected were raised by the expected arrival of the young Marquis; but when he came, though he made several arrangements in religious matters, they related chiefly to the temporalities of the church. He pledged himself to allow general liberty of conscience; and thus the reformation still continued to advance. Farel was held in grateful esteem by the council and the citizens, as being the chief instrument of effecting this great change, and they would gladly have retained him at Neufchatel, had his engagements with the Bernese government permitted. He returned to Murten, and

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Anthony Marcourt, a Frenchman, successfully prosecuted the work which he had begun. In order to secure a good education for the young, Farel provided a schoolmaster of Christian principles, Louis of Strasburg, who had been recommended to him by his friend Bonifacius Wolfhard.

On a retrospect of these occurrences, Farel thus expressed himself: "It is well that the deceptions of antichrist are apparent to most persons, and that Christ can be preached with perfect liberty. But when I consider how much still remains to be accomplished, how far the people are from Christian purity, innocence, and love, I am obliged to confess that the state of things is very lamentable. How many weeds must yet be rooted up before the soil can receive the seed! How many trials are to be endured, how many efforts to be made, how many dangerous foes to be overcome! Truly hardy labourers are necessary, who will sow even without the hope of an abundant harvest."

To a young man who expressed a desire to labour in the Lord's vineyard, he wrote as follows: "If you are truly acquainted with Christ, so as to preach him in simplicity and purity, without vain disputes about water and bread (baptism and the Lord's Supper), tribute and tithe, in which the religion of many consists; if you have no desire to bring forward anything else than that all men should deny all ungodliness and unrighteousness, and full of faith, lay up treasure in heaven where Christ sits

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at the right hand of God; that they should be subject to the civil authorities, paying the tithe and tribute due to them, not only to the ungodly, if in the providence of God they are under the government of such, but also to the pious (and to the latter the more willingly, as being their brethren); and if it is your chief desire to implant that faith which works by love – then come courageously and take up the cross which stands ready for you. Look for labour, not for leisure; expect no rest till the day's work is ended. Truly, a wide field lies open, but only for those who wish to feed the flock, not to live upon it. Besides this, much reproach is to be endured. You must expect to meet with ingratitude in return for kindness, and evil for good. But do not suppose that I mention these things to deter you: I would rather inflame you with the courage of a hero who, though the foe he is about to meet is strong and well-armed, is ready to enter into the hottest of the fight, trusting in that God whose is the conflict and the victory; for the battle is not ours, but the Lord's."

When Fortunatus Andronicus delayed his coming under the pretext that his wife could not endure such hardships, Farel wrote to him saying, "If you have received grace to preach the gospel, do not bury your talent; for you will have to answer for the souls of those who are the slaves of spiritual tyranny, and whom you might have enlightened and led to Christ. It ought not to deter you that I can promise you

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scarcely any salary, for you know that we ought for Christ's sake to endure hunger and poverty, and even death itself. Nor must you regard your wife in this affair; all must be set aside for the sake of Christ; nor must we inquire what a woman can or will do, but what God wills and commands." This letter of Farel's produced its intended effect. Fortunatus came with his wife. It should be remembered, that Farel's letters were written in the midst of much occupation and affliction, and that he desired nothing from others of which he did not set the example. In all his trials he consoled himself with the thought that "God will never forsake his people; if he were to violate his promise, we should indeed be in a miserable state, but he is faithful and true, and cannot lie."

CHAPTER 11. FAREL'S JOURNEYS AND SUFFERINGS IN BEHALF OF THE REFORMATION.

FAREL visited Neufchatel from time to time for the purpose of confirming the newly planted Christian church, and of preaching the gospel in the adjacent neighbourhood. In Boudevillers, the governor threatened with confiscation and imprisonment, those who received the reformed faith. He was only prevented from accomplishing his threats by the intervention of Berne. In Bevay, where the word of God had been eagerly listened to, the prior excited a tumult; and not content with instigating the town's people to an attack upon the congregation during Divine service, [the prior] called in the assistance of other persons from Baudry. They drove the preacher out of the church, and reviled and assaulted him. Here again, the Bernese government interposed with a strong remonstrance.

Bordering on Neufchatel lies the district and town of Valangin. The widow of Count Claudius, of Aarberg, Wilhelmina von Vergy, resided here. Her zeal for popery, though great, was exceeded by that

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of her chamberlain, Claudius von Belgrade. But their united efforts could not prevent the entrance of the reformation. People from the Val de Ruz came daily to Neufchatel where they became acquainted with the doctrines of the reformers; the effects of this intercourse soon became apparent in several parishes. Encouraged by the favourable disposition of the people, and relying on the protection of Berne, Farel attempted to make known the word of God in this place, and came there with his faithful companion, Anthony Boyne. While he was preaching, a priest came and performed mass. His companion noticed that the people were more attentive to the mass than to the sermon. Irritated at the sight, when the priest was in the very act of elevating the host, he tore it out of his hands. Exhibiting it to the assembly, he exclaimed, "This is not the God whom you ought to worship. He is exalted in the heavens, in the glory of the Father, and not in the hands of the priests, as *you* imagine and as *they* pretend." Enraged at this act, the priests and their adherents caused the alarm bell to be rung. Farel and Boyne were fortunate enough to escape in the crowd. But as they were returning home in the evening, they were assailed with sticks and stones in a narrow pass near the castle, by a mob led on by the priests. They were dragged half-dead to the residence of the countess, who seemed by no means to disapprove of the outrage. The priests led Farel into the chapel, and endeavoured to compel him to fall down before

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an image of the virgin. But he steadfastly refused, exclaiming, "You ought to worship the only true God in spirit and in truth, and not a dumb, lifeless, helpless image." Exasperated at his firmness, they beat him still more severely, so that he lost much blood, of which traces were visible six years after on the walls of the chapel. At length, after continued ill treatment, they cast him into prison. As soon as the news of this inhuman proceeding reached Neufchatel, the inhabitants hastened to his rescue. The names of the aggressors were never known, but strong

suspicious fell on the canons of Verlangin, who were assured beforehand of the approval of the countess, and were daily guests at her table.

Undismayed by these sufferings, Farel soon afterwards went to Avenche, two leagues from Murten, where he was informed that there were some persons disposed to hear the gospel. He met with great opposition from the priests who excited a tumult from which, however, he escaped unhurt. On a second visit to this place, accompanied by some friends from Murten, he was the bearer of a message from the senate of Berne, enjoining the inhabitants to abstain from persecuting the faithful preachers of the gospel or their hearers. This new attempt gave umbrage to the government of Friburg; they arrested Farel's companions, and threatened to punish the inhabitants of Avenche if they allowed him to preach. Shortly after, the bishop of Lausanne, who had been informed of Farel's coming, openly applauded his adversaries,

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and promised "the valiant, good, and faithful Christians and Catholics, who showed such a noble spirit, all blessings from God in this life and paradise hereafter." To encourage their zeal, he sent a doctor in theology who was to instruct them in all matters relating to salvation. Farel conversed with this delegate of the bishop, who reviled him and called him a heretic. Meanwhile, envoys were sent from Berne to Friburg to complain of the uncalled-for interference of the government of the latter place in the affairs of Avenche, and to declare that Farel and those who desired to hear him were under the protection of the Bernese. The same envoys also charged the people of Avenche to make good their promise of allowing the word of God to be freely dispensed without danger to the preacher; and they threatened them, in case of disobedience, with heavy penalties. Notwithstanding this, the magistrates of Avenche punished all who went to Murten or elsewhere to hear the gospel.

Farel returned to Murten; but in a few days came back again to Avenche in consequence of orders from Berne to accompany their envoys to Orbe. In that place there were a few enlightened and zealous friends of the reformation who met with violent opposition from Michael Juliani, a Franciscan. On one occasion, when this monk was reproaching those of [Farel's] brethren who had renounced celibacy, [reformer] Christopher Honlard interrupted him with the exclamation, "You lie!" An uproar immediately began in the

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church. The females present made a furious attack on Honlard, pulled him by the beard, disfigured his face, and would have taken away his life, had not a magistrate rescued him from their hands and put him in confinement. As soon as the news of the fray reached the bailiff, he hastened to the spot, liberated Honlard, and imprisoned the monk. Marcus Romain, the schoolmaster who had apprised the bailiff of what was going on, was also very roughly handled by the mob which assembled in front of the castle. They would, if possible, have called the *governor* to account for his treatment of their "good father Juliani."

The evangelical party reported a number of expressions from the Franciscan's sermon to the authorities at Berne, and messengers were sent by the opposite party to Friburg. It was agreed

that the investigation should commence on the arrival of the envoys from both parties. No sooner had Farel entered the city than he ascended the pulpit during vespers. The people crowded round him, but he had scarcely opened his lips when a dreadful noise and hooting began. In this chaos of sounds might be heard at times the words, "Dog! Devil! Heretic!" applied to the preacher. The serenity with which Farel continued his discourse only increased the fury of the populace. They fell upon him with such violence that, but for the interposition of the bailiff, his life would have been sacrificed. Nothing daunted, he attempted to preach in a place of public resort the next morning, but the people were not disposed to listen to him.

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There was a meeting of the council in the afternoon, which he attended, with the envoys from Berne and Friburg. A mob of women waited for him on his return home, attacked him with their fists, and threw him down. He was rescued from their fury by Peter de Glaviesse, a respectable nobleman. It is worthy of notice, that these assailants were led on by a female of rank, Elizabeth Reif, wife of the Lord of Arnay, who not long after was converted from her misguided zeal, together with her husband. From that time, they ranked among the faithful professors of the gospel. Nothing of consequence resulted from this inquiry. Juliani admitted having used some of the expressions alleged; the rest he wholly denied, or declared that they were not represented correctly. After a short examination, he was dismissed and secured himself from further investigations by a hasty flight.

The deputies sent from Oilu to apologize for the irregularities that had taken place there, met with an unfavourable reception at Berne, and they were enjoined to allow Farel full liberty of preaching. The first time, however, that he ventured to preach under this sanction, the children interrupted him with noise and clamour in the middle of his sermon. At another time, several persons drew their swords, intending to terrify him; but to the astonishment of his audience, he continued his discourse unmoved. Encouraged by the arrival of a new deputation from Berne, he ascended the pulpit a third time, while the congregation

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was engaged in a procession to the church of St. Germain in the suburbs. On their return, they saw to their great surprise the new preacher in the pulpit; the children began their usual clamour; the clergy entered the church singing; and Farel was compelled to withdraw. Indeed, on every occasion he was more or less annoyed by some breach of good order and decorum.

The Bernese deputies now represented to the council that as the people had heard Juliani's controversial harangue, they ought also to hear Farel's refutation of it. Accordingly, Farel preached twice a day for six successive days. The first and second day he had many hearers; but afterwards their number was limited to the few friends of the Reformation. Though his visit to this place seemed at the time to be almost useless, yet ultimately it proved of great advantage to the cause. Here he met with Peter Viret, a young man who had studied in Paris but had been compelled to leave that city on account of his attachment to the evangelical doctrine. Convinced as he was of the truths of the gospel, his timidity prevented his appearing in public as their advocate till Farel, after much persuasion, prevailed upon him to devote himself to the ministry.

Soon after Farel's departure, he preached for the first time in his native town, won the hearts of his parents, and by his useful labours, turned many of the people from their errors.

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In May, Farel returned to Neufchatel and preached at St. Blaise, where he engaged in a hot dispute with the curate, particularly respecting the mass. A magistrate who was standing by declared that Farel deserved to be hung. This and other similar expressions roused the people; they ran to arms, and Farel's life had nearly been sacrificed to an infuriated mob. Incensed at this treatment of their reformer, the inhabitants of Neufchatel a few days after proceeded to St. Blaise, and destroyed both the images and the altar.

Farel returned to Murten, in a very debilitated condition, and suffering from an expectoration of blood. Here he was visited by his countryman, Libertet¹ Fabri, from Vienne, who had been studying medicine at Montpellier, but left the university on account of a prevailing epidemic. He was on the point of proceeding to Paris, to pursue his studies, when he heard at Lyons of the changes God had wrought by the instrumentality of Farel in Aden, Murten, and Neufchatel. He resolved to become more intimately acquainted with the man who had accomplished such great things, and to dedicate himself to the service of the ministry, if he should be thought to possess the requisite qualifications. Farel at once perceived his fitness for the sacred office, and confirmed the resolution he had formed; accordingly he began preaching in Murten.

As soon as Farel had recovered from the ill treatment that he had received at St. Blaise, he was sent to Granson, which was very soon the scene of fresh

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disturbances. A Franciscan friar from Lausanne preached on the festival of John the Baptist. Farel, with a freedom which was certainly indecorous, though not unusual in those days, interrupted the preacher and argued against his assertions. On this, the mayor, who was standing near Farel, abused and struck him. This was a signal for the townspeople, the friars, and their neighbours who had come armed from Iverdun, to attack Farel and the minister of Tavannes. They beat them, trod upon them, and injured them most seriously. It seems that they had been excited by a false report that Farel intended to throw down the lofty crucifix which stood in the gallery. Von Wattenwyl, who had been appointed a commissioner by the senate of Berne to act on behalf of Farel and his associates, was informed of this outrage by De Glautines. He arrived the next day. He went immediately to the church of the Franciscans, where a monk was preaching. When about to ascend the gallery, he was seized by two monks, Grandot and Tissot. One of them endeavoured to push him back. But his servant, who was making way for him, perceived that the monk had an axe concealed under his cloak. He immediately wrested it from him and would have killed him had his master not interfered. A dreadful tumult now arose in the church. At length, tranquillity was restored. The monk finished his discourse, and Farel followed in refutation of it. By desire of Von Wattenwyl, the two monks were arrested, and a guard

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¹ Original text "Libertat", but later "Libertet." (orig. pages 227, 279, infra pp. 110, 135) Changed for consistency.

was stationed at the convent that no one might escape. The monks, in their defence, alleged that they did not know Von Wattenwyl, and were only anxious to prevent Farel from entering the gallery. One of them was set at liberty upon taking a solemn oath; the other was sent away as an alien. It is delightful to be able to state that within two years after this, both of them renounced the errors of popery, and became preachers of that gospel which once they had so violently opposed.

Farel met with more success in the neighbourhood than in Granson itself. His discourses were so favourably received at Fyn, that in a short time the majority of the parishioners expressed themselves in favour of the reformation. Accordingly the reformation was publicly recognised under Farel's superintendence.

Granson still continued in an unsettled state. Some zealous but indiscreet partizans of the reformation, having failed in legal proceedings against the monks, made an attack upon the images. The parties concerned, together with Farel and other preachers, were arrested; but on the repeated demand of the Bernese government, they were discharged. The town, however, was not restored to good order. A multitude of women, ill-pleased that the friends of the reformation should hold their worship in public, rushed tumultuously into the church and put an end to the service. The congregation at first offered resistance, but were overpowered by the infuriated assailants. Farel, Grivat, and Fromont, were the

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chief objects of their outrageous attack. Farel was shortly after recalled from Granson, as his residence there was a source of continual altercation between the governments of Friburg and Berne. Weary of such frequent disturbances, these two cantons entered into an agreement relative to the reformation in the districts under their joint jurisdiction. The terms, on the whole, were favourable to liberty of conscience.

Farel continued with unabated zeal to oppose the worship of images. On one occasion, some zealous individuals from Ivonant destroyed certain altars and images at Granson in his presence, without his attempting to restrain them. The senate of Berne complained of his impetuosity while he, on the other hand, reproached them with lukewarmness. "There are persons," he writes, "who profess a desire for the establishment of Christianity, but whether they are in earnest God knows! The Bernese do not labour as zealously for the doctrine of Christ as the Friburgers do for popery. I do not believe that formerly they would have endured a trifling insult to the lowliest of their servants, in the manner they now bear the reproach cast upon the gospel. Monkery and priestcraft, already in a state of decay, would long ago have been annihilated by the word of God, had not the government of Friburg made such exertions on their behalf."

Although Farel still longed for the cooperation of his friend Tossanus, the lack of evangelical preachers was partially supplied by persons who had

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fled from France to avoid persecution. John la Compte, a young nobleman from Meaux, undertook the arduous office of preacher in Granson. Out of seven who were anxious to be employed in the ministry of the gospel, Farel selected the four ablest as pastors of the newly formed evangelical churches in the bailiwick of Granson. It pained him deeply that, owing to his multiplied labours and sufferings, his correspondence with his dearest friends was necessarily interrupted. "Even were my father alive," was his frequent apology for silence, "I could not find time to write to him."

Zuinglius, a short time before his decease, exhorted Farel "to be prudent, and not to rashly expose himself to danger, but to be careful of himself, for the Lord's further service." Thankful for such an admonition, he wrote in reply, "Take care of yourself also, for far greater danger threatens you than me." The warning arrived too late; Zuinglius had already fallen in the contest for the truth.

CHAPTER 12. FAREL'S PASTORAL LETTER JOURNEY TO THE WALDENSES – FIRST VISIT TO GENEVA.

IN the beginning of the year, Farel attended the synod held at Berne. There he met his old friend Capito, to whose influence its deliberations were much indebted for the spirit of gentleness and harmony by which they were distinguished.

He received at this time accounts of the sufferings of the friends of the reformation in France. Finding that some of them were inclined to apply to the civil power for relief, he addressed a circular letter to them, in which, after adducing the example of Abraham, he proceeded to say, "I beseech you faithfully to follow it, and then you will experience the glory and power of God. You are looked upon with a suspicious eye, threatened, oppressed, and your lives embittered. You are most oppressed by those whose special duty it is to encourage and assist you; and those who were once your friends have become your foes; in short, on all sides you are pressed and surrounded by your enemies, like the prophet Elisha.

FAREL'S PASTORAL LETTER. 101

But, my dear friends and brethren, do not be discouraged; say with, the Psalmist, 'The Lord is our help, of whom shall we be afraid?' If all the powers of earth set themselves against us, we will not despair, for the Lord is with us. 'If God is for us,' says the apostle, 'who can be against us?' Do not look at the host of the Assyrians, but at the power of God who fights for us. Profit by the fear which has seized you; take courage, and enter into that holy covenant which God has made with us through his Son. Say to yourselves, How will it be with us, if the Almighty King, the Lord of heaven and earth, should refuse to acknowledge us; and should say respecting us, 'Whoever is ashamed of me before men, I will be ashamed of him before my heavenly Father.'"

After admonishing them to please God rather than men, and to implore him to remove every obstacle out of the way of his holy gospel, he represents what would be the condition of mankind were the righteous God to deal with them according to their deserts. He reminds them of the idolatry which had up to now been prevalent, of the blasphemy of a man's exalting himself above God, and arrogating divine honours of the sacrifice of the mass, as if the redemption of Jesus Christ were not sufficient. The consequences of these corruptions he represents to be unbelief, separation from God, neglect of the holy Scriptures, a substitution of the ordinances of men for the laws of God, strife, hatred, murder, and

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unchastity. Instead of the love of our neighbour, [a substitution of] the most hateful self-love meriting the righteous judgment of Heaven. He again encourages them not to consider the number of their enemies, but to look up to God; to place all their hopes in him, to seek the blessings of eternity, and to have the truth so inwrought into their souls as to convince their adversaries by the force of Scripture, justice, and reason. "Let none of you be ashamed of Jesus and his gospel: look solely to God. Act with moderation and kindness, mingled with firmness and perseverance, which will conduce to the honour of God, and the edification of your fellow

men.” In conclusion, he exhorts them to walk in all truth and holiness, in purity of heart, in faith, love, goodness and patience, as examples of a holy and pious life, praying to God that he would extend his glory everywhere, and destroy whatever is opposed to his holy doctrine.

Farel was not lax to exemplify in his own conduct, the Christian courage which he endeavoured to infuse into his brethren. Accounts of the reformation had penetrated the valleys of the Waldenses. One of their pastors who had visited Germany, had brought home with him the writings of the reformers. A few years after, the pastors Morel and Masson were sent on a mission to confer with the reformers in Germany and Switzerland on the Christian faith. Œcolampadius received them as brethren. He rejoiced in their faith, Christian practice,

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and usages, but pointed out some particulars in which he conceived that they were in error. And he exhorted them to do all things for Christ’s sake, rather than take a part in ceremonies which they abhorred in their hearts. Two others of their preachers, George from Calabria, and Martin Gonin, visited Farel during his residence at Orbe and Granson.

Morel, George, and Martin, brought back with them to the valleys, in writing, the opinions and advice of Œcolampadius and Bucer, together with a proposal to call a synod in order to compare their doctrines and form of worship with the standard of the holy Scriptures. This was decided upon. Farel with Anthony Saunier, his friend and countryman who had suffered fourteen months’ imprisonment in Paris for corresponding with him on religious subjects, were chosen by their colleagues in Granson as a deputation to attend the synod. Having been strictly examined by the Waldenses, they were admitted to their deliberations at which it was resolved to do away with the abuses which had crept in, and to renounce altogether the use of popish ceremonies. They also passed several resolutions almost unanimously on the subjects of election, free will, the lawfulness of oaths, the observance of the Lord’s day, the marriage of the clergy, fasting, auricular confession, baptism, and the Lord’s Supper. The severe persecution which broke out the following year, prevented the complete adoption of the arrangements that had been approved of, by the Waldenses.

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During Farel’s visit to the Waldenses, he noticed many things that required alteration in order to prevent the people from being led astray by false teachers. Schools were needed, and the holy Scriptures were not to be found among them except in manuscript. The synod was unanimous respecting the necessity of having Bibles printed, and establishing schools. Farel undertook to provide for the latter. Immediately after his return, he sent four persons, Adam, Marten, Guido, and Robert Olivetan, into the valleys to establish schools there, and to concert measures for translating and printing the Bible. They departed in October. After enduring many hardships, they arrived in the valleys where they were well-received by the majority, though the influence of the dissentients was perceptible. They instructed both pastors and people in the holy Scriptures, and urged the speedy establishment of schools. To Farel was committed the important task of editing James Faber’s translation of the Bible. Thus, his mission to the Waldenses proved of permanent benefit.

On his way home, Farel and his companions reached Geneva in the beginning of October. At this time religious differences began to be more distinctly marked in this city, and secret adherents to the reformation were to be found among all ranks. The mental freedom of the Genevese languished under the yoke of a rich, ignorant, and corrupt clergy; their civil

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liberties were also endangered. But the papal absolutions had lost their value in the eyes of many, and even the senate desired the priests to preach the pure gospel instead of the fables and legends which the people would no longer endure. Upon Farel's arrival there, he sought out some friends of the reformation who received him gladly. He began immediately to instruct them at his lodgings. His residence in the city, and the numbers who thronged to hear him, soon became a matter of notoriety. The senate and the clergy, who dreaded "the scourge of the priests," as Farel was termed, put themselves in motion and met together, not knowing how to act. The first thing done was that the senate cited Farel and his companions before them, charged them with exciting a disturbance, and commanded them to leave the town without delay.

To this, Farel replied that he was neither a seditious person nor a deceiver; but he was resolved to advocate the word of God and the truth of his doctrine at the hazard of his life. He then laid before the senate his credentials, in which the states in alliance with Berne were requested to give him a friendly reception and listen to his doctrine. Upon this, the syndics assumed a milder tone and only requested them to return to their lodgings, which they accordingly did.

Scarcely had they arrived there, when some of the principal people of the town and the clergy came, and invited them to the house of the vicar-general,

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Armade de Gingins, abbot of Bonmont, where others of the clergy were assembled. But, under the pretext of conversing with him on religious subjects, the most deadly animosity was concealed. The senate suspecting their ill-intentions, sent the syndics Hugue and Bellard with the preachers. They were also accompanied by the bishop's secretary and their friend, Robert Olivetan, who resided in Geneva as a private teacher.

The insults they received on the way were no favourable omen. Before they arrived at the place of meeting, one of the leading members warned his brethren against disputing with the persons assembled. William de Vegio, the bishop's official, first examined them and treated them with great contempt on account of their ordinary and unclerical appearance. When Farel spoke of a higher call than any human authority which impelled him to preach the word of God, Vegio required him to prove by miracles (as Moses did before Pharaoh) that he was an ambassador from God. They were then conducted before the assembly, of which the assessors wore weapons concealed under their dress. "Tell us," said the canons, "you vile devil, Farel, are you baptized? Where do you come from? Why do you travel to and fro in all directions? To turn the world upside down? How did you come here? Who invited you to this city? Who gave you authority to

preach? Are you not the man who disseminated the Lutheran heresy in AËlen and Neufchatel, and troubles the people?

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Why do you come here to scatter the seed of heresy throughout the country?" To these insulting interrogatories Farel replied, "I have been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and I am not a devil. I go here and there to preach Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for our sins, and was raised again for our justification. Everyone who believes on him shall receive everlasting life, but he that does not believe shall be condemned. For this purpose I have been commissioned by God, our gracious Father, as an ambassador of Jesus Christ. I am bound to preach him to all who are willing to hear; and I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to induce everyone to receive him. I came here on my way home in order to see whether anyone would listen to my discourses. And I am ready to hold a disputation with you, and to give an account of my faith and preaching. For this purpose I understand you have called me before you. As often, therefore, as you please to hear me peaceably I will to my last breath maintain what I have preached, and daily preach, as the pure truth and not heresy, as is laid to my charge. I go forth, not in the name of man, but in the name of God, who has ordained me to be his servant, and not with the most distant intention of exciting disturbances in this city and its neighbourhood. Elijah said to King Ahab, 'It is you that troubles Israel, and not I;' and I can say in like manner, It is not I that causes such commotions, but you and your adherents who would

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throw the city and the whole world into confusion by human traditions and ordinances, and by your licentious conduct." He did not produce his credentials, believing that it would only increase the prejudice against him.

They gnashed their teeth while he was speaking, and under pretence of deliberating more freely, desired him and his companions to withdraw. Scarcely were they out of the room, when one of the vicar-general's servants levelled a gun at Farel; but the piece burst in his hands, and his intended victim remained unhurt. Farel turned round to the assassin, and coolly said, "Your shots do not terrify me." After this, sentence was pronounced upon them, that they were to leave the city in three hours under pain of death, and to consider this as a special favour out of regard to the senate of Berne. Farel, on hearing this sentence, exclaimed, "You condemn us unheard." He was not permitted to utter another word. Bergery, one of the leading men, stood up and in a furious tone repeated the words of the Jewish high priest, "He has blasphemed God, what need do we have of further witnesses; he is worthy of death." A general cry was now raised, "Away with him to the Rhone!" Some of the canons called him a servant and emissary of the prince of the devils, trod on him with their feet, and struck him in the face with their fists. Others exclaimed, "It is better that this Lutheran heretic should die than that the people should be seduced by him." When Farel interrupted the

FAREL'S FIRST VISIT TO GENEVA. 109

uproar by saying, "Speak the words of God rather than those of Caiaphas," they cried out with increased fury, "Kill this Lutheran dog! Strike at him!" The principal clergy now fell upon him, and probably would have murdered him, had not William Hugue, the syndic, shocked at their bad faith, reproached them most severely, and threatened to restrain them by means of the civil power. Still, Farel was not out of danger; for as he was retiring, someone drew a dagger and would have stabbed him if the syndic had not seized his arm.

While there were not lacking those who were base enough to lament the failure of these murderous attempts, many even of the staunch adherents of the clergy were greatly shocked that such infamous means of supporting their cause should be resorted to. And the syndic who accompanied the preachers, Bellard, was secretly on their side. Early the following day, their friends having been informed of a plot to arrest them and send them to Savoy, accompanied them across the lake a day's journey. They landed between Maisee and Lausanne; avoiding those towns where danger was to be apprehended, they arrived safely at Orbe.

Though Farel's unfavourable reception and expulsion discouraged his friends at Geneva, he himself did not give up the hope of gaining over that city to the reformed faith. Immediately after his return, he persuaded the minister of Ivonant, Anthony Fromont from Dauphiny, to repair to Geneva in

110 FAREL'S RETURN TO MURTEN.

order to cherish the spark which still glimmered there. Full of pious confidence, this young minister ventured to go. He arrived at Geneva on the 3rd of November, and succeeded in changing some decided enemies of the reformation into its friends.

On Farel's return to Murten, he took measures to remove his colleague¹ who injured rather than edified the church as he sought to ingratiate himself with the rich and powerful.

Farel was very anxious that the younger clergy should be trained to act in a manner worthy of their sacred calling. Many excellent young men, full of zeal for the spread of the gospel, looked up to him as a father, and poured their sorrows and anxieties into his bosom. In order to bring into closer union the brethren who, for the most part, were strangers to each other, and to consult with them on the affairs of the church, [Farel] instituted a weekly meeting to be held at Murten and Neufchatel alternately. From these friendly conferences, synods were gradually formed which assumed the office not only of ordaining ministers, but of appointing pastors for particular churches. To this latter measure, however, the senate of Berne refused to accede, deeming it an intrusion on their own authority.

Among the persons who left France to escape persecution, were Farel's three brothers. Others of his relations suffered a tedious imprisonment. At Farel's request, the government of Berne interceded with the king on their behalf. But they received a haughty

FAREL'S RETURN TO MURTEN. 111

¹ The person is unnamed.

reply with violent threats that [the king] would extirpate heresy from his dominions. The brothers, however, were not banished from France. Gauthier, some years after, resided with Count William of Fürstenberg, whose influence he hoped to employ with the king on behalf of his brethren in the faith. But the name of Farel was probably obnoxious at the court from his having been suspected of writing some small treatises in the name of the king and the Parisian theologians, though after attempts to discover the real author, no evidence was found to substantiate the suspicion.

CHAPTER 13. FAREL PROMOTES THE REFORMATION AT GENEVA.

FROMONT'S preaching cherished that interest which had for some time existed in the minds of the Genevese, relative to the doctrines of the reformation. The people listened with great attention to a long and severe discourse against false prophets which he delivered on New Year's day, 1533. He was threatened with imprisonment for continuing to speak in public, contrary to the express injunction of the magistrates; but his friends had up to now prevented this threat from taking effect. In general, any person who taught or openly defended the evangelical doctrines was banished or obliged to quit the country. This fate befell, in succession, a Franciscan who had commenced preaching against ecclesiastical abuses, Robert Olivetan, who had interrupted a Dominican while inveighing against the Lutherans from the pulpit; John Guerin, a mechanic, for administering the sacrament in the absence of a regular pastor; and a foreigner for speaking against the mass. These persecutions were chiefly at the instigation of the

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government of Friburg. To counteract this influence, the evangelical party applied to the Bernese who accordingly complained to the senate of Geneva of the treatment that Farel had received, notwithstanding his letters of recommendation. [They complained] still more of the unsparing persecution of those who professed the reformed doctrine, and the endeavour to suppress the preaching of the gospel; but their interference only exasperated the hatred and bigotry of the papists. The priests raised a tumult in the city and seemed as if they would totally destroy the evangelical party. The Bernese sent a deputation, accompanied by Farel, to warn the senate of the danger to which their city would be exposed by such disorderly proceedings, and to demand that a monk who had impugned their authority, should be brought before their envoys to answer for his conduct.

The senate of Geneva was perplexed by the alternate menaces of Berne and of Friburg, and the whole city was divided into religious and political parties. The enemies of the reformation charged its doctrines with being new, unheard of, and destructive of that ancient edifice which so many learned men, religious orders, and universities had erected. "Since these doctrines," they said, "have been published (without any proof that the publishers of them are sent from God), war, pestilence, famine, discord, hatred, and animosity have prevailed; while previously, peace and prosperity, and all that could be desired, were enjoyed. The preachers, and not we,

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are the false prophets, who have brought such misfortunes upon us."

The priests made the superstitious people believe that Farel and Viret fed devils at their table in the form of black cats; that devils hung at every hair of Farel's beard; that he had no whites to his eyes; and other things equally monstrous. They attempted to support their cause by means of preaching. And with this design, they sent for Guy Furbity, a dominican and doctor of the Sorbonne. He was appointed to preach in advent, not as usual in the church of his own order, but

in the cathedral, to which he was conducted in great pomp and with an armed escort. He chose for his subject the soldiers dividing our Lord's garments among them, which he applied to ancient and modern heretics who divided the church: Arians, Sabellians, the Waldenses, Lutherans, and the Germans. His audience was a large one, chiefly of females. He attacked with great vehemence, the violaters of fast-days, the readers of the holy Scriptures, the despisers of the pope and their protectors, and called them "mad dogs, heretics, Jews, Turks," etc. He exalted himself and his brother priests above the Virgin Mary because, as he pretended, they could draw down Christ from heaven and transmute a wafer into a God.

The two reformed preachers, Fromont and Alexander Camus (called du Montin) happened to be in the church. After the sermon was ended, they offered

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to prove the fallacy of it from the holy Scriptures. This occasioned a great uproar, and a general cry was raised, "Away with them to the fire!" Du Montin¹ was seized and sentenced to perpetual banishment under pain of death. Fromont concealed himself and was sought for in vain from house to house.

Information concerning these transactions was speedily conveyed to Berne. As the senate considered themselves aggrieved by the epithets Furbity had applied in his sermon to the friends of the reformation, they sent two of their most respectable members, Hans Francis Nageli and Ausburger, to demand the arrest of the monk, and that he should answer before the envoys for what he had said. Trusting to the protection of the deputies, Farel, Viret, and Fromont again appeared in Geneva. Fortunatus Andronicus had preceded them a few months before.

Farel arrived on the Saturday before Christmas day, and was followed by a courier from Berne with letters to the syndics and the senate. The canons met in a suspicious manner, and the bishop's fiscal sent about to every house, exciting the people to arm themselves in defence of the ancient faith. The bishop's palace was the place of rendezvous. Many of the town's people assembled, besides the clergy, who were formed into a separate company. The wine flowed freely, and every one promised to be at his post. On Monday afternoon an armed body of men marched out and took possession of the Molard.² Many persons were struck with astonishment at

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the sight of a host of clergymen in military array against one man, who made his appeal not to arms, but to the word of God.

As soon as the friends of the reformation were apprised of this movement, they removed Farel from the inn where he had taken up his abode, and placed him with one of the citizens in whom they confided. They also provided themselves with arms, but only for defensive use. Everyone feared a bloody result. The syndics at length succeeded in causing the party that first marched out, to retire.

¹ The original printing had "du Moulin."

² A military tower in Geneva dating from the 14th century.

To satisfy the envoys, the senate placed a guard over Fuerbity, yet not so as to restrict him from going about and preaching. On St. Stephen's day he took leave of his auditory.¹ But three days after, he came forward more boldly than ever, and reviled all who joined what he termed the execrable new sect, as the most licentious characters, robbers and murderers, who disowned subjection to all authority, human and divine, and lived like beasts. On New Year's Day he once more took leave of the people, and addressed them with such effect that they were all in tears. He exhorted them to be firm in their opposition to the heretics, and concluded with expressing a wish either that God would convert them, or cause his curse to light upon them. His blasphemies were listened to by many with pleasure; but at last they became so outrageous that the senate put him in close confinement. The evangelical preachers taught the word of God in private houses, but were still exposed

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to danger if they appeared in public. The vicar-general issued an order that no one should preach without the bishop's permission, and that whoever possessed a copy of the Scriptures should commit it to the flames under pain of excommunication.

Another deputation from Berne arrived in January to demand the arrears of the debt incurred during the war, and to complain of the oppressive manner in which the reformed party had been treated. They threatened to dissolve the alliance unless their terms were complied with. The Genevese were perplexed by similar threats from Friburg, in case Farel and his associates were permitted to preach the gospel. The senate, having in vain alleged that Fuerbity's affair belonged to a spiritual tribunal, and finding that the Bernese were on the point of returning the articles of alliance, summoned the monk to appear before them. The envoys and Fuerbity addressed the senate. The meeting concluded with a request from the [envoys] that the business should be brought before the great council. At the same time, it was agreed to request the bishop's vicar and court to send one or two of the clergy in order to assist the monk. The ecclesiastical authorities, however, refused to lend their aid, and demanded Fuerbity's release. The whole city was now in commotion – some maintaining that the affair belonged to the spiritual court, and others being afraid of the consequences if it were not brought before the great council. Nor was the latter measure determined upon till a fresh deputation had laid the

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Articles of Confederation on the table, and were on the point of removing the seal.

When the council was assembled, as Fuerbity found himself unsupported, he immediately made his submission and expressed his willingness to answer the propositions which should be laid before him to the best of his ability. Some of them he positively denied; others he objected to as not being accurately reported, or justified himself by appealing to the customary mode of preaching in France; and he declared that he addressed the Genevese in such terms only for their good. The Bernese envoys insisted that he had done them great injustice, and called upon him once more to substantiate his assertions. After being closely pressed to prove his opinions by a

¹ That is, his sermon or preaching.

reference to the Scriptures, Farel instantly exclaimed, "I thank God, who has put this resolution into your heart; and entreat you to dispute with us, in all meekness and love, so that we may aim at nothing but the glory of God and the edification of our neighbour." "The most glorious victory," he added, "is that which is gained by the truth, and I would gladly sacrifice my life to ensure its universal reception."

The disputation, which began on Thursday January 29th, was held in the senate house, with the Bernese envoys, the council of two hundred, and several doctors of law and medicine. Furbity first brought forward the proposition that the prelates and pastors of the church have a right to enact laws and ordinances besides those contained in the Scriptures, and

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which cannot be violated without mortal sin. This he endeavoured to prove from Deuteronomy 17.8-12. But Farel turned this and some other passages in connexion with it, against him, and showed that even Moses had prohibited additions to his laws. From this he inferred that it would be still more criminal to take such a liberty with the gospel, the final revelation of Divine truth. Furbity asserted that the Levitical priesthood was a type of the pope. Farel referred the type to Jesus, the great High Priest who, by his own offering, had done away with all sacrificial and sacerdotal services, and had invited everyone to come through him to the Father. This did not satisfy the monk. He maintained that the church must have a supreme head, since even Christ himself commanded the people to obey the Scribes and Pharisees who sat in Moses' seat; and Paul recommended obedience to teachers, and that the traditions of the elders should be kept. Therefore he inferred that the decrees of the pope were binding. Farel allowed that the church had a head – not the pope, but Jesus – the supreme Lord and Head, from whom all salvation flows to the church. And he observed that Jesus recommended the people to follow the Scribes only when they taught what Moses had commanded; for otherwise they occupied the seat of falsehood. In the same manner, only those were to be listened to, in later times, who preach the pure doctrine of Jesus; the teaching of all others should be avoided as much as the leaven of the Pharisees. The decrees of

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the apostles at Jerusalem proceeded not so much from themselves as from Jesus, in accordance with his instructions and the guidance of his Spirit. Furbity then asked in what part of the gospels it was stated that Jesus had forbidden the eating of blood, or of strangled meat, or such as had been offered to idols? These, he asserted, were ordinances of the fathers, framed under the presidency of Peter, whom Jesus had declared to be head of the church, and subsequently established by the authority of the pope and the councils. Farel replied that these prohibitions were made in accordance with the precept of Jesus, that we should not offend our brother; and Peter himself had spoken against laying new and intolerable burdens on Christians. He explained still further what Jesus meant by the keys of the kingdom of heaven, namely the gospel, or word of God, which all possess who preach the word of God in its purity. Hence, nothing in favour of the pope's supremacy is to be found in the Scriptures. No man, however holy he may be, ought to be listened to except when he preaches according to Divine truth. Should he teach dreams, like the false prophets, no one ought to listen to him for he is not sent from God. To support the

authority of tradition, Fuerbity instanced the change of the Sabbath which was transferred to Sunday in commemoration of the resurrection. To this Farel replied that the festivals also were a Divine arrangement, although every day was holy, and ought to be so regarded; and it would be contrary to the law of love for one individual to separate himself from the rest, and celebrate another day.

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The greater part of the day was spent in this disputation.

The next day the disputation was renewed. Farel alluded to his observations on the preceding day, and showed that the Sunday was introduced according to the Divine command, but in true liberty of the spirit, without any superstitious notions. Fuerbity objected that if only that which Jesus had commanded ought to be observed, he would not have said to the apostles, "I have still many things to say to you." "These words," replied Farel, "do not at all prove that Jesus authorised the apostles to make new ordinances or laws. On the contrary, he enjoined them to teach what they had heard from him. The commandments of Jesus are alone to be kept, and not those of ecclesiastical dignitaries, of whom no mention is made in Scripture, and through whom the corruption and even the annihilation of genuine Christianity has been effected. The monk, in amazement, now inquired whether Farel wished to do away with the church, the pope, and the councils, whose authority he deduced from the apostles and from the assemblies at Nice, Antioch, and Constantinople, in which heretics were overcome by the word of God. Attacks upon the church might, indeed, be expected at a time when so many prelates neglected their duties, and shunned the labours of the ministerial office. Farel now pointed out the difference

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between what assumed the title of the church, whose final argument was the executioner and the apostolic church, of which not a vestige was to be found in the Romish communion. "It was not so formerly," he said, "and ought not to be so now; but you arbitrarily subject princes to yourselves, instead of being subject to them. Nothing is more evidently without the sanction of the Holy Spirit than your various offices, benefices, dignities, and orders, of which the pope has a greater number than any monarch from the beginning of the world. The popish domination surpasses every other in its pride, pomp, and luxury. Such dignities and privileges have not been introduced by the meek, gentle, and gracious Spirit of Christ, but by the spirit of antichrist."

Farel then proceeds to describe more minutely the teachers of the primitive church, and as Fuerbity himself had referred to 1Tim. 3.2, he proved that the word of God was set aside by celibacy, and that the Romish church, deeply infected as it was with impurity and corruption, could not be under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The election of new syndics and some holidays that intervened, besides other occurrences, delayed the continuation of the discussion. When it was resumed, the Bernese deputies thought that enough had been said on that subject, and called upon the monk to speak on the prohibition against eating flesh. He at once acknowledged that he could not prove this point from Scripture. "This is keeping

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your promise admirably," said Farel, "that you would maintain before all the world, from Scripture, what you have been preaching, to your latest breath." Though the monk humbly apologized, the deputies would not be satisfied with anything short of a public recantation in the cathedral, and required that after that he should suffer banishment. But no sooner had he ascended the pulpit, than instead of uttering a recantation, he began to complain of injustice. He was again urged to recant; on his refusal, the people assaulted him, and he would in all probability have lost his life, had not the Bernese deputies interfered. He was then led to prison; but after all this, he would neither retract nor dispute any more. On Whitsunday the syndics laid before him certain propositions, and in the afternoon he was visited by Viret, Farel, and Dr. Caroli, who had been his divinity tutor. As soon as he saw the latter, and heard of his having left the Romish church, he almost fainted. They laboured for two hours to make an impression on his mind, but in vain. Two years elapsed before he obtained his liberty.

At the commencement of Lent, the provincial of the Franciscans sent Francis Coutelier, a member of that order, to edify the people during that season. The friar laid before the senate the subjects on which he intended to preach. He was enjoined to publish the pure gospel, and that he should not allude to the adoration of the Virgin, the invocation of saints, purgatory, and prayers for the dead. He

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promised faithfully to comply. But though less violent than Fuerbity, he did not abide by the prescribed regulations. The deputies who attended his sermons, desired that one of their ministers might be permitted to preach, promising that he should not attack the mass, nor image worship, nor any other peculiar tenet of popery. Besides other reasons for granting this, they represented how injurious it was to the Christian doctrine and to their own reputation, to have it generally understood, that they dared not appear in the churches, but propagated their doctrines in holes and corners. For up to now they had met for worship only at the inn. But, through fear of the government of Friburg, and of the bishop and clergy, this request was not granted, The senate pretended that ecclesiastical affairs did not fall within their province.

A few hours afterwards, a number of the citizens conducted Farel into a hall belonging to the Franciscans, and the bell was rung to announce the preaching of the word of God. It was the first evangelical discourse which had been delivered in Geneva without interruption. Everyone was astonished. The Bernese envoys declared that they had no hand in it, but were struck with wonder at the marks it bore of the Divine interposition. Their opponents expressed great dissatisfaction. They inquired who had given Farel permission to preach, and earnestly requested that he might not be so favoured again. To pacify them, the senate desired

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the Bernese deputies to take the preachers back with them when they returned; this, however, they declined doing, and shortly after they left the city.

The senate now attempted to hinder Farel from preaching; but neither he nor his friends were inclined to retrace their steps. On the contrary, he hotly attacked the Lent preacher in his discourses, and accused him to the senate of manifold errors and of seeking to injure the Bernese. The senate demanded a copy of the charges in writing; To moderate Farel's heat, they promised that they would not permit the honour of God or the character of their allies to be insulted with impunity. At the same time they begged him to bear in mind the critical state of the city.

The government of Friburg, dreading Farel's great influence and perseverance, reproached the Genevese most violently for tolerating his public labours. It was in vain that the senate pleaded the remonstrances they were constantly receiving from Berne, and the dangerous state of their affairs. The Friburgers were not to be so appeased, and annulled their alliance with Geneva.

This event hastened the reformation, and considerably increased the influence of Berne. At Whitsuntide Farel administered the Lord's Supper to a large number of communicants. A priest entered the assembly in full dress, threw off his robes before the table of the Lord, and to the astonishment of all present avowed himself a friend to the gospel.

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The newly collected congregation now worshipped in the same church as the Franciscans. Farel and his fellow labourers conducted the worship, and administered the sacraments.

The increase of the evangelical party, and the impetuous zeal of some of its members, roused the partizans of the church of Rome to fresh efforts. A plan was formed and approved by the bishop and other ecclesiastics, to surprise the city by night, expel the civil authorities, and extirpate the Lutheran heresy. By what means this plot was frustrated is not known. Recourse was next had to spiritual weapons. The pope and the bishop pronounced sentence of excommunication against the city and its allies. The Genevese in consequence broke off their connexion with the bishop, and a state of insecurity ensued in which constant watchfulness was necessary to protect them both from internal and external foes.

In March 1535,¹ a servant girl was suborned² by some catholic priests to remove the protestant ministers by mixing poison with their food. Farel, from illness or some other cause, happened not to dine that day. Fromont dined elsewhere, so that only Viret partook of the soup. He felt the effects of the poison immediately; though his life was saved, his health never entirely recovered from the shock it had received. The servant, on being charged with the crime, attempted to implicate several ecclesiastics.

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But as no sufficient evidence appeared to support the charge, she alone was condemned to death on the 14th of April. This and another still more atrocious attempt to poison the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper, excited general hatred against the priests. After happily escaping these

¹ V. Archives du Christianisme, Mai, 1827. p. 205.

² [Induced to commit perjury or give false testimony.](#)

dangers, the preachers were appointed to reside with the Franciscans, who gradually became more friendly. By daily intercourse, some of them were gained over to the reformed faith. Of these, the principal were the guardian, and James Bernard, whose brother Claudius was Farel's host. Another brother also, Lewis, who held an office in the cathedral, declared himself in favour of the reformation.

Bernard, the Franciscan, had been a zealous defender of popery, and had held many a hot debate with Farel on various points of doctrine. Becoming more thoughtful, he compared the disputed doctrines with Scripture, and gradually arrived at the conviction that the evangelical method was the sure way of salvation, and determined to abandon his own. Farel pointed out to him how little would be gained by this step if he did not, for his own justification and the good of others, publicly state the reasons for his conduct, and offer to answer the arguments of opponents. The Franciscan followed this advice. And thus Farel obtained what he had long wished for in vain, a public disputation with the general consent of the papists, to which the friars of Bernard's order, who were then holding an assembly at Grenoble, were invited.

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Eight commissioners were chosen from each side to conduct the discussion. Owing to an interdict from the bishop and the duke of Savoy, not many men of learning were present. It was carried on for nearly four weeks. The subjects discussed were redemption, good works, the mass, the church, the worship of images, tradition, free will, and the protection of the saints. Farel, Viret, and Fromont took turns with Bernard in defending the propositions. One of the opponents was Peter Caroli, a doctor of the Sorbonne, who had lately arrived at Geneva. From the first he gave indications of instability of character. Impelled by vanity, he was anxious to be chosen president; but Farel frustrated his wishes. Though he approved of the propositions against the mass, yet under the pretext of duly considering the subject, he defended it with all the arguments adduced by the Romish church. Some of the papists were so delighted with his advocacy of their cause, that they praised him to the canons, who gave him wine and urged him to further efforts. But having been completely refuted by Viret, he was reduced to such straits that he could only utter some vulgar exclamation of contempt.

This disputation appears to have had a very important and salutary influence. In consequence of the instruction derived from it, several priests and many of the laity joined the evangelical party. As soon as it was ended, Claudius Bernard, with many of the inhabitants, demanded the public acknowledgment of

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the reformation. But the senate withheld their assent from this measure, for fear of greater disturbances.

While the disputation lasted, Farel and his friends preached in the church of St. Germain, a parish where most of the inhabitants favoured their views. On his complying with a request to preach in the Magdalen church, the priest who was performing mass when he entered, hastily retired. The vicar complained of this unexpected visit, and the senate ordered Farel to confine his

preaching to the church of the Franciscans and St. Germain. A few days after, however, he appeared in the church of St. Gervais. When brought before the senate to answer for his disobedience, having first respectfully listened to their admonitions, he replied "that the reformation was a work of Divine Providence, and its completion could not be delayed without opposing the will of God, and that almost the whole city had declared in its favour." "Issue righteous commands," he said in a firm tone, "if you wish that the servants of God should render you willing obedience. Since the appearance of evangelical light in your city, the conviction must have been forced upon you that everything which does not have the sanction of the holy Scriptures must be separated from religion. Give God the glory and, as Christian magistrates, aid the victory of truth over error and falsehood; especially when you behold some of the most zealous defenders of popery compelled to acknowledge the truth of our religion, and do homage to it by their conversion."

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In conclusion, he beseeched the senate to assemble the council of two hundred, and to allow him to appear before them.

Though the senate still refused to withdraw their prohibition, Farel and his fellow-labourers thought that "they ought to obey God rather than man." In one day they preached both in the Magdalen and Dominican church. The following Sunday while the bell was ringing to assemble the congregation of the church of the Franciscans, a great multitude who were assembled at the cathedral, sent for Farel. Accordingly he preached there, and defended his conduct as on former occasions, and again desired to be heard in the presence of the great council.

The people with their leaders, having in some measure taken the work of reformation into their own hands, and greater commotions being apprehended, the senate at last assembled the council of two hundred. Farel, Viret, James Bernard, together with several other Franciscans and citizens, appeared before it. Farel began in a firm but moderate tone and, in a strain of natural eloquence, stimulated by the importance of his cause, made some observations on the late disputation. In reference to the leading topics, the mass, and image worship, he pointed out what strong evidence had been adduced that these practices were not founded on Scripture. He remarked that most of the priests shunned the disputation; that those who ventured to advocate popery had been unable to defend their dogmas, and

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that several of them had acknowledged that they were vanquished, and had adopted the reformed faith. He declared that neither he nor his colleagues wished those priests to be punished who could not receive his doctrine, but prayed fervently for their conversion. Impressed with the sublimity and sanctity of the Christian doctrine, purified from all superstition, he declared on behalf of himself and his brethren, "We are ready to seal the truth of the religion we preach with our blood. The most horrible death shall not deter us from maintaining this sacred cause." He called upon the council to declare themselves either for or against the doctrine he had preached, and concluded his address with a pathetic and fervent prayer that they might receive illumination from above, in a matter which involved the honour of God and the salvation of a whole people.

All present were deeply affected, and the subject was discussed in an earnest but peaceable and dignified manner. The majority decided on calling together the Romish clergy, to inform them of the result of the disputation, and to inquire whether they had any other arguments to bring forward in favour of their tenets. The monks confessed their ignorance, but the higher ecclesiastics answered in a tone of defiance, that they cared neither for the disputation nor for Farel, and would adhere to their ancient practices.

On that day much was done to liberate the Genevese from their spiritual chains. The mass was

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forbidden to be celebrated. Soon after, an edict was published which established the Reformation and abrogated Popery. Instead of the former sumptuous ritual, a simple form of worship was introduced. Those who still clung to their fetters and the ancient faith left the country.

The senate of Berne heard with joy of Farel's success, and exhorted their confederates who were now favoured with the light of truth, to live for the future in Christian and brotherly union. For then they might feel confident that the Lord would not forsake them in the greatest dangers. To the last period of his life, Farel praised the Divine Providence which had so wonderfully preserved the little flock in Geneva, though attacked by wolves within, and surrounded by foes without.

CHAPTER 14. FAREL CONFIRMS THE REFORMATION AT GENEVA - CALVIN'S ARRIVAL - DISPUTATION AT LAUSANNE.

THE Genevese were resolved to purchase, at any rate, civil and religious liberty; and after many an arduous conflict, their efforts were crowned with success. Farel called upon the great council to express their gratitude for the manifold interposition of Divine Providence. Both in public and in private he exhorted them all to unanimity, self-denial, and forgiveness of injuries, and aided the senate to the utmost in their efforts to suppress discord. Not satisfied with a general oath of reconciliation, he obtained a declaration on the part of the whole body of citizens of their adherence to the reformed faith, and utter renunciation of the Romish church.

His proposals for the improvement of the schools were readily agreed to. He considered the young as an important part of the church, and was very anxious to prevent their falling again into the hands of the monks. A daily service in the churches was now appointed, a becoming observance of the Lord's Day

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was established, and the ordinances of religion were attended to with the utmost simplicity. In the communion, Farel made use of common bread. He enjoined modest attire (particularly in the head-dresses) on those who were about to enter the marriage state. And he caused the laws framed against licentiousness to be strictly enforced. The first communion, on Easter day, was solemn and numerously attended, a proof that the friends of the reformation continued to increase daily.

In order to extend the reformation throughout the country, the senate sent for the village priests. In the presence of Farel and Francis Bonivard, they were informed that they must either prove the truth of popery from the holy Scriptures, or renounce it. The senior answered in the name of the rest, "Send teachers to instruct us on the points in which we may have erred, and if we are convinced of it, we will obey you." Farel thought he perceived a spirit of resistance in this reply, and asked, "Do you wish to oppose the word of God?" Bonivard judged more charitably and more correctly, and was of opinion that there would be less probability of their being trustworthy, if they too easily forsook their ancient faith.

The lack of suitable fellow-labourers was painfully felt by Farel. He found few who were duly qualified or sufficiently courageous. The immoral or conceited, or those who abandoned the exterior of their ancient priestly order, without renouncing its spirit, were objects

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of his decided aversion. Not being entirely satisfied with Reti, his colleague at Geneva, he sought to procure the assistance of Viret and Fabri, who had returned from Neufchatel. A special messenger was dispatched to solicit the consent of the synod. It was obtained, and Fabri, after incurring imminent danger, arrived at Geneva. Viret was induced, by the solicitations of the officers of a Lausanne regiment, to stay and preach the gospel in that place. Fabri, after assisting

Farel for a short time, removed to Thonon. Neither the war nor a change of masters prevented the monks in Thonon from indulging in the amusements of Lent. They acted the character of Farel in a farce got up by them for the occasion. The abbot Michael, of the ancient house of Blonay, personated the reformer. The secular priests, indignant that such a heretic should be brought on the stage, proposed to burn the author of the comedy in effigy. Upon this, the abbot went to Geneva, related the occurrence to Farel, and requested him to come to Thonon and preach there. His visit was attended with danger and proved of little use. He met with unexpected opposition from all classes. He recommended his young friend Fabri to exercise the greatest mildness in the prosecution of his work, and exhorted him not to be discouraged by any difficulties, however formidable. He advised Rudolf Nageli, the bailiff, to keep a strict eye upon the priests, and the magistrates to do their duty, and not to tolerate popery, either publicly or privately.

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Unexpectedly, Farel obtained an assistant, who alone was equivalent to many labourers. There arrived in Geneva, intending only to pass the night there, a young preacher who had already acquired the reputation of a learned man, and a friend to the evangelical doctrines; this was no other than John Calvin. His intention was to proceed to Basle and Strasburg for the purpose of devoting himself to study with his friends there. Farel, perceiving his great talents, and aware that such a man would be invaluable in Geneva, solicited him to remain and assist him in preaching. After many fruitless entreaties, he solemnly conjured him and said, "You have no other ground for refusing my request than your love for study; but I tell you in the name of Almighty God, that if you do not join me in the work of the ministry, God will punish you for preferring your own pleasure to the Lord's service." Overpowered by this appeal, and feeling as if seized by the Divine hand, Calvin could no longer refuse, and fixed his residence in Geneva as a teacher of theology and preacher.

Farel also met with an assistant in Corault, an Augustine, who came at Calvin's solicitation from Basle where he had fled for safety from persecution. He had been distinguished at Paris for his pulpit eloquence. Though afflicted with bodily blindness, he had been the instrument of spiritual illumination to many.

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Much about the same time, Farel's two brothers settled in the canton of Berne, that they might be able to profess the reformed faith without molestation.

Fabri had many a hard struggle to endure at Thonon. A Franciscan stranger preached there at the request of the Romish clergy, and pretended that he would defend his statements at the hazard of his life. Fabri proposed a public disputation. But when the monk saw that he was in earnest, he left the place with a promise that he would come again; but he never returned. Farel employed his influence with the senate of Berne to appoint a public disputation, and at last it was fixed that one should be held at Lausanne on the 1st of October. The elders of the church were invited and all the clergy. Nothing could show more strongly the necessity of instructing the common people than the ignorance of their teachers. For Farel could scarcely find one priest in the country who could recite the ten commandments perfectly; and on many occasions opposition was excited

merely by his repeating the Lord's Prayer and the twelve articles of the Christian Faith in the vernacular tongue.

Farel drew up ten propositions which were to be the subjects of debate at the disputation; they were as follow:

1. The Scripture knows no other justification than by faith in Christ, offered once for all. Whoever seeks the forgiveness of sins by any other way, offering, or purification, virtually denies the efficacy of this offering.

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2. The church acknowledges no other High Priest, Lord, Mediator, or Head of the church than Him who is risen from the dead, and exalted to the right hand of the Father.

3. There is no other church of God than that which receives its redemption alone through the death of the Lord; believes alone in his word, and relies stedfastly upon it – knowing that since his ascension, he fills, preserves, governs, and animates all by the power of his Spirit.

4. This church, the only one acknowledged by God, makes use of the ordinances appointed by Christ, baptism and the Lord's Supper, as the symbols or signs of invisible things of Divine grace.

5. It acknowledges no other ministers than those who administer the word and these sacred ordinances.

6. It acknowledges no other confession or absolution than that which is made to God, and received from Him who alone can forgive sins.

7. It adopts no other form of worship than that which is according to the word of God, and founded on the love of God and our neighbour; hence it rejects innumerable ceremonies, images, etc., which deform religion.

8. It acknowledges only a civil magistrate, appointed by God, necessary for the peace of the country, and to whom all are bound to be obedient as far as his commands are not contrary to the will of God.

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9. This church also teaches that marriage is ordained by God for all men, and is not opposed to the sanctity of any order or rank in life.

10. As it respects what are called indifferent things, such as meats, drinks, and holidays, the Christian is at liberty to observe them according to the rules of prudence and charity.

Neither the prohibition of the emperor, nor the apprehensions and entreaties of the clergy and other inhabitants of Lausanne, and other parishes in the Pays de Vaud, could alter the resolution of the senate of Berne. The disputation was held in the cathedral church, contrary to the will of the canons who, being unable to prevent this supposed desecration of the edifice, removed a highly venerated image of the Virgin Mary and those of the saints to a place of security.

Before the arrival of the deputation from Berne, Farel addressed the assembly and endeavoured to prepare them for a right consideration of the subjects of debate. He advised all present to pray that God would enlighten them and grant the victory to the truth; and to listen to both sides dispassionately; and to carefully to examine the arguments. He exhorted the priests as well as the preachers to pay a supreme regard to Jesus Christ, to be anxious, not for their own reputation, but for the welfare of their flocks. He aimed, by the most cogent arguments, to induce all who heard him to exert themselves for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

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And he depicted in vivid colours the inevitable misery of those who neglect the Saviour. After advising them to a temperate use of Christian liberty, and expressing his devout wishes for peace and unanimity, he urged them to seek out and console the poor and afflicted, to minister to their necessities, both spiritual and temporal. And (alluding to the popish doctrine) [he urged them] to make their pilgrimages to such saints as being the true images of God.

The next day Von Wattenwyl, the senior bailiff, and the other deputies arrived. The president and secretaries having been chosen, Farel opened the meeting and was followed by the bailiff who stated to the persons present the object of the disputation: namely, to allay the disturbances which had arisen in the country on account of religion. He administered an oath to the presidents, that they would hear both sides with impartiality, appease all strife, and allow the final appeal to be made to the Scriptures alone.

The two parties stood opposite each other. On the one side, Farel, Viret, Calvin, Caroli, Fabri, Marcourt, and le Comte; and on the other, the clergy of the cathedral, the Dominicans and Franciscans of Lausanne, the Augustines of Thonon, and the whole priesthood of the conquered districts. Farel and Viret took the most prominent part in the disputation. Calvin spoke but little, yet much to the purpose. Their principal opponent was Claude Blanchrose, a Frenchman, one of the king's physicians who had settled in Lausanne.

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Farel read the first proposition, with scriptural proofs and elucidations. When the opposite party were called upon to reply, the canons of Lausanne entered a tedious protest against the disputation, which they supported chiefly on the ground that the Scriptures recommend peace, whereas a disputation only engendered strife; that any particular church was subject to error; and, in short, that they were not at liberty to dispute, but must wait for a general council.

Farel answered these objections by arguments drawn from the Scriptures (which they had misquoted) and from the fathers of the church who (as he stated) were always ready to dispute

with heretics. He also animadverted¹ on the references they made to general councils. He furnished the canons with a copy of his reply, which was followed on their part by a second and third protest. A tedious dispute now arose upon faith and good works. Farel explained that faith in Christ is not an empty, inoperative notion, which permits the soul to remain in bondage to sin; but an active principle, productive of good works. The question was agitated whether good works precede or follow justification. The papists maintained the former, and represented the opposite opinion to be of a licentious tendency. On the part of the reformers, Farel asserted that, far from denying the necessity of good works, the reformers diligently inculcated them; but at the same time, he pointed out faith as their genuine source. "After having impressed a man,"

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he said, "with a sense of his sinfulness, we then say, 'God does not will your destruction, but your salvation.' He has given up his well-beloved Son to death for us. And therefore if you from the heart believe that he has suffered for you, and pray to God for pardon in his name, and forsake sin, he will forgive you. Such a doctrine can never lead to evil or ingratitude. On the contrary, it will inflame the heart with the love of God and our neighbour, and bring forth visible fruits in the outward life." Then, turning to the clergy of Lausanne, he animadverted pointedly on the lives of these strenuous defenders of good works, and showed that what they termed good works were mostly pilgrimages, masses, or absolutions.

The second proposition was brought forward by Viret, and as no one offered to oppose it, Farel explained at large those errors of the Romish church against which it was directed.

After Viret had defended the third proposition, Farel exposed the groundlessness of the doctrine of transubstantiation, and the great uncertainty, even to believers in it, whether the transmutation on any given occasion has been effected, since so much is made to depend on the ordination and intention of the priest, and the regular consecration of the wafer. In a lively and eloquent manner, he pointed out the evils arising from the mass. He exhorted the priests to study the Scriptures, and urged them to follow the example of St. Paul who, after his conversion,

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devoted his life to establish that faith which he once laboured to destroy. In reply to Mimard, a schoolmaster who tried to argue in favour of transubstantiation from the incomprehensibility of Divine mysteries, Farel said, "I do not wonder that it seems unfathomable to you, for it surpasses sense and reason that a body should be, and not be, at the same time. You have been led into this absurdity by the spirit of Marcion who attributed to Jesus the mere appearance of a body, and not by the Spirit of God." The reproach of arrogance cast by Mimard on the reformed ministers, Farel threw back on the teachers of the Romish church who, without the warrant of Scripture, under the pretext of Divine communications, had introduced a multitude of dogmas and observances, had invented purgatory, fixed the time and mode of penance for every sin, and elevated a poor sinner to be head of the church and a god upon earth. To the question, "Who are you that you should pretend to be wiser than the fathers and the church?" He replied, "We are poor sinners who believe that we have received forgiveness of sin and salvation through Christ.

¹ Express one's opinion openly and without fear or hesitation; it also means to censure, or be blunt.

We desire to live by the aid of his grace, according to his word, and long to induce others to do the same, being ready to lay down our lives for his gospel. But who are you who have other objects of worship besides God? Poor wretches who kneel before lifeless images without sense or feeling, servants of the Romish

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whore who has seduced the world, and made its princes drunk with the wine of her fornication. The reproach which you cast upon us, that we “stone” you, falls upon your priests and their adherents. They are audacious enough not only to stone us (as I have often experienced myself, and I pray God to forgive them as I do from the heart), but where they have an opportunity, to prepare fire and torture for those who do not act according to their pleasure. We are anxious for your salvation, that every one of you may know, trust, serve, and honour Jesus, and not do homage to a mere wafer, along with the holy rat which swallowed it, and which you have preserved here as a choice relic.” Farel then recounted the manifold abuses of the Romish church, and asked in what gospel they were to be found.

The argument was next taken up by Calvin, who explained so clearly their reasons for rejecting transubstantiation, and the real benefits attached to the Lord’s Supper, that the opposite party did not say a word in reply; and Tandi, a Franciscan, confessed before the whole assembly that he was overcome by the power of truth, and that henceforth he would believe the pure gospel, and regulate his life by it.

Viret defended the fourth proposition, the fifth, sixth, and seventh also, which passed without any opposition. In reference to the eighth,¹ Blanchrose, who had already complained of being deserted by the priests, repeated a variety of strange notions which

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he had before broached respecting the Trinity, a doctrine to which he pretended to find analogies in all the sciences.

After Viret had defended the proposition concerning the power and rights of the magistracy without opposition, Farel spoke of the injustice done to ministers of the gospel: by terming them antichrists; and treating them as men whose aim was to produce political changes; who first attempted to destroy the church in order to more easily dethrone princes. As a counterpart to their calumny, he represented the doctrine of the Romish church which withdraws every ecclesiastic from allegiance to the civil powers as soon as he has received ordination. So that if all the inhabitants of a country were to devote themselves to the church, the civil rulers would not have a single subject left. While, on the other hand, this doctrine excludes princes, being laymen, from interfering with the affairs of the church, which it devolves entirely on the priests, who are in subjection to the pope as their supreme head. Farel exhorted the magistracy to abolish popery, and to permit the preaching of the pure word of God. At the same time, he urged on the people the duty of thanking God for granting them pious rulers who were anxious to make them

¹ 8. It acknowledges only a civil magistrate, appointed by God, necessary for the peace of the country, and to whom all are bound to be obedient as far as his commands are not contrary to the will of God.

acquainted with the way of salvation. He then read the ninth proposition, relating to marriage and celibacy, and vindicated the honour of the former, from a consideration of its

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Author, its antiquity, and its uses. He described the pernicious effects of celibacy among the clergy. It was shown in the number of corrupted and ruined families, and in the multitudes of their illegitimate offspring, exposed in the streets, destitute and diseased, cursing their fathers and mothers, objects of universal disgust – of whom even more were to be found in Lausanne than in Geneva. He remarked how much the consciences of the canons must accuse them, since not one of them ventured to show his face at the debate on this proposition.

Viret read and explained the tenth proposition which Blanchrose combated on medical grounds, alleging that the season of Lent was peculiarly well-chosen, being a time when all nature is reawaking from a general torpor and, consequently, the human frame is more liable to inflammatory disorders. Farel, after considering fasting in various points of view, declared it, as practised in the Romish church, to be only a mockery and pretence since, though flesh was forbidden, much of the food allowed to be eaten was stimulating and difficult to digest. He remarked also that it was a striking circumstance that the command to fast proceeded from Rome, the seat of gluttony. He praised the goodness of God for creating such a variety of things for the sustenance of mankind, which they might enjoy with perfect liberty and thankfulness; and contrasted with this the tyranny of the popes who, by their despotic

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commands, robbed people of their Christian liberty, imposed greater burdens than were borne by the Jews, and drained their very life-blood.

On the afternoon of the seventh day, Farel made a long speech, in which he reviewed the propositions, and urged the assembly to reflect upon the truths they had heard, and receive them. More especially, he called on the clergy to renounce their errors, to study the holy Scriptures, and adopt them as their rule of faith and practice. He encouraged the more youthful among them who possessed the requisite abilities, to do their utmost in order to be qualified for the sacred office. He called upon the magistrate to extirpate popery and immorality in the newly conquered districts, and to promote true virtue and the dissemination of the Divine word. He contrasted the persecuting conduct of the priests with that of the ministers of the gospel. Alluding to a plot which had been laid, but was timely discovered, to assassinate the ministers on their journey to Lausanne, he said, “We do not thirst for blood, like those who laid in wait to destroy us on our way here. So far from seeking to punish them, we interceded on their behalf, and our only wish is that they may receive complete forgiveness.” The bailiff then dissolved the assembly, and desired them quietly to wait the result.

From the account we have of the disputation, it is evident that Farel took the lead in the debate. It was opened and closed by him, and there was scarcely

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a proposition on which he did not speak at the time it was discussed, or make remarks upon it at the close of the debate. Though unprepared for the protests and objections of the canons, he replied to them with great discretion, and opposed Scripture to Scripture, the fathers to the fathers, and the decrees of one council to those of another.

On this occasion, the ignorance of the priests was exposed, not less than their immorality. And it was attested by the excuses they made for their silence, and by the charges they brought against Farel and his associates, of arrogance and self-conceit, and lack of charity in exposing the faults of their opponents.

The disputation was not without considerable effect. Several of the principal persons on the popish side went home convinced of their errors, and became promoters of the reformation. Farel returned home with joy to Geneva, full of gratitude to God for having granted him this opportunity to make known the truth.

CHAPTER 15. CONFESSION OF GENEVA – THE ANABAPTISTS – CAROLI’S ACCUSATIONS.

THOUGH the reformation was now publicly introduced and adopted at Geneva, Farel was not satisfied till he had taken further measures for promoting unanimity in religion. He conceived that a general confession of faith would be advantageous. With a special reference to the state of the newly planted church, he drew up twenty-one articles, as simple and intelligible as possible, without subtleties or technical definitions, and founded solely on the Scriptures. They were in substance as follows:

“The word of God is the rule of faith. There is only one God, who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and in whom we must place our entire confidence: wise, powerful, righteous, gracious, and merciful, he is the sole Lord of conscience, and his will is the only standard of all good; hence we must be guided by his perfect laws alone.

“Man by nature has a darkened understanding and a corrupted heart, incapable of himself to truly

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know God, or to keep his commandments. Hence he is in dread of condemnation. But through Christ, in whom we find all we need, and of whom we believe everything contained in the general confession of the church, we are redeemed, reconciled to God, cleansed from sin by his death, regenerated by his Spirit, so that evil, mortified by his grace, no longer reigns in us, and our will is conformed to the Divine will, being delivered by him from the bondage of sin, and rendered capable of good works.

“Since man continues weak and imperfect till divested of his mortal body, and never attains to complete perfection, however great his progress may be, he always remains an object of the Divine mercy, and must seek his justification and peace from Christ alone, and not in himself or in his own works. We obtain all the benefits above mentioned, solely through the grace and mercy of God, without any worthiness or merits of our own, by faith, or by the assured conviction that our salvation comes from God alone through Christ our Mediator and Intercessor, who has given us free access to God, from whom every good gift comes down, and to whom alone we must return thanks with fervent and intelligible prayers.

“The sacraments appointed by Christ are designed to exercise as well as to strengthen our faith; to confirm the promises of God, and to be a public testimony of our belief. Baptism is an outward sign of our acceptance as the children of God and members of his Son, typifying our purification from sin,

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the mortification of the flesh by the death of Christ, so that we may live in him through his Spirit. The Lord’s Supper is a symbol by which he represents our true fellowship with him

under the form of bread and wine. It must be administered in the company of believers, agreeably to its original institution, and all who seek salvation through Christ must partake of it. Traditions are not the ordinances by which a church is to be governed. They are snares to the conscience and impose on believers what does not come from God, in order to introduce another form of worship and destroy Christian liberty.

“The Christian church exists wherever the gospel is purely and faithfully preached, heard, and practised, and the holy sacraments are duly administered, though human imperfection may be mingled.

“Since there will always be despisers of God and his word, excommunication is a holy and salutary regulation instituted by Jesus himself for the preservation of the good and the amendment of the bad. It extends to all who are known to be idolaters, blasphemers, murderers, robbers, unchaste, false witnesses, seditious, mischief-makers, calumniators,¹ fighters, drunkards, and spendthrifts, if they do not amend after being admonished.

“The teachers of the church are faithful ministers of God’s word, who feed the flock of Jesus Christ with it – that is, who teach, admonish, comfort, warn, and reprove, and who resist all false doctrine and delusions of Satan. They have no other power than to

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govern the people committed to their charge, by means of the word of God, without which they must not and dare not attempt anything.

“honor and obedience is due the civil authorities when commanding nothing contrary to God’s will, as well as intercession for them, and bearing the burdens they impose. All unfaithfulness towards them, as well as indifference to the public welfare, or the disturbance of it, is unfaithfulness towards God.”

This confession also contained some severe reflections on the traditions, the mass, and other corruptions of the Romish church, as the inventions of Satan. This confession was accepted by the great council, printed and published, and read every Sunday in the cathedral. After some time it was resolved that all the citizens should solemnly express their assent to it. This gave rise to fresh dissensions. Those who were still attached to popery in their hearts, the friends of the Anabaptists and the opposers of church discipline, were against the confession – to whom might be added the enemies of social order, from its decidedly asserting the duty to obey the civil powers. Many intrigues were formed, both against the church and the state. The Anabaptists were one source of confusion and disturbance. Farel was already acquainted with these people, and was aware of the artifices they employed against the reformers. They had spread a report concerning himself, that he had joined their party.

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¹ *Calumniator*: One who attacks the reputation of another by slander or libel.

Two Flemings, Herman de Liege and Andrew Benait, had prevailed on some members of the senate to adopt their tenets, by whose means they were introduced to the whole body. They submitted to them certain propositions which they offered to defend against the preachers. The senate was averse to a disputation in public, and wished it to be confined to the great council; but Farel and Calvin urged public disputation. It was accordingly held in the convent of the Franciscans, in the presence of the senate and a great multitude of people, and lasted several days. The Anabaptists were declared to be vanquished; but it was resolved for the future not to permit such controversies, from an apprehension that they would unsettle rather than confirm the newly established faith. The preachers also were forbidden to dispute with such persons. The Anabaptists having declared that they could not conscientiously retract their opinions, both they and their adherents were ordered to quit the city on pain of death; but no haste was shown to execute the sentence on the townspeople. A few years after, Herman de Liege sought another conference with Calvin in Strasburg. He confessed that in many points he had been mistaken, and he excited hopes of the complete abandonment of his errors.

A new opponent now entered the lists against Farel and Calvin: this was Peter Caroli, a man full of vanity, servility, fickleness, and hypocrisy, who for many years had been seeking to push himself into notice.

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He had lectured on the Scriptures in Paris, where Farel had known him and become aware of his immoral course of life. He became suspected by his colleagues in the Sorbonne as to the correctness of his sentiments, for which he was called to account. He endeavoured to evade the charge by recriminations, appeals, and protests; immediately after, he appeared in public, contrary to his promise. His doctrines (which were in part correct) were condemned as blasphemous, heretical, and borrowed from Luther, Wickliff, the Waldenses, and Bohemians. Expelled from Paris, it is supposed that he went to Meaux. He afterwards made his peace with the Sorbonne by a recantation. And when a minister at Alençon, he went from being an object of persecution, to himself becoming a persecutor. Soon after this, he ranked with Faber, Roupel, and Arand, as an advocate of evangelical principles. When persecution broke out afresh, he left the country and came to Geneva.

At some of the disputations he acted in a very ambiguous manner, sometimes pretending entire neutrality; at another time servilely applauding Farel and Viret's doctrines. But though he professed to concur with them in every point, and even called the adoration the most horrible idolatry, he refused to sign the resolutions passed at the meeting, alleging that it would put obstacles in the way of his return to France. In Basle, to which he went upon leaving Geneva, he acted a very disingenuous part, and asserted that he had refused to sign only

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so that Farel and Viret might not enjoy the triumph of having overcome him. When minister of Neufchatel, he went with Peter Guido to one of the convocations at Basle, and was present at the disputation at Lausanne, where he evidently sought to bring himself into notice. At Neufchatel he married into a family of respectability. At his earnest solicitation, the senate of Berne appointed

him minister of Lausanne. On account of his seniority and doctor's degree, they gave him precedence over the tried and meritorious Viret. Not content with this, he sought to exercise an authority over Viret and the clergy of the whole neighbourhood. But the Bernese, aware of his aspiring disposition, recommended him to pay deference to the advice and experience of Viret. He then endeavoured to gain his ends by secret intrigues. At first he aimed to prevent the entire abolition of popery. When that seemed impracticable, he attempted to injure the reputation of Farel and Viret in order to procure the rejection of their doctrine and discipline; and he affected a superiority over his countrymen, the French preachers. Yet Farel still evinced the utmost solicitude for his welfare: not content with his having renounced popery, [Farel] wished to see [Caroli] an altogether changed man. He remonstrated with him very seriously on his faults, and exhorted him to make the best reparation in his power for past errors, by zeal in the Lord's service and purity of heart. His efforts, however, seemed of little avail. For not long after, Caroli

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was again suspected of licentious conduct. On one occasion, when Viret was preaching on unchastity, he ran out of the church in a great rage, and cried out like a madman, "These people are always taunting and insulting me, but I will be revenged on them." Viret declared that he had not thought of him. Caroli, however, kept his word. And Farel in particular, who saw through his character, and warned his friends against him, was the special object of his resentment.

Caroli's first attack was made upon Viret. He took advantage of his absence on one occasion, to read from the pulpit a document in which he attempted to prove the necessity of prayers for the dead – declaring that, for the future, he would not be guided by the opinion of such a young man. Through the medium of his partizans, the affair was brought before the senate. When he found that his efforts against Viret were useless, he directed his malice against Fabri. During Caroli's absence, Farel came to Lausanne, but the senate of Berne, afraid he might increase the violence of party feeling, peremptorily enjoined him from all interference in the business, and to confine his attention to his own church. In haste, Calvin was sent for from Geneva. Commissioners also arrived from Berne, to whose arbitration the dispute was submitted. They condemned Caroli's doctrine and demanded a recantation; but upon humbly imploring their forbearance, and at Calvin's intercession, this was dispensed with.

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The affair was now supposed to be ended, when all at once Caroli, with much emotion, said that the glory of God and of Christ, the advancement of true religion, the unity of the church, and the public peace, as well as the necessity of disburdening his own conscience, called upon him to divulge a fact which had long lain heavily on his heart, namely, that several preachers, both at Lausanne and Geneva, were infected with Arianism.¹ Without offering any evidence to substantiate the charge, he accused all the preachers of Geneva, together with Viret, Fabri, and other estimable men. Everyone was struck with astonishment. Calvin stated that only a few days before, Caroli had invited him to dinner and treated him as a dearly beloved brother; he had also commissioned him to present his salutations to Farel, without saying a word to disparage him or others whom he had that day accused of heresy. Calvin stated that he must have been influenced

¹ [Arianism rejects the Trinity, denies Christ's divinity, and thus asserts the supremacy of the Father over the Son.](#)

by far different motives from those which he alleged, or he would not have so long delayed bringing forward his accusations, nor have partaken of the sacrament with such suspicious colleagues." "But," added Calvin, "if your zeal for orthodoxy is really so great, I beg that you tell me how you have ascertained that I am infected with heresy? I have given the world the clearest proofs of my orthodoxy, and have shown that no one maintains the Divinity of Christ more firmly than myself. Everyone is acquainted with my works, and I have the satisfaction of knowing that all the orthodox churches approve of my doctrine.

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But what proofs have you given of your faith? Is it your resorting to taverns or suspicious corners? Tell me, what reason have you to accuse me of Arianism? I will clear myself from so infamous a charge, and not allow my character to be so vilified." Overawed by Calvin's manly appeal, Caroli at once changed his tone, and spoke in the highest terms of him, but repeated his charge against Farel. Calvin defended his friend, and quoted a passage from his own Catechism, which had been introduced into Geneva under Farel's sanction. Viret demanded a retraction, to which Caroli consented. But in order to give their absent brethren an opportunity to exculpate themselves, they required that a synod should be convened at Lausanne.

The synod met on the 14th of May. More than a hundred ministers belonging to the canton of Berne attended, and about twenty from Neufchatel. Caroli had fled at first to Neufchatel, but took courage and returned. Megander, who was sent with the deputation from Berne, opened the synod, stated the occasion of its being called, and the charge made against the ministers by Caroli.

Viret was called upon first to speak. Without using the word "Trinity," he expressed his belief in these words, "We confess that the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with the Father, are the true and eternal God." The deputies committed this confession to writing, but Caroli was not satisfied with it, and called it brief, obscure, and cold. He repeated the

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Nicene and Athanasian creeds, with singular gesticulations, which excited the laughter of the whole assembly – and making a sudden pause, he accused several other preachers. Claudius of Savoy, whom he had charged with Arianism, declared his entire disavowal of it. No proofs could be found against others who were accused.

The Genevese preachers observed a profound silence till the close. Calvin then rose, and accused Caroli of troubling the church from blameworthy motives, and of casting reflections on innocent and highly deserving men. To justify himself and his colleagues, he presented a full confession of their belief, with a direct disavowal of the sentiments falsely imputed to them.

Caroli objected to about ten phrases, and also remarked that the confession contained neither the word "Trinity," nor "person;" while on the other hand, in some points it was hyper-orthodox. After Calvin had given some further explanation of their views, Caroli required that the Genevese preachers should sign the three most ancient creeds, as a proof of their orthodoxy. This

they refused to do, that they might not by their example introduce such tyranny into the church, as that an individual should be exposed to the charge of heresy only for refusing to use the words or to speak according to the pleasure of another.

Caroli then repeated the words of Athanasius, "This is the catholic faith which, unless a man

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believes, he cannot be saved;" and added that no man could be a Christian who rejected this creed. Calvin exposed the nullity of his assertion, and charged him with not having this faith himself, since he had not received the fourth article of the Athanasian Creed.

The synod unanimously pronounced the confession of the Genevese preachers to be orthodox, and that Caroli was a calumniator, unworthy of the ministerial office. He appealed to the council of Berne, which referred the matter to a synod which was to be held there at the end of the month. At that time Caroli appeared and made his charge against Farel, Calvin, and Viret, with much effrontery, but with little regard to truth. Their vindication was declared by the whole assembly to be complete. When they were interrogated respecting Caroli's fitness for the pastoral office, he was alarmed, and objected to evidence being received against him from persons whom he had just accused. But as the synod persisted in pressing their interrogatories, he at length allowed that he had been guilty of some irregularities. Here Farel interrupted him, and gave a long catalogue of his misdemeanors. Among other things, [Farel] charged him with being an accessory to the death of two youths who had broken some images, and whom [Caroli] had watched till an opportunity offered itself to deliver the youths up to judges who were noted for the severity of their punishments.

The synod then called upon Viret to give an account of the dispute respecting prayers for the

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dead. He presented a written narrative of the circumstances, and refilled the eight reasons alleged in favour of that practice by Caroli.

At the close of the synod, the senate pronounced the Genevese preachers and their friends innocent, and banished Caroli for calumny and immorality; but on his exhibiting a more submissive temper, they referred the final decision to an ecclesiastical court. Caroli then brought forward fresh insinuations, more particularly against Farel, probably because in the Genevese Confession the Trinity was not mentioned, and Farel was the most disinclined to make use of terms not expressly sanctioned by Scripture.

The Genevese preachers, in reply to this new attack, said that it did not become a man to make objections, and lay down the law for others, who had been condemned twice by the church, and once by the senate. On his refusing to make the acknowledgments that were decreed by the ecclesiastical court, [Caroli] was consigned to the civic authorities, and ordered by the bailiff not to go beyond the bounds of the city. Early the next morning, however, he made his escape to Solothurn, where he attended the service of the mass, and reviled the reformed mode of worship.

He wrote to the senate of Lausanne, thanking God that he had been honourably delivered from a vile faction whom he abhorred; that as the controversy concerning the fundamental articles of the

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Christian faith was not yet ended, if God would afford him courage and strength, as he had done up to now, he would continue to combat the enemies of the most holy and undivided Trinity, as well as advocate the mass, and prayers for the dead. After this, he went to Rome with recommendations from Cardinal Tournon, and presented a memorial to the Pope, in which he avowed his detestation of the irregular practices of the new sect, and of the pernicious doctrines held by their teachers who had revived the ancient heresies; he also denounced Farel as the chief of all heretics. Boasting that he had been victorious over his opponents, he beseeched the Pope that he might again be received into the Romish church, that his concubinage (so he termed his marriage) might be annulled, and that he might be restored to his rank as Doctor, with power to exercise the clerical functions and hold benefices. His request was complied with; the Pope granted him a letter of absolution. Notwithstanding that his conduct had been so immoral, he still found patrons; for he was as expert in nattering¹ others as in defending himself. In Berne he excited a distrust of the people of Valois. For lack of better information, Myconius also entertained unjust suspicions of the Genevese ministers. Therefore they sent to Zurich an account of the whole affair which had excited great attention in Switzerland and Germany. Afterwards they transmitted, through their friend Grynoeus,

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“An Apology in the matter of Caroli, against those who patronise him,” with their confession respecting the Trinity, and a declaration that they had no special objection against the use of ecclesiastical terms relative to that doctrine, though Farel continued to deem them unscriptural and unimportant. Myconius and the people of Berne had been much displeased that these terms had not been employed in Caroli’s affair. The senate, therefore, took occasion to reprove Farel for refusing to employ the language of the catholic church. In order to give their opponents no pretext either for persecution, or for the rejection of the reformed doctrine, the senate felt anxious that not only their sentiments but their words should be orthodox.

When Capito and Bucer came to Berne to justify themselves from the charge of having acted insincerely in the affair of the Concordat with Luther, the complaint against Farel and Calvin for their disuse of ecclesiastical terms was again discussed. With respect to Calvin, the accusation was very ill-founded, since he had not only made use of them in his Institutes, but maintained their necessity. At the same time, both he and the Strasburg divines were of opinion that if any person was reluctant to use these terms, provided he rejected them neither from malice nor obstinacy, he ought to be tolerated, and not be excluded as heterodox.

At length it was agreed, that the words Trinity

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¹ *Nattering*: talking socially without saying much.

and Person should be regarded as suitable for designating and defending the doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but that no one should be expelled from the church simply because he did not make use of them; nor, on the other hand, should the clergy of Berne be reproached if they refused to admit to the ministry persons who rejected these terms.

It was a great advantage to Farel and his friends that on all these occasions, Calvin, to whom no suspicion could reasonably attach, stood forward and undertook their defence. The clergy of Berne, however, were not so anxious to enforce the use of the established phraseology respecting the Trinity, as they were that Bucer and Capito should make it apparent that they agreed with their Swiss brethren on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. As the clergy of Berne strongly disapproved of the terms "essentially," "bodily," "fleshly," and "supernaturally," they were omitted, or less objectionable words substituted. The mystery of the communion of the Lord's Supper is termed, indeed, unspeakable, and a participation of the body and blood is mentioned. But the confession, in which all bodily presence is carefully excluded, concludes thus: "the spiritual participation, or the spirit, is the bond of our fellowship with him." The Strasburg divines who up to now had been accustomed to dictate to others, signed this confession after rejecting the expression of a

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"mere commemoration," and speaking of a real communion of the body and blood of Christ. The clergy of Berne were satisfied with this subscription.

The ministers of Zurich were much *dissatisfied* that their brethren at Strasburg should be invited to Berne in order to sign new confessions of faith. In their apprehension, the truth was obscured and its progress retarded by the conduct of the Bernese clergy, and particularly by their refusal to admit any to the pastoral office on account of unscriptural terms. Consequently they came into closer union with the ministers of Geneva, of whose confession they cordially approved.

Farel laid to heart these disputes so much, even when they first arose, that Calvin dreaded the effect upon his health; he sent for Viret to tranquillize him. "Our adversaries," he said, "now have a fair handle against us, since we also have our popes, bishops, abbots, and priors."

Meanwhile Farel's reputation increased, both in his own neighbourhood and in foreign parts. Even Englishmen travelled as far as Geneva for the purpose of becoming acquainted with him and Calvin. His enemy Caroli still tried, however, to fasten the charge of Arianism upon him, for which purpose he referred to a little work published by Farel called "A Summary of Christian Doctrine," which chiefly touched on the points at issue between the reformers

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and the papists, and of course said little on the doctrine of the Trinity. To repel Caroli's misstatements, Farel prepared a new and enlarged edition, with an appendix containing the reasons for its republication. He expressed his desire to present to his readers the pure doctrine of Jesus Christ, and to make the Scriptures the standard by which all religious opinions should be tried.

CHAPTER 16. DISTURBANCES ON ACCOUNT OF THE CONFESSION – EXPULSION OF THE PREACHERS – ATTEMPTS FOR THEIR RECALL.

THE ritual and discipline of the reformed church in Geneva had been arranged by Farel and Viret before Calvin's arrival; nor does it appear that [Calvin] had any share in preparing the confession, with the exception of the article on excommunication, a point which he considered of the first importance, and essential to the well-being of the church.

However much the religious and political parties in Geneva differed from one another, they were unanimous in opposing the new regulations as an infringement on their former liberty. Those who were still attached to popery in their hearts, refused to send their children to the protestant schools. And persons disposed to embrace the sentiments of the anabaptists (one of which was the unlawfulness of all oaths), scrupled to give the solemn pledge which the confession required. To the majority, the article on excommunication gave great offence; while many felt

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aggrieved at the insertion of the ten commandments, which they said it was impossible to observe. On the other hand, from an earnest desire to check the prevailing depravity of manners and to promote unanimity, the preachers urged the administration of the oath. Calvin even threatened to leave the city unless some additional regulations were made for dividing it into parishes, and appointing elders. Without these, he thought, the strict supervision which ought to be maintained by those who assumed the office not merely of preachers, but of pastors, would be impracticable.

By the command of the senate, the inhabitants assembled in the cathedral. After a sermon by Farel, in which he exhorted them to live in the unity of the faith, the confession was read and the syndics administered the oath. Many of the more respectable class, however, absented themselves on this occasion, and decidedly refused to adopt the confession. They were ordered, in consequence, to quit the city. But so great were their numbers and their influence that they could safely disobey.

To fortify themselves against the powerful opposition they encountered, Farel and Calvin sent the confession to Berne, where it was examined and approved. They also obtained a deputation from that state for the purpose of exhorting the Genevese to peace and concord, and to impress upon them the inestimable value of the religious and civil freedom which they now enjoyed. This mission, however.

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produced little effect; for the opponents of the Reformation were at that time so much in favour with the people, that they chose the new syndics from their party.

But the preachers were not only harassed by their avowed enemies; they were brought into painful collision with their brethren in the faith. Since the Genevese kept only Sunday [as a holy day], a difference arose between them and the Bernese respecting the celebration of certain feast days (Christmas, New Year's day, the Annunciation, and the Ascension). The use of unleavened bread at the Lord's Supper, the baptismal font, and the head-dresses of brides in adherence to the letter of Scripture (1Pet. 3.3),¹ were disapproved of by the Genevese preachers. The Bernese wished to establish a uniformity of rites in order to repel the charge of lack of unity which was brought against the Evangelical church. As they considered the Genevese to be under obligations to them for the introduction of the reformation, they expected them to conform to their standard of discipline.

A synod was convened at Lausanne for the purpose of settling this difference. The Bernese appointed as a deputation to attend this meeting, two members of the great council, John Huber, and John Louis Ammon, together with Peter Conz and Erasmus Ritter. The synod unanimously adopted the usages of the church of Berne. But Farel and Calvin, who had consulted with the divines of Basle and Strasburg on the subject, would not submit to its

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decision. They conversed amicably with the Bernese deputies and ministers, and agreed with them on most points, except the feast days. As they wished to practise compliance with the wishes of others as far as was compatible with their own Christian liberty, and saw no evil likely to arise from not coming immediately to a decision, they proposed to lay the matter before the synod of Zurich. This proposal, however, was rejected, and they received a communication from the senate of Berne, and another from the ministers, urging them for the sake of peace and unanimity, to adopt the decision of the synod of Lausanne. In reply, the preachers complained of being so pressed, and of not being allowed to take the opinion of other churches. The council of Geneva, on the contrary, determined to accede to their wishes in order to gain the favour of the Bernese. The dissensions in that city now became greater than ever. The strictness of the preachers in matters of minor importance, and their enforcement of the laws which affected the dissolute among the higher classes, served to increase the general odium against them. It was said that they aimed at erecting a new system of popery and tyranny over the church. Meanwhile the observance of the statutes of the Reformation was less and less regarded, and doubts were cast upon their authority by the very persons who ought to have upheld it. The senate prohibited the ministers from preaching unless they would administer the sacrament in the same manner as the Bernese.

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At Easter, however, the ministers declared that they could not conscientiously administer the sacrament at all in a city where so much evil abounded. But in defiance of the prohibition, Calvin preached in the cathedral, and Farel preached in the church of St. Gervaise. The next day, without being heard in their own defence, they were ordered to leave the city within three days for refusing to obey the senate. "Well," they said, "it is better to obey God rather than man!" Calvin, who had discharged his ministerial duties without receiving any remuneration added, "If

¹ **1 Peter 3:3** "Do not let your adornment be outward-- arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on apparel --"

I had been the servant of men, I should have been ill-rewarded; but I rejoice in serving a Master who never fails to give his servants the recompense that he has promised!" "The sufferings occasioned by our own people," Farel remarked, "are indeed painful; but God has a right to impose upon those who are his whatever cross he pleases, according to his wisdom; and it is our duty to willingly bear whatever he sends us."

They were not, however, left destitute of encouragement and consolation in this season of trial. Grynoeus, whom they had informed of their troubles, wrote to them as follows: "It is not your own cause you are maintaining, but that of Christ, the King of kings. He has his eye upon you who are his servants, and also observes Satan, who is raging against you. The power of God's Spirit must be manifested through you, and the craft of Satan must be exposed. However the storm may gather around you,

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a firm adherence to the word of God, with a stedfast and confiding heart, will be your help and defence. Daily ascend the pulpit as is your habit, firmly trusting in the Lord, and speak from the heart in the fulness of faith and love. I clearly see that your senate is not sincere, and that the protection of Bernes is doubtful; but the Lord lives. The word of God never manifests its power more mightily than when Satan rages."

On leaving Geneva, Farel and Calvin proceeded to Berne, and gave an account to the senate of the circumstances attending their expulsion. Their statement was listened to with indignation and sorrow. The senate lost no time in expostulating with the Genevese. They urged them to set Corault at liberty, and to receive again the excellent teachers whom they had dismissed. They were also assured that the uniformity of rites and discipline which they desired to adopt, was proposed for their own advantage, and not from a wish to impose on their consciences in matters of indifference. The answer was such as might be expected from those who were hurried away by their passions, instead of being guided by reason.

The two friends now departed for Zurich where envoys from the districts which had embraced the Reformation were assembled, with Bucer and Capito. They represented to their brethren the distracted state of the church at Geneva, the destitute condition of the sincerely pious, and the imminent danger of the entire overthrow of the whole fabric on which they had bestowed

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so much labour. Though they felt that they were the victims of an unjust persecution, yet they were ready to acknowledge that, from inexperience and mistaken views, they had erred in doing or leaving undone many things. They allowed that they had perhaps been too strict on some points, and expressed their willingness to receive further instructions. They made no objection to the baptismal font, but only wished that the ceremonies in use up to now should be continued. They also were ready to admit the change in the sacramental bread, although they foresaw that difficulties would arise if the clergy of Berne persisted in their mode of "breaking bread." With respect to holidays, they were willing to yield, provided their observance was not rendered compulsory, and that the people were allowed to work after Divine service. The assembly agreed

with them in judging that the constrained introduction of festivals was contrary to the confession of Basle, and to the principles of Christian liberty. With respect to their restoration to office, Farel and Calvin declared that, because they had been condemned unheard, they wished to be examined before their opponents in order to justify themselves to the world, and so that it might not be said that their restoration was merely an act of indulgence. In reference to church discipline, the points which they deemed the most necessary were the division of the city into parishes in order to render the connexion between the pastors and their flocks more intimate; the appointment of a sufficient

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number of preachers and elders; greater regularity in the appointment to the sacred office; and that the senate should abstain from the "laying on of hands" which belonged to the ministry alone; the more frequent administration of the sacrament; the singing of psalms; and lastly, the enforcement of excommunication when necessary, according to the mode already prescribed and adopted.

The assembly acknowledged the importance of these points, and allowed that Farel and Calvin were not obstinately striving about matters of indifference, but that their hearts were set on the promotion of objects truly Christian and important. While they promised their support, they enforced at the same time, the duty of moderation and Christian meekness. Letters were written to Geneva to effect their recall, and the improvement of the church. The senate of Berne was requested to send a deputation there who would undertake the defence of the exiled preachers, attempt their reinstatement, and settle everything in an amicable manner.

Farel and Calvin now returned to Berne, resolved to meet whatever trials might await them with patience and meekness. Bullinger requested Von Wattenwyl, the provost, to assist them. "Although they manifest too ardent a zeal," he said, "yet they are pious and learned men who have a claim on our candour and forbearance." When they appeared before the Bernese ministers, they were treated with great rudeness and severity by Conz. He charged

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them with throwing all the churches of Germany into confusion by their hesitation respecting the sacramental bread; nor would he listen to any explanations they could offer. To appease his anger, they mentioned their concession in reference to holidays. But here his anger broke out into a fresh paroxysm, and he reproached them with reserve and craftiness. They appealed to the sincerity and openness with which they had given their conditional assent to this point. After fresh reproaches, he accused them of duplicity in such unmeasured terms that Erasmus Hitter and the other envoys who were present at the synod of Lausanne, charged him with falsehood, and offered to procure satisfaction for the preachers from the great council should they require it.

This scene made so powerful an impression on Farel's mind that as long as he lived he could never recur to it without horror. A few days after, he and his companion were summoned before the senate, and thrice in one hour they were called upon to surrender the disputed points. They maintained that it belonged to the church to adopt the plan of uniformity; nor would they alter

their resolution, preferring to suffer anything rather than yield to the intrigues of a corrupt faction.

Viret had been already dispatched to Geneva to exhort the people to act as became Christians; but the senate now resolved that two envoys should accompany the preachers to the neighbourhood of Geneva, enter the city without them, make preparations

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for their being received again, and then introduce and reinstate them in their office. On objecting that this would have too much the appearance of being restored by favour, and expressing a wish that one of the Bernese ministers should accompany the deputation, the senate resolved that they should be conducted directly into the city; that a time and place should be appointed for justifying their conduct, and that if no charge were brought home to them, they should then resume the station they occupied before. The envoys were also commissioned to lay before the people the articles drawn up at Zurich, in the presence of Farel and Calvin, who would thus be able to remove any doubts and objections that might be started against them.

A league from Geneva, they were met by a messenger who forbid the preachers from entering within its walls. Relying on the goodness of their cause, they would still have proceeded had not the deputation held them back, and thus happily preserved them from persons who lay in wait for them near the city. The gates were guarded as if to keep out a hostile force. The great council informed the deputation that they must bring the matter before the people. Louis Ammon and Viret addressed them in an eloquent manner, and represented the injustice of expelling such deserving individuals, and of refusing to hear them in their own defence. They urged their recall, and reminded the assembly of what Farel had already done and suffered for Geneva. They

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appeared to make a strong impression, and left the meeting with hopes of a favourable result. But no sooner had they departed than one of the syndics drew forth the Zurich articles from his pocket and read them aloud, with comments and insinuations that rendered them offensive to all the people.

The banishment of the preachers was then confirmed almost unanimously. Such was the agitation of the assembly that when some proposed to hear their defence, others drew their swords as if they would have killed them on the spot.

Thus was the plan of the senate of Berne aborted. Indeed, before the deputation arrived, Peter Vandel, one of the heads of the party disaffected to the reformation, boasted that he had the sentence of the preachers in his pocket. Conz had furnished him with a copy of the articles, and thus showed that he retained the same feelings of resentment and dislike which he had exhibited on former occasions. Very different was the spirit manifested by Grynaeus, who would gladly have seen them reinstated in their office; he called upon them to look in this affair to Christ alone, and to forget themselves. They were prepared to comply with this advice, for their anxiety was far greater for the welfare of the church than for their own personal comfort. It was their

conviction that what had been done against them in the name of the city, had emanated from a few; this increased their tender solicitude for the congregations over which they had presided.

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They were invited to remain at Berne, and gave offence to some persons by their refusal. It seemed best, however, to direct their course to Basle where their friends awaited them.

CHAPTER 17. FAREL'S CALL TO NEUFCHATEL – STATE OF THE CHURCH IN THAT CITY – CAROLI'S RETURN – CALVIN'S RECALL TO GENEVA.

ON their arrival at Basle, Farel and Calvin were received with much sympathy and kindness, particularly by Grynseus. They resolved to remain there till Providence indicated to what part they should direct their steps. Tossanus wished them to return to Lausanne or some other part of the canton of Berne. Others desired to recommend them to George Duke of Würtemberg. But while they were in this state of uncertainty, Farel received an unexpected call. The persecution he had endured revived in the hearts of the people of Neufchatel their former attachment to him. They called to lively recollection their having received from him the elements of the Christian faith. After fervent prayer to God, the senate and the council of sixty communicated their unanimous wish to the committee of ministers, that Farel might receive a call to the pastoral office among them. They agreed, and two of

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the senators, with two of the ministers, travelled to Basle in order to invite him. At first he was decidedly averse to the proposal. He would have preferred devoting himself to private study; and he was aware of the almost insurmountable difficulties that would attend the discharge of the pastoral office, especially in reference to ecclesiastical discipline which had been almost totally neglected. Indeed, of so much importance did he consider this branch of ministerial duty, that it was not till after the strongest assurances that he should not be hindered in establishing it, that he at length yielded to the entreaties of his friends, and the neighbouring churches. Having once made up his mind, he set off for Neufchatel with his usual promptitude, after spending rather more than seven weeks at Basle. Soon after his departure, his sister's son died there of the plague; he was visited and comforted in his last hours by Calvin.

Farel found Neufchatel in some respects altered since his former residence in it. The reformation had spread through the whole of the adjacent country with the exception of a few villages. The popish clergy had retired, and their opposition, if not 'less virulent, had for the most part ceased to be formidable. The vicar of Boudry, a native of the district, who at first adopted but afterwards deserted the reformed faith, was the most persevering in his efforts against it. Assisted by Voga, the mayor, he collected an armed body of men who attacked Fabri

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and his hearers from Gratte and Bole during the sermon. By agreement, the evangelical party had occupied the church at Pontareuse, but they were hindered by the priests at Christmas, and afterwards they were assaulted in the church. By the interference of the Bernese, the people were relieved from direct acts of violence, and the priest confined himself to verbal warfare, attacking at one time the evangelical doctrines, and at another the preachers.

It was with difficulty that the preachers obtained even a scanty maintenance, since the reigning prince had taken possession of the church revenues. From the synod of ministers instituted by Farel, a committee was formed which, in the third year of the reformation, framed a set of regulations respecting baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the marriage ceremony. They also gave directions for the mode of preaching, drew up a Liturgy, ordered the visitation of the sick, and recommended the use of baptismal and marriage registers. The Bible was disseminated in the vernacular tongue by means of an edition published at Neufchatel.

Such was the state of Neufchatel when Farel returned there. Many beneficial changes had been effected and a foundation laid, but "a wise master builder" was required to carry on and complete the edifice, and to prevent unauthorised persons from employing inferior materials upon it. The governor, it is true, had a short time before embraced the principles of the reformation, but he still retained his personal dislike of Farel.

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On arriving at Neufchatel, he made it one of his first objects to visit Corault, formerly his companion in affliction. He had been liberated from prison, and had obtained a place of refuge, first with Fabri at Thonon, and subsequently at Orbe. Farel accordingly went to Orbe; but on entering the town, he perceived the inhabitants in mourning, and found that they had just been carrying to the grave the remains of his pious fellow-labourer. From Lausanne, where he was present at Viret's marriage, he travelled to Thonon, and heard from some of the Genevese there lamentable accounts of the confusion that prevailed in their city.

Some of the ablest ministers had been removed from Neufchatel by the senate of Berne, into their new territories; so that Farel saw few around him whose lives corresponded with the proper model of a Christian minister. In some of the churches the old priests still consumed the revenues and corrupted the people by their bad example. In other cases, unworthy persons insinuated themselves, such as a Frenchman in St. Aubin by the name of Alexander. Without the knowledge of the committee, he was accepted by the patrons of the benefice; but he was finally expelled both from his office and church communion. The church was also disturbed by Basil, a Neapolitan sent from Romelia, it was supposed, to foment intrigues; and Michael, from France, who was an apostate like Caroli.

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The profanation of the sacred office, and the neglect of pastoral attentions to the sick, the poor, the ignorant, and the young, which Farel witnessed in too many instances, disheartened and almost overpowered him. He communicated his distress to his friend Calvin who, in reply, observed, "Wherever you turn your eyes, you will find innumerable causes of lamentation. For myself, I see no end of them, and I should lose my courage if the thought did not support me, that whatever may happen, the work of the Lord must not be abandoned; and along with so much that is evil, the Lord always grants something that gladdens our hearts."

In the midst of these perplexing circumstances, Farel was astonished to hear that Caroli had again made his appearance at Neustadt! Not having obtained what he sought from Cardinal de

Tournon and the Pope, he professed he desired to return to that evangelical church which he had so vilified at Rome. Uncertain of Caroli's intentions, and anxious for the tranquillity of the church, Farel hastened to Neustadt. He was accompanied by Dean Barbarin, his colleague Chaponneau, and two envoys from the council, besides some other preachers. Viret and Zebeden joined them there. It was his determination to return good for evil, to "heap coals of fire on the head" of his enemy, and if possible to cure the wretched instability of his religious character.

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In the presence of Peter Cleresse and some of the counsellors of Neustadt, the preachers recounted to Caroli all that he had done against them, his unjust accusations, his flight and apostacy, and the subsequent calumnies against the gospel and its teachers which he had uttered at Rome, as well as the shameless language which he had used respecting his marriage. Besides this, they called upon him to frankly and unreservedly tell them if he had any objection to make to their doctrine. Caroli made professions of the deepest penitence, bore testimony to the orthodoxy of the preachers, declared his rejection of purgatory and intercession for the dead, and termed the mass a denial of the only sacrifice of Jesus Christ. As to forsaking his wife, he confessed that his conscience had severely reproached him, but that he had manifested his attachment by sending her a considerable sum of money. He excused many of his speeches and actions as having been done for the sake of being at peace with those among whom he resided. The severe reflections on his former associates contained in his petition to the pope, he ascribed to the pen of the bishop's official at Lyons. He took credit to himself, however, for having preached the evangelical doctrines as often as circumstances permitted, before the chancellor of France and several cardinals. He also spoke somewhat ostentatiously of the consolation he had afforded many who had been imprisoned on account of their faith, and of the persecutions which he himself had endured.

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After this explanation, and on his earnestly requesting forgiveness, and so that his past errors might be buried in oblivion, the preachers who were present gave him the right hand of fellowship. They promised to use their influence on his behalf with the neighbouring churches, particularly those to whom his former conduct had been most offensive. When the subject of Caroli's restoration to their communion was brought before the committee of ministers, there was considerable diversity of opinion. By some he was looked upon as a worthless individual on whom all forbearance and kindness would be misapplied. Others, and particularly Farel, were more leniently disposed, and conceived that they were acting agreeably to the commands of Christ in striving to bring this wandering sheep back again to the fold. The senate of Berne, however, interposed their authority and called him to account for having clandestinely left the country, and for the calumnious language he had used respecting them to the pope. Here again Farel endeavoured to act as a peace-maker. While he solicited the senate to pardon the delinquent, he urged Caroli to make the fullest acknowledgment of his offences. A general distrust of Caroli, nevertheless, appeared to pervade the reformed churches. He made several fruitless attempts to be restored to the ministerial office among them, the last of which he addressed to Farel and Calvin from Metz. But when this, like the preceding negotiations, had failed, he justified the suspicions entertained of his sincerity, by

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once more making his peace with the Sorbonne, and returning to the Romish communion.

The expulsion of Farel and his friends from Geneva was followed by the most melancholy results. Every social tie was broken; order and harmony were exchanged for discord, tumult, faction, and deeds of violence. Mass was performed without scruple; the reading of the Scriptures was restricted, and totally prohibited to females. The preachers disregarded their sacred functions, and even assisted in removing from their stations the best qualified teachers of youth. No wonder that they were at last looked upon as intruders and hirelings who unlawfully occupied the places of the true shepherds, and that many refused to receive the sacrament from their hands. At length their safety was endangered, and some of them left the city.

Calvin had predicted that the bitter enemies of the reformation, while imagining themselves about to enter a port of safety, were in reality hastening to destruction. This was most exactly fulfilled. The syndics who pronounced the sentence of banishment on himself and Farel, met with a dreadful end. John Philipp, a man of a turbulent and ferocious disposition, was executed as a murderer. Two others accused of treason, died in prison. Claude Richardet, who had sarcastically told Calvin that the gates of the city were quite wide enough for him to go out at, found them shut against himself; he broke his neck trying to escape through a window. These

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awful events, and the disturbed condition of public affairs, were the means of gradually leading the people to a better state of mind. They excited an earnest desire for the return of their teachers, who with Christian magnanimity had never ceased to show a lively interest in the welfare of Geneva. Calvin was frequently asked whether he was willing to return, but his constant reply was that, as he had been expelled with Farel, it would seem an act of grace rather than of justice, if he were recalled without him. And when at length he received a call, his first question was why Farel was not united with him in the invitation, since his assistance was as necessary in the restoration of the church as it had been in its first establishment. While Calvin was beseeching Farel to counteract the efforts made for his recall, the latter did his utmost in the contrary direction. He urged Calvin by all means to accept the invitation. "Without doubt," he said, "this call comes from God. The Genevese confess their faults before God. They acknowledge their neglect of his word, the ill treatment of his ministers, and the sufferings which have befallen them in consequence, and they are looking for deliverance by the republication of scriptural truth. *God* recalls you. He permitted your expulsion so that you might afterwards fill your office with greater power and authority."

The chief obstacles to Calvin's return, besides his own reluctance, were his presence being required at the diet of Worms, and the unwillingness of the

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Strasbourg people to part with him. Farel urged the churches in Switzerland to apply for his dismissal from Strasbourg. "I conjure you, brethren," he said, "if you are Christians, and wish to promote the welfare of the church, to use every effort in this important affair, lest the wrath of God fall upon us for betraying the church; for I cannot regard it as anything else than treasonable should anyone wish to hinder the restoration to office of pastors who are so much desired. Indifference to the welfare of the most inconsiderable church cannot be justified, much less indifference towards one on which the ruin or salvation of so many depends."

These appeals of Farel were not in vain, and he gave Calvin to Geneva a second time. The Genevese made honourable amends both by word and deed to the expelled ministers, acknowledging their great obligations to them, and declaring that they should be unworthy of the name of Christians, and could never hope for tranquillity in their state, if they did not endeavour to remove every ground of offence, and restore the Christian ministry to its due honour and authority.

Calvin returned to Geneva alone, his friend Farel being prevented by other pressing engagements from reintroducing him to the church.

For the purpose of relieving his countrymen from persecution, Farel took a journey to Worms, and solicited in their behalf the aid of the princes and learned men assembled there. He was gratified by

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enjoying the opportunity of becoming acquainted with so many pious and distinguished individuals whom the Lord had employed in the renovation of the church. He also brought forward the needs of his own church, and obtained from the convocation a decision in favour of a system of ecclesiastical discipline which had been drawn up by Melancthon.

In consequence of the increasing persecution of the protestants in France, and at the request of Viret, Farel also went as far as Zurich in the hope of meeting with persons possessed of sufficient influence to check, in some measure, the arbitrary proceedings of the French court.

CHAPTER 18. FAREL'S DISMISSION AND RE-ELECTION.

FAREL was still unsuccessful in his attempts to establish church discipline, and to introduce the regulations respecting the celebration of the Lord's Supper which had been agreed upon at Worms. It grieved him exceedingly to be obliged to administer the sacred bread to those of whose faith he had no assurance, and whose sentiments concerning the way of salvation he was not permitted to ascertain. He also observed that persons in the higher ranks were the most culpable in this respect. They attended to the outward services of religion, but never reduced to practice the truths they heard.

From the time when he first came to Neufchatel, there was a party strongly opposed to him and to the doctrines he preached. He had succeeded in putting down the useless holidays that were spent in idleness and debauchery, as well as the dances which were of an objectionable nature for the most part, and other irregularities. But to many, the constraint thus imposed was irksome, and

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they looked upon the ejection of Farel as the means of again enjoying their favourite amusements. They eagerly seized on the first opportunity to carry their wishes into effect. It was the following: a female of respectable connexions, having lived for some time on bad terms with her husband who was universally acknowledged to be a man of integrity, at last entirely left him. As she was the mother of a family, and her character was not altogether above suspicion, this act of separation gave very general offence. Farel first sought by serious, but gentle remonstrances, to bring her back to her duty. When these were unavailing, he attempted to influence her by means of her parents, but with no greater success. He then expressed his opinion publicly of such conduct, but without mentioning her name. Indignant at this, she absented herself both from church and the sacrament. Farel, to check so dangerous an example, applied to the civil authorities, but they refused to interfere. He then attacked both the senate and congregation from the pulpit, displayed in strong language the enormity of the offence, and declared that such a pest ought not to be tolerated in the church. His sermon had the effect of setting all in array against him, both old and young, who had smarted on former occasions under the severity of his rebukes. In the censure passed on this individual, they felt themselves also condemned. No efforts were spared to excite a general commotion. The whole city was divided into two parties;

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the one was intent upon retaining Farel, the other upon dismissing him. His opponents at last succeeded in gaining a majority for his leaving within two months. The greater part of the senate and the most respectable part of the inhabitants were on his side. But a few persons of rank, including the governor, had influenced the common people, while they were in a state of sudden excitement, to vote against him.

The first friend that hastened to console Farel was Calvin, who had just arrived at Soleure on his way to Geneva. No sooner did he hear of the events that had recently transpired, than he set out for Neufchatel, and exerted himself to allay the agitation of the people. From there he went to

Berne, and endeavoured to interest the senate and the preachers on behalf of his friend and the endangered church. Hans Mirabilis also, a well disposed individual, entreated the aid of the Bernese government to quell the discord that prevailed. Two commissioners, the bailiff Von Wattenwyl and Michael Augsburg, were sent but it soon became apparent that they were animated by a hatred toward Farel. The bailiff that was at the head of the imperial party in Berne adopted Bucer's peculiar sentiments; but he showed little or no favour toward Farel and Calvin, although they were Bucer's friends.

Viret first addressed the people of Neufchatel. His speech was so powerful, so encouraging to the well-disposed, so confounding to the malcontents, that it seemed likely to produce a complete reconciliation

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without the interposition of the Bernese preachers. But the bailiff showed himself little disposed to adopt conciliatory measures. When he was reminded of the sacredness of the call which had induced Farel to remove to Neufchatel, he answered, "Who can compel me to retain a servant when I am no longer satisfied with him?" and repeated this degrading comparison with evident satisfaction.

The party which was opposed to Farel, succeeded in impressing on the deputies from Berne a strong apprehension of the tumult that would arise in case he were to remain. They asserted that if the dispute were not settled within two months, he would be obliged to obey the decision of the public meeting, and leave the place. Farel replied that having been accepted by the church, he would be dismissed by the church alone. God had given it into his charge, and God would re-demand it at his hands; that under such circumstances, he could not leave the congregation without becoming a traitor to Christ and the church; that no one brought any charge against either his doctrine or his life. If it could be shown that he was faulty in either, he would not only consent to his dismissal, but submit to the severest punishment, even death itself.

In this affair, the ministers saw the fatal injury that would be inflicted on the pastoral authority if Farel should suffer expulsion by such irregular means. Yet they perceived that no one had the courage to acquaint the Bernese commissioners with the true

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state of the case. They resolved, therefore, to send to Berne two of their number, Thomassin and Le Clerc, the pastors of Corneaux and Neustadt, in order to furnish the senate with more complete information. Nothing, however, was gained by this. The same envoys were once more sent from Berne; as their former views were strengthened rather than altered, they ended their commission by deciding that Farel should only stay two months longer in Neufchatel, and then take an amicable leave.

Farel was decidedly averse to this arrangement. He declared that he would not give way to Satan, and would rather suffer a thousand deaths than endanger the church by leaving it in such a manner. The envoys reported that he added that he would not leave, although it should cost lives

or bloodshed; but this statement was denied by his friends. The ministers of Neufchatel, finding that the commissioners from Berne threw all their influence into the scale of Farel's opponents, deputed Einard Pichon to visit the churches at Basle, Strasburg, and other places, and collect their opinions. Letters were shortly received from the churches of Geneva, Montbeliard, Biel, Monsee, and Thonon, which were unanimous in supporting Farel's determination not to abandon his post.

In the midst of all this agitation, Farel maintained the serenity of a suffering Christian, and the exercise of an activity which was ever attentive to the wants of others, and neglectful of his own. He wished,

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indeed, that the disorders and evils which had followed the expulsion of the pastors from Geneva might operate as a warning to the people of Neufchatel. But he carefully repressed every personal feeling, and submitted himself to God, and the advice of his brethren in the ministry. "Whether God has resolved," he said, "to retain me here or not, is not what troubles me, for I am prepared for everything." For all the aspersions that were cast upon his character he was more than recompensed, not only by peace of conscience, but by the esteem in which he was held by the churches, both far and near, the sympathy of his brethren, the attachment of the good, and the filial regard of those who had been brought by his instrumentality to a knowledge of the truth. But when he reflected on the injury that would ensue to the church from his expulsion, he suffered more mental agony than if he had been obliged to endure a thousand martyrdoms. Yet amidst all this he was enabled to say, "God is more powerful in raising me up and strengthening me, than Satan and all his servants are in casting me down and discouraging me."

His courage rose with the dangers of his situation. When that universal scourge, the plague, began to rage at Neufchatel, he acted the part of a most faithful pastor. He daily visited the sick without distinction, relieved the poor, and sought to win his enemies by kindness. Such conduct commanded the respect even of his bitterest opposers. On account

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of the peculiar circumstances of the church and the prevailing pestilence, a day of humiliation was appointed. Everyone partook of the sacrament. The preachers admonished, warned, and reproved the people. The loss that menaced the church, the near approach of death, and the example of their devoted pastor softened the hardest hearts, and opened the prospect of a general reconciliation.

Meanwhile Einard faithfully fulfilled his commission, and was received everywhere with mingled feelings of pleasure and regret. He found but one opinion respecting Farel's learning, character, worth, and sufferings in behalf of the church. The churches in various places cheerfully complied with the wishes of the Neufchatel clergy, and prevailed on their respective senates to use their influence with the Bernese in favour of Farel and his friends.

The people of Basle addressed a letter to the ministers, the senate, and the whole congregation of Neufchatel. They expressed their grief and astonishment on hearing of their divisions, since they had supposed that they were in a flourishing state, under the guidance of that skilful and pious pastor from whom they had first received the lessons of heavenly wisdom. They asked them whether it had not been their own wish that the gospel should be preached to them, without limitations and restrictions. "But," they added, "if self-denial, the renunciation of the world, and victory over Satan, did not belong to the preaching of salvation, every reasonable man, not

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to say every Christian, must admit that, in order to improve the people, their teachers must have the power to punish scandalous livers." They might read in the Scriptures that the Holy Spirit reproves men for their iniquities. "But a faithful pastor is an instrument of the Holy Spirit, and proves his fidelity by driving away the wolf from the flock. Can a true member of your church," they said, "be so dull of hearing as not to hear the voice of the shepherd, or so forgetful of the shepherd's duty as to take ill his serious warnings, or to wish, on account of them, to drive the shepherd away? Are there such persons among you? Then there is reason to mourn over their backsliding, and their leaving the kingdom of light for the kingdom of darkness. In the early ages of the church, it was hotly debated whether the lapsed (or those who had abjured the profession of Christianity, and gone back to heathenism) could be received again into the church on account of the greatness of their sin; but the mercy of God is great, and he will have compassion even on such, if they return to him." But should it be otherwise, should they persist in expelling Farel, and seek out a preacher who, so far from being a Farel, would only prophesy smooth things, then greater unhappiness would surely ensue, and the infernal sorcerer would sow the seeds of discord among them. Since it was the united wish of all the preachers to maintain Farel in his office on account of his learning and piety, they should take care, lest their unanimity should be

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broken, for that would realize a favourite device of Satan. They might easily imagine what the papists would say on such an occasion. In Neufchatel they would be evangelical, and yet cannot endure Farel! In what way must the gospel be fashioned in order to please them? They wish, perhaps, only a dead Christ, not a living one, not one who enlivens by the Holy Spirit or, in other words, a gospel without repentance. It is clear what doctrine will suit men of the world, namely, what allows them to live according to their own self-will and lusts in the vain conceit that, since Christ has suffered for sin, everyone may do as he likes best. Despisers of the gospel will continually disseminate errors against which pious preachers must both speak and act. But you valiant men! You true shepherds! By all the means in your power, prevent such reproach from being chargeable on your city, which you cannot permit without great damage to your own souls. And all of you, who would be guiltless in this affair, pray to the God of peace that, according to his grace, he would heal your divisions, and grant that his gospel may be published among you to his glory, even to the end of time. Leave nothing undone which may contribute to reconciliation. Endeavour to win over your enemies by persuasion; spare no kind words; exert all your powers to bring peace here, and under its shadow, the free preaching of the gospel; for where freedom is lacking, not the gospel, but hypocrisy and falsehood will be preached."

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The Strasburgers expressed, through Bucer, their sorrow on account of the recent events. They dwelt on the great services of Farel to Neufchatel, the unanimity which prevailed at his first coming, the purity of his doctrine, and the spotless integrity of his life, from which even his enemies could not withhold their admiration. "How does it come to pass," they said, "that you, we do not say reject, but allow an individual to leave you whom not men, but Christ, has sent for the promotion of your salvation? How is it that you, we would not say discharge, but allow to be snatched away from you, the very founder of your regeneration?" Perhaps they were offended, the letter proceeded to say, by the vehemence of his reproofs. But he only reproved that which the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures declares worthy of eternal death, which is contrary to God, shuts out from his kingdom, and leads to hell. "Should not the wounds which a pastor so loving and desirous of your salvation, inflicts, be more agreeable to you than the flattering speeches of those who connive at your vices? With sin, indeed, we may be angry, but not with its punishment, however bitter it may be. The one leads to condemnation, the other to deliverance." They added, perhaps they might reply, that the majority among them acknowledged and would gladly retain their father and teacher, but that, since some could not endure his sharp reproofs, they must make a sacrifice for the peace of the church, and the quiet of the community. What peace? What quiet?

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In neither church nor state can peace be maintained in which the ministers of that true peace which we have with God through Christ, are not duly esteemed. But some will say that those who have engaged servants may also turn them away. But Farel's being placed among them was evidently of God; and if they would not look at the higher appointment of the Holy Ghost, let them remember Farel's election by the ministers of the gospel, the two councils, and the whole church. They had not hired him as a mercenary whom they might discharge at pleasure; rather, he had been sought for, called, and chosen by all classes, to be a teacher and father; a choice approved by Christ and the Holy Spirit. His office was too sacred to be at the arbitrary disposal of turbulent men. Is it seemly that the sheep should bring the shepherd to account, or children their father, even if they think he has punished them somewhat too severely? "If up to now you have withstood the tyranny of antichrist, and not deserted the kingdom of the Lord; if you have not dismissed the servants of the truth in order to please any of your princes, why do you now show such inconsiderate deference to some factious spirits whom you might so easily repress?" In conclusion, they declared that they wrote not from an apprehension lest the people of Neufchatel should withdraw their confidence from Farel, and dismiss their faithful minister, but in order to strengthen them stedfastly to withstand those who wished that Farel should connive at their irregularities.

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In Constance, Einard met with a cordial reception; his request was granted, and he was furnished with the warmest recommendations to Zurich. Blaaren and his colleagues were fully of the opinion that it would be a bad example for the whole evangelical church if so distinguished a preacher of the gospel as Farel should succumb to the audacious intrigues of a few who ought to be put down at once. The people of Basle and Strasburg mingled with their expressions of

sympathy, exhortations to the greatest moderation and patience, lest the good should be involved in the too severe punishment of the bad. In the existing relaxation of discipline, they wished the means that still remained for maintaining good order to be so employed that the offenders might respect their ministers, even as a vicious son respects a virtuous father whom he ventures not to disobey though he does not love him.

Calvin also admonished, comforted, and encouraged his friends. "Sincere is the Lord's will," he said, "to exercise us in his service, and to allow us no rest; we must strive as valiant and steadfast men, but only with the weapons which he permits us to use. Under his protection, we shall be sure of victory. Through the moderation that you now show, many hearts will be softened and become contrite. Should all things proceed as you wish, endeavour by all means to heal the wounds that have been inflicted. It will be a most delightful victory, if Satan and the abettors of these disturbances should find themselves forsaken

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by their followers." With like feelings of love and sorrow, the inhabitants of Zurich regretted the constant attempts of the enemies of the gospel to loosen the bond of union, well-knowing that the strength of true religion depended on the oneness and unanimity of the brethren. They addressed Farel in the first place, to point out what the Lord required of him, the feeding of his flock with the word of truth and life, the publishing of repentance according to the doctrine of Christ, or the exhibition, accusation, and condemnation of sin and vice, so that vices may not come into vogue under the appearance of virtues, and thus cease to be objects of disgrace. "This cannot be effected," they remarked, "by smooth and flowery language, but by the plain seriousness of a teacher who calls sin and vice by their proper names. Hatred and persecution, it is true, may arise from administering reproof, as the Lord and his apostles foretold and experienced; but they who suffer in this cause shall be especially beloved by their Lord, and must not desert their charge on account of their sufferings. Wherefore, persevere in the service to which you are called; pray to the Lord, the Author and Friend of peace, that he would bring back the wandering sheep, and incline them to submit to discipline and the means of grace. This is your duty, good shepherd! And if you fulfil it conscientiously, Satan, who has for a time had the advantage, will soon be crushed under you."

To the ministers, they said, "You are the salt of the

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earth. Consider what is likely to ensue if, in your present circumstances, you are foolish, imprudent, and weak. Salt preserves from corruption by its sharpness. Preserve your church and your office (which are entrusted to you by God) by innocence, wisdom, prudence, and diligence. Your office becomes powerless if Farel is banished on account of his plain dealing; your church will enjoy no security without an able minister of the word, armed with a heroic disposition. No one is so well qualified as Farel: he is pious, blameless, circumspect, unassuming, full of courage, learned, and exceedingly eloquent; a father rich in experience, the reformer of your church; a true apostle, who bears on his body the marks of the wounds he has received in the cause of Christ; steadfast, and in the greatest conflicts the victorious preacher and confessor of the

truth. Hence his Christian reputation and fame has spread far and wide throughout Germany. You must not allow so deserving a man to be expelled causelessly and unheard. With your assent he was called and installed into his office; and without you he cannot be deprived of it.”

They proceeded to warn the council, by various solemn quotations from the prophets, not to involve themselves in a contest which hindered the servants of God in the publication of the truth. It should be the care of the magistracy to lend a helping hand to the preachers, so that they may be able, without molestation, to admonish sinners and punish evil-doers.

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None of them would endure dissoluteness in his own house, and shall the pastors appointed by God permit such practices in the church?

Lastly, the Zurichers directed their exhortations to the church, that they should acknowledge with thanks to God their having met with such a shepherd. Certainly they would be very unfortunate if they had teachers such as many of them wished they had. But “Farel is a father full of holy zeal towards his children, straightforward in his actions, and unused to flatter and to smooth matters over. Whatever may have been done from passion and prejudice, we entreat you by the infinite love of Christ and his bitter death, to lay aside evil passions – give no room to Satan – forgive one another your faults, and be reconciled to each other, and to your faithful teacher.” The epistle concluded with the words of Paul, Phil. 2.14.¹

The last place visited by Einard was Berne, where he met with Conz, who made ample amends to Farel for his former ill behaviour. He not only introduced Einard to the senate, but spoke in strong terms of the danger to which the discipline of the church was exposed, and the importance of preserving Farel from being expelled by a licentious faction.

Both at Neufchatel and Berne, these various letters, especially those from Zurich, produced a very beneficial effect. Farel felt his resolution strengthened, and only wished that his character might correspond more exactly to the favourable representations that

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had been given of it. When Einard returned, the allotted period of two months had expired. The two councils met, but in consequence of the small number present, merely resolved that a meeting of the congregation should be convened for the following Sunday. In consequence of the letters from Zurich, the senate of Berne sent for Farel by a special courier. At first they proposed that he should tender his resignation. But he showed them in a serious and conclusive address, that the point on which he had made a stand was a matter of conscience; and that having been duly and legally called, he could not give up his office without another equally clear call. He would readily obey such a call were it to preach the gospel to the Turks at his own charge. The senate wrote to the council of Neufchatel that their sentiments had been misconstrued by Farel's opponents; that in reality they never wished him to leave at the expiration of two months, but had held out that time as the duration of his stay for the purpose of calming the popular excitement.

¹ NKJ [Phil 2:14](#) Do all things without complaining and disputing,

They further declared that nothing could be more agreeable to them than that such a teacher should be retained for promoting the welfare of the church, someone who had always laboured in the Lord's vineyard with the strictest fidelity and conscientiousness. This communication was received by the whole congregation with great applause. The previous decision was annulled, a reconciliation was pronounced, and a fine was appointed to be paid by all those who would annoy others on

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account of this affair. The council sent intelligence of this decision to Berne; a few individuals alone wished to wait for the governor's return, and left the council dissatisfied when their wish was not complied with.

It was hoped that this affair had at last reached a happy termination. But the governor who, from the first, had been the prime mover in the disturbance, now returned and gathered around him the remnant of the faction. New intrigues were set afoot and, confiding in the aid of Berne, the malcontents resorted there and brought back a document in their favour, subscribed by sixty burgesses.

To investigate the matter, a fresh deputation consisting of Rudolph von Erlach and James Tribolet, was sent from Berne. The envoys minutely fulfilled their duty, and gave a faithful report; after which Farel was once more called to Berne, together with deputies from both parties. As they could not agree, it was resolved that in eight days the sense of the majority should be taken, unless a reconciliation were effected in the interval. Twelve individuals on each side attempted to settle matters; but failing to do so, the sense of the people was taken in the presence of the Bernese envoys who promised to guarantee the decision. Two-thirds of the assembly voted for Farel. The well-disposed rejoiced in the result and perceived in it "the finger of God," while their opponents were reduced to silence. Farel's friends exhorted him afresh to prudence and moderation;

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not that they considered him destitute of those qualities, but that he might be more on his guard not to give his enemies the least pretext for calumny. In a few months, every vestige of the disturbance was removed, and complete harmony was re-established. Farel being re-appointed for life, fervently thanked God for rescuing his church, and endeavoured to employ all his powers in promoting its prosperity.

Scarcely had peace been restored, when Farel repaired to Geneva, where he witnessed with astonishment the changes effected by the united labours of Calvin and Viret. After their expulsion, such was the increase of licentiousness that only a few persons remained uncorrupted; but they formed the stock on which the new grafts were inserted. It was by almost incredible efforts, under which others would have sunk, that these two individuals succeeded in giving a new form to the ruined church.

During the time of the dispute between Farel and the people of Neufchatel, the committee of ministers belonging to that place was employed in framing a new system of ecclesiastical regulations. These were intended to define and establish the duties and rights of the preachers. Elders and deacons were to be chosen; children were to be instructed on Sundays; those who had been duly instructed were to be publicly confirmed; and the extension of schools were proposed. No one was to be confined by illness more than three days without informing his pastor. The ministers

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were to have access to the prisons at all times. Whoever absented himself from public worship, either from contempt or self-indulgence, was first to be reminded in a friendly manner, and after the third admonition, to be excluded from the sacrament. Without permission of the magistracy, no stranger could have the marriage ceremony performed. Weekly meetings of the clergy were to be held, chiefly to promote unanimity in doctrine. The censorship exercised by the ministers over each other was defined with great exactness. As to their life and doctrine, the Scriptures were made the standard of appeal. Circumstances rendered it necessary that the examination, calling, and choice of preachers should be conducted according to the manner already introduced. In drawing up these articles and others relating to public worship and the administration of the sacraments, regard was paid to the practice of other churches, and to the opinions of Melancthon, Calvin, and Bucer.

CHAPTER 19. FAREL IN METZ – CAROLI'S LAST INTRIGUES.

THE great opposition which the preaching of the gospel had experienced in Metz from the time of its first introduction, was not able to suppress the attachment to it felt by many of the inhabitants. Yet several attempts to establish the Reformation had failed, owing to the aversion of the clergy and the majority of the senate and nobility. A more favourable period seemed now to have arrived; some of the Dominicans had begun to preach evangelically, and Caspar Von Huy filled the highest civic office, that of Echevin. This individual and his brother had permitted the gospel to be preached on their estates where multitudes assembled to hear it. In order to introduce it into the town, a union with the Smalcald confederacy was attempted, and means were taken to obtain a zealous preacher. A call was given to James Gallus, minister of Morsee, who was, however, deficient in one essential qualification for so arduous a post: that Christian fortitude which would brave all dangers, even death itself. In this critical juncture, Farel

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resolved to make the attempt himself, and was encouraged by Calvin, who believed that no person was so fit for the undertaking as his experienced and dauntless friend, richly endowed as he appeared to be, with the Spirit and power of the Lord.

Farel arrived at Metz in September, and preached his first sermon in the churchyard of the Dominicans. To prevent his being heard, they caused all the bells to be tolled, but his voice of thunder overpowered the sound. So desirous were the people to receive the word of God, that the next day he had above three thousand hearers. His public preaching, and still more his administration of baptism without the observance of popish ceremonies, excited great attention. In order to prevent a disturbance, the most respectable friends of the gospel and Von Huy beseeched him to discontinue preaching till circumstances became more favourable. He was suddenly summoned before the senate, and asked by whose authority he preached? He answered, "By the authority of Christ, and at the request of his members," whom he would not name. He then addressed the senate with great earnestness on the ministerial office, and reminded them of their duty as Christian magistrates in reference to the free publication of the gospel. During the deliberations of the senate, his friends led him away, and conducted a man who resembled him in figure and dress out of the town, in order that by this deception he might escape further examination. Soon after this, the Echevin would gladly have procured him a church

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to preach in; but even his own brother opposed it. The plague, however, which just at this time broke out in a dreadful manner, allowed full scope to Farel's pious activity, and gave occasion for a noble display of his intrepidity and zeal. He found access to many houses which before would have been shut against him, and carried the consolations of religion to the bedsides of the sick and the dying. Still he met with opposition from the civil authorities. A deputation from the reformed confederate cantons was not even allowed to enter the city. The senate subjected to a fine anyone who should presume to visit Farel; and an imperial mandate against evangelical

preaching was posted, which was pulled down by the children. At last, persecution actually commenced.

On acquainting the ministers with his dangerous situation, and requesting their interference, they resolved to send one of their number to Metz. Farel's brother Claudius also hastened to his support, by way of Strasburg. Tossanus would have joined them, but could not procure leave of absence from the Duke of Wirtemberg.

Farel perceived among the friends of the gospel at Metz a spirit of anxious foreboding, and a disposition to trust in the calculations of human prudence rather than in the providence of God. Many dreaded the loss of reputation and persecution. In vain he pointed out the necessity of keeping God and his commandments alone in view, without being harassed by the devices of Satan, or the intrigues of his servants.

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In vain he declared that God had never forsaken a government which had in real earnest sought the spiritual welfare of the people. The senate would not listen to the request of a majority of the people to allow the word of God to be preached freely. The canons spread a report that Farel wished to overthrow the civil authorities and destroy the church; and by their misrepresentations they urged some persons to make an attempt on his life. However, they abandoned the attempt upon witnessing his exemplary conduct, and his efforts to promote the interests of truth and holiness by his preaching.

While a deputation of the evangelical party went with the Echevin at their head to Metz, it was deemed advisable that Farel should retire to the neighbouring town of Gorze under the protection of Count William of Fürstenberg. It was either on his departure from Metz, or when he appeared before the senate, that he forewarned the people that before long they would feel the tyrant's rod, and lose that liberty which they were so much afraid of losing in the event of their receiving the gospel; a warning which subsequent events fully verified.

At Gorze he was not inactive; he preached alternately in the parish church and in the abbey chapel. On one occasion, he publicly contradicted Fidelis, a Franciscan friar, for which he was furiously attacked by the women in the congregation. He was so roughly handled as to be obliged to keep to his room for some time. With this exception, he preached indefatigably and without interruption till Easter.

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Having been accused to the Duke of Lorraine as a disturber of the public peace, he addressed a letter to him in which [Farel] ably vindicated his own character and the general principles of the Reformation.

He commenced his letter by observing, "that honouring magistracy as the ordinance of God, he had always set himself against those who refused to obey the civil powers and refused to pay taxes, as was the practice of the Anabaptists and the Popish clergy. No governor had ever been

deposed who obeyed the Divine word, but only those who renounced its authority and gave themselves up to idolatry; this might be proved from sacred history. Wherever he had preached the gospel, he had never opposed the magistracy. But worse than the charge of sedition was that of subverting the faith and Divine worship, of dishonouring the Virgin Mary and the saints, and violating all the ordinances of the Christian church. He acknowledged and taught no faith but that which was grounded on the word of God, so that men should confess they are poor lost sinners, and filled with self-reproach for their sins, have recourse to the mercy of God in dependence on Jesus, to obtain grace and pardon. He then described this faith in the Redeemer, and his work of salvation by which eternal life is procured for men. Without attempting to form a party or new sect, he had constantly exhorted his hearers to follow Jesus, the good Shepherd. All agreed that the true church could never be better administered than in the times of the apostles. And he could call God to witness

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that his zealous endeavour had been to approach as near as possible to the primitive church in soundness of doctrine, purity of life, and the regular administration of the sacraments. He need not enter more minutely into the subject, since the regulations of the evangelical party were in everyone's hands. He then brought home the charge of insubordination to those who called themselves the church, to the exclusion of all others; priests, monks, and crowds of ecclesiastics who, claiming exemption from the civil powers, refused to pay taxes, released subjects from their allegiance, and seduced them to rebellion and perjury; all of this against the express commands of God. Thus popery inflicted the greatest injury on the bodies and the souls, the reputation and the property of men. None had occasioned more hatred and bloodshed or shown greater rapacity, than the pope and his agents who were continually fishing in troubled waters – as princes everywhere, and especially those of Germany, could testify. He described in pathetic language the corruption of the evangelical doctrine by the papists, by confounding faith and works, and passing over the justification of the sinner as insignificant in order to gain credit to their own fancies, and to give to human inventions the authority of Divine commands. No human tongue could express the profaning of Divine things, and the disgraceful traffic they carried on with the Virgin Mary and the saints. He said this was not out of hatred or envy, for he wished evil to no man. he would willingly sacrifice his life for the salvation of a fellow-creature,

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and therefore he would say no more respecting these immoral, blinded, ignorant people; he would commend them to the mercy of God. But he could not easily withdraw his eyes from the corrupt condition of the church. “Where,” he said, “are the faithful shepherds? Where are the evangelists who proclaim in its purity the holy doctrine of Jesus? Where is the wholesome discipline of the church? Who has sufficient wisdom and sagacity to reform the church? The greater part pray like apes, who move the lips without knowing the meaning of the sounds they utter. Alas! The misery is great and indescribable; and it is especially to be regretted that no one has compassion on the poor, misguided souls for whom Christ died.” He then proceeded to notice the perversion of the Lord's Supper; that a new sacrifice and rite was established instead of a feast of commemoration and thanksgiving. “Many original regulations of the church,” he remarked, “such as catechising, the election, induction and laying on of hands of pastors, and the

visitation of the sick, have fallen into disuse, or lost their original character. While marriage, which is ordained by God, has been dishonoured, and impurity has been encouraged through the celibacy of the papists. They teach the opposite of all that the Scripture commands, and yet they pretend that it is enjoined by an infallible church, and that the pope holds the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Should anyone attempt to maintain the truth, he is treated as a heretic worthy

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of the flames; even the Bible is denounced as a source of heresy. Aware that they are spiritually weak and abandoned by God, they commit their cause to the protection of the civil power, and to the advocacy of that irrefragable¹ doctor, the executioner, against whom nothing can be said since he silences heretics by cutting out their tongues, or closes their lips forever by fire and sword.” He spoke of the Holy Scriptures, and of the benefits that would result both to princes and people from an acquaintance with them. He answered the objection that it would dispose them to neglect sermons or to separate themselves from the church, adding, “It is indeed a great comfort to sincere believers to find again in the Scriptures that which they have heard preached; or to hear that which they have read in the sacred volume, faithfully announced by the preacher.” After such statements and arguments, he earnestly requested the Duke to call on the friends of popery and their opponents, that seeking the glory of the Lord and the welfare of their brethren, they might amicably confer in his presence on the doctrines they held in common, and on the points in which they differed. And then adopting the Scriptures as their standard, renounce everything which was opposed to the will of God, and destructive to the souls of men. When he had endeavoured to excite the Duke to promote the Reformation in his own dominions, he concluded with saying; “So that all this may be effected for the establishment of truth and suppression of falsehood,

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I would gladly risk my life, without wishing that any other person should suffer any bodily harm or loss of property, so that all may serve the Lord.”

Though Farel maintained throughout this letter a conciliatory and respectful tone, no favourable impression appears to have been made on the Duke or any branches of his family, who indeed always ranked among the most inveterate enemies of the Reformation.

The evangelical party at Metz sought to be received into the Smalcald confederacy; but even Luther himself found his efforts on their behalf fruitless. All that the combined influence of the reformed princes was able to obtain for them, was liberty of preaching without the power to administer the sacraments. In consequence, many persons from Metz repaired at Easter to Gorze, to celebrate the Lord’s Supper. Scarcely was the communion over when they were alarmed by the sound of war-trumpets. At the instigation of the cardinal of Lorraine, his brother Claudius Duke of Guise, with the approval of the king of France, fell upon this innocent people. Many were put to the sword, and others drowned in attempting to escape. Farel was wounded. He and Count William were especially sought for, and with great difficulty they took refuge in the castle. His friends were under great apprehensions on his account, for some time elapsed before

¹ *Irrefragable*: not to be overthrown or defeated.

it was known what had become of him. When complaints of this outrage were made to the king of France and the senate of Metz, they only made an evasive reply, without

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making any attempt to bring the offenders to justice. By the orders of Count William, Farel and others of the wounded were conveyed on litters to Strasburg, and not without considerable risk.

In order to weaken Farel's usefulness and influence in Metz, Peter Caroli was sent there by the Duke of Orleans. This man gladly seized the opportunity to wreak his resentment on Farel; he denounced him as the worst of heretics, and rendered him suspected by the senate in reference to the doctrine of the sacrament. Favoured by the clergy and the senate, his arrogance rose to such a pitch, that he dispatched a formal challenge to Farel, at Strasburg, to dispute with him and stake their lives on the result. In the church of St. Vincent, he summoned him to appear before the pope, or the council of Trent, or the emperor of Germany and the king of France, or before the divines of the French universities, or at Salamanca or Ahala in Spain, should he not be able to come to France; and, lastly, if these cities were too remote for him, to meet him at Louvain or Padua. He demanded an answer in eight days. In case he declined to appear, [Caroli] threatened to brand him everywhere as a cowardly heretic and schismatic. He repeated this challenge in somewhat different terms, proposing that they should both be put under arrest, himself at Metz, and Farel in the hands of the king of France.

Farel replied immediately and asked, Who had authorized him to cite him before the pope, for whom

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he did not care, since he was the declared opponent of his Lord and Master, Jesus. He also doubted whether [Caroli] was commissioned to dispute with him by the monarchs whose names he had made use of, who would have chosen persons more considerable than either himself or Caroli for such a purpose. Yet he was ready to defend the doctrines he had preached before all men, even those of the highest rank, should God call him to do so, without putting any other man's life in peril; though he would submit to any punishment himself, if it could be shown that he had not preached Christian truth. Neither of them, he said, were rich enough to travel to Spain or Venice; but they could meet in Metz. And if Caroli did not have sufficient influence to have a disputation appointed where he was preaching at present, then how could he accomplish it in a place where he was unknown? Impartial judges might be chosen there from each party, and he would be ready to appear at any hour. After having exposed the ridiculous nature of his proposal to dispute with each other under arrest, he said, "I have never sought your favour, or that of your friends, nor do I heed what they say, but I seek the favour of my Redeemer; and in attending to his voice, I find my consolation." At the close, he reminds Caroli of death and eternity, and says, "Poor man! What will you do? Why torment yourself, and act against the convictions of your conscience? I know well that your grievously deceived wife and children lie a heavy weight upon your heart, and that all you have

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perpetrated against God and his servants will return upon your own head. You are now presumptuously seeking to exalt yourself; but you will fall to the ground, and come to nought. Your execrable ambition! Will it never have an end?"

In order to counteract Caroli's garbled and erroneous accounts of the former disputations, Farel sent for the original documents, and published an apology¹ in the form of an epistle addressed to all his brethren in the faith. His friends manifested the greatest sympathy for him by consolatory and encouraging letters, and the cities which had been the scenes of his labours, Strasburg, Geneva, and Berne, interceded warmly on his behalf.

Caroli having sent a letter to Strasburg, which seemed to indicate somewhat greater discretion, Farel once more expressed his sentiments and wishes respecting him. He reproved him severely for having professed before the senate that he came to Metz in the name of God, since his conscience would best tell him what corrupt motives had brought him there. "You came to Metz," he said, "to labour against God and to do the works of your father who is a liar, for the ruin of the true church of Christ. And yet you presume to say that you came in consequence of being moved by God to suppress that holy doctrine which I preach." He described, in strong language, the whole course of his life since he had been aiming to grasp the mitre; the vices he had practised, or of which he had boasted; the innocent blood which had been

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shed by his means; his calumnies against the servants of God and the reformed churches; the adulteries he had committed; his repeated disgraceful declarations concerning marriage, his wife, and children, etc., and forewarned him of the Divine judgment if he persisted in his evil practices. He noticed very slightly the personal insults he had received from him. "If I am rightly informed, you have publicly declared that I am the greatest heretic that the world has ever seen. Might it please our Lord that I could say in truth that you are the most faithful and pious servant of God that ever appeared! Truth is not to be propagated by falsehood. Go uprightly to work: do not calumniate those whom your own conscience tells you deserve praise, persons who wish that the pure word of God, the proper administration of the sacraments, and all that our Lord has ordained, may be duly appreciated in his church. You are well-aware that such sentiments are not admitted in those churches which are still under the tyranny of the pope. Is not the truth sufficiently powerful to maintain itself, and to destroy falsehood universally? I do not dispute for the sake of being victorious; nor am I concerned at being overcome. My only anxiety is that truth may gain the victory. For I cannot gain a more glorious victory than when truth is acknowledged and received; that is, when Jesus is acknowledged and received, and Satan with his deceptions is unmasked and cast out." He then beseeched him to retrace his steps, and to employ the good gifts

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which God had bestowed upon him, to his glory. He expressed his readiness to hold a friendly conference with him, and thus to restore tranquillity to the agitated people of Metz. His feelings kindling at the prospect of the happy consequences of Caroli's yielding to his expostulation, he

¹ That is, a defense.

exclaimed, “Oh, what riches, what joys, what blessings would pour down upon us! Oh that I were annihilated, and that the Lord Jesus had taken possession of every heart! Oh, if such a holy church were built up before my eyes, I would not only regard it as my greatest happiness to stand as a doorkeeper at the gate of the sanctuary, but even to be a servant of its lowliest servants: I would esteem this lowly condition more highly than if I possessed all the riches of the world, all kingly power and dignity, and yet were excluded from such holy society! O, Caroli! In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ who has so often called and waited for you, have compassion on the souls he has so dearly purchased! Think of what you will gain in the sight of God; no longer obstruct the honour and glory of the Lord, and the welfare of poor souls; no longer seek yourself, your own honour or fame; exert yourself in no other cause than the cause of God!”

In order to obtain permission for a disputation, the Genevese sent Calvin to Strasburg. He and Farel petitioned the senate to give them a safeguard to Metz, or a request to the senate there to grant them an audience, or lastly, to intercede with the

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German protestant states to take their part. The first proposition was rejected as dangerous, and the second as useless, because the arrival of the emperor had strengthened the hands of the senate. Letters were written to the states, but nothing was gained except a promise to urge an interview at Metz, and to request a safeguard without saying for whom. An unsatisfactory reply was received from Smalcald, although the Echevin von Huy was there with four deputies. After remaining there some weeks longer, they returned, unable to accomplish the object of their mission. Farel and his friends were never again brought into collision with Caroli, though for a time he continued to practise his intrigues at Metz. He went to Rome with flattering expectations, which were completely disappointed. He quickly sank into the oblivion which Farel predicted, and he died in a hospital there a few years later, a victim to his excesses – poor, miserable, and forsaken.

Farel had been absent from home about a year. The sacrifices he had recently made, and his sufferings in the Lord’s service, acquired him new esteem from all who were able to appreciate his merits. The deep interest he felt in Metz was increased rather than lessened by absence. Daily and hourly, with an affection like that of a mother for her children when in danger, he yearned over the souls of those who were seeking salvation, but whom he was unable to aid. In a consolatory epistle, he expressed his grief on this account, and his ardent desires for their

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welfare. He assured them that he often meditated on the unsearchableness of God’s ways in withholding the word of life from those who seemed so eager to receive it; and humbled himself deeply before that just and holy God, who at his pleasure pours down fruitful showers on one city, and allows another to languish in drought. After noticing their dangerous situation, which was both to him and them a trial of faith, he exhorted them to a confession of their sins, and to believing, persevering prayer. He encouraged them to confide in the Divine assistance, even should greater storms assail them; since God, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, would certainly fulfil his promises given through Christ. He sent them a collection of prayers,

which he had composed for their use, with directions when, how, and for whom they ought to pray. He continued actively engaged in their cause by letters and negotiations. Some years after, he took a journey to Strasburg with Viret, on their account, when new persecutions had broken out against them.

CHAPTER 20. CALUMNIES AGAINST FAREL – DISPUTED ELECTION – CALLED TO GENEVA AND LAUSANNE – ATTENTION TO THE SCHOOLS – CHURCH IN MONTBELIARD, AND PERSECUTIONS THERE – WRITINGS.

ON Farel's return to Neufchatel, he soon found himself involved in fresh difficulties. His colleague Chaponneau seemed disposed to act the part of Caroli all over again. He secretly instigated his son-in-law, Cortesius, to impugn the correctness of Farel's sentiments on the doctrine of the Trinity. Cortesius was, however, brought to acknowledge that his accusation was unfounded, and professed himself ready to make all the reparation in his power.

An attempt was made in 1545 to recall Farel to Geneva. This had long been a favourite project of Calvin, who was convinced that his former colleague would be far more useful in Geneva than at Neufchatel, where the people so easily received a wrong bias. The senate of Berne and the ministers of Neufchatel were willing to yield to the proposal. Farel would have consented if a successor could have

226 DISPUTED ELECTION.

been found to supply his place; but Tossanus, who was the best qualified, refused to leave Montbeliard – as this was not practicable, Farel remained [at Neufchatel].

During the negotiations for Farel's removal to Geneva, Chaponneau died. In his latter years, he had become a more peaceful and useful colleague, having been on terms of friendly intercourse with Farel, and having evinced increasing zeal in the Lord's service. On his death-bed, he desired to see his neighbouring brethren in the ministry once more. He earnestly exhorted them to promote the welfare of the church, and to enjoin on all its members, especially those of his own congregation, peace and unanimity. Then, with many tears, he asked forgiveness of them all. He ordered his writings against Calvin to be burned, and bequeathed him, as a token of his regard, a copy of St. Augustine's works. All present thanked God for the change that had taken place in him, and for such a termination of his earthly course.

Chaponneau's death was the occasion of fresh disturbances in the church. He had expressed a wish that Tossanus might be his successor, whom Farel would likewise have most preferred for a colleague. But the first question agitated after his decease was not who should fill his place, but in whom the right of election was vested. The old faction reappeared, whose only hope of preventing one of Farel's friends from being chosen, was to exclude the committee of ministers from the choice and presentment

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of a minister. In reality, they desired to obtain Marcourt, who had always shown himself very indulgent and pliable. Farel hotly advocated the rights of his brethren. Assemblies were held on two occasions in order to choose Marcourt. But Farel's steadfastness frustrated the attempt, so that

his opponents despaired of succeeding till after his decease. They agreed to adopt the mode of election already established. Christopher Libertet Fabri, a man of acknowledged zeal and piety was unanimously nominated Chaponneau's successor. The ministers of Thonon and the senate of Berne gave Fabri leave to remove to Neuenburg, and Farel felt his burdens lightened by the cooperation of his young friend.

A few months afterwards, Calvin and Viret endeavoured to draw Farel into their more immediate vicinity. The government of Berne had resolved to institute another professorship of divinity at Lausanne, and Viret wished for a colleague of congenial sentiments and views. No one appeared to Calvin more suitable for this office than Farel. Well-versed in the Scriptures, and not deficient in a knowledge of the Hebrew language, he possessed some of the most important qualifications of a good expositor. Nor did it escape Calvin's observation, that as his years increased, [Farel's] manners became more refined and gentle. The ministers of Lausanne made two applications to the government of Berne for their sanction to this appointment, but without success. Though Farel

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had rendered eminent services to Berne by establishing the reformation in the Valais, Neufchatel, and Geneva, yet he had become obnoxious to some of the principal members of the government by his somewhat hasty temper, and his bold uncompromising address. He had also given offence to the senate, by refusing to form the church at Geneva on the model of that at Berne. It seems probable, too, that they were afraid of bringing Farel into closer union with his friends, Calvin and Viret. These three distinguished men constituted a sacred triumvirate, so harmonious that all their movements seemed actuated by one spirit. Calvin's profound knowledge and acuteness, Farel's zeal, devotedness, and overpowering eloquence, with Viret's gentle and captivating address, formed a combination of qualities which excited envy and fear in the breasts of their opponents. The consequence was that this second attempt to remove the pastor of Neufchatel was as fruitless as the first; but this was less to be regretted, as Beza soon after began his labours at Lausanne.

The excellent Mathurin Corderius had been tutor to Calvin and many other eminent men, and he was headmaster of the school at Neufchatel. On his removal to Lausanne, the senate of Berne addressed a letter to the council of Neufchatel on the importance of having his situation well-filled, and on the utility of schools in general, "for promoting the glory of God, and instructing the young in the

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Divine word and propriety of conduct." "Certain tyrants," they said, "who undertake to suppress and extirpate the gospel, know of no better method than the abolition of the Latin schools."

Farel entered fully into these views. He was most anxious for the education of the young, and foresaw that darkness would again overspread the church if young men were not regularly educated for the ministry of the gospel. For "it is incredible," he said, "what is still attempted by those men who are continually hatching some mischief in their solitary cells." Hence he urged

the council to educate some candidates for the ministry at the public expense, and succeeded in engaging them to provide for four. He wished that the utmost pains should be taken in giving children a religious education, founded on the holy Scriptures. He required of those youths who devoted themselves to the study of divinity, that they should learn the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, and cultivate an acquaintance with the objects of nature, in order to perceive how wonderful is the Creator, how weak and short-sighted is man; likewise that they should acquire a knowledge of the various countries, states, and nations of the earth, and pay particular attention to those writings which treat of good laws and institutions. He also regarded as necessary the study of logic, in order to distinguish appearances from realities, and of rhetoric, that they might learn to express themselves with

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force and precision; besides which, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music, and the other liberal arts, were not to be overlooked. "Truly," he said, "these sciences are the gifts of God, nor must they be condemned or rejected on account of the perversity of men who abuse them." He called upon the council to improve the schools already existing, to establish new ones, and appoint upright and accomplished teachers. In short, for the sake of the public welfare, "let no one in any way obstruct the cultivation of learning, or of the arts and sciences." For whatever may be a person's station or calling, knowledge and science will be of inestimable advantage to him; but above all, the knowledge of the holy Scriptures. On this subject, Farel addressed both the church and the magistracy, but especially parents, to whom he says, "If you are desirous of worthily bearing the honourable name of father, which God applies to you, and assumes also for himself, if you wish to be fathers in reality, and not in name only, give your children pious and faithful teachers, or bring them up yourselves in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

The persecutions endured by the protestants in France called forth Farel's sympathy and efforts for their relief, particularly as his brothers, Daniel and Gauthier, were in prison, and the latter was in danger of his life. In company with Viret, he travelled to Berne and Basle to gain assistance for them. Farel's

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two brothers were at length set at liberty. The following year he and Viret visited Basle and Strasburg in behalf of the persecuted Waldenses.

In Neufchatel itself, Farel was called upon to counteract the writings of the Anabaptists, which Peloux, a citizen of Neustadt, had caused to be printed in Germany, and had circulated there very extensively. He wrote a severe letter to Peloux, with the hope of recovering him from his errors; but it seemed to embitter rather than soften his spirit. Calvin also was much harassed by persons of the same class, and he sought the advice of his friend on the best method of checking their attempts. Farel advised [Calvin] to employ his pen against them, encouraged him when he seemed ready to relinquish the contest and retire from Geneva, and at last, visited him, in order to render the aid of his personal interference with the citizens and the senate. He reminded them of his former services, of his distinguished abilities, and of his pre-eminent labours in the cause of the reformation. And, since many were offended by the severity of Calvin's reproofs, he

wished them to recollect that he had with equal freedom exposed the faults of Luther and Melancthon, and other eminent men.

In 1545, Farel published a small book of devotions, full of energy and fervour, and bearing a strong resemblance to the Confessions of Augustine. He also printed about the same time several pastoral

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letters, for the encouragement of all who loved the truth, and for the special consolation of the persecuted. He read Calvin's writings with the deepest interest. On one occasion, when extremely dejected on account of his friend's troubles, he was so cheered by his work on the Council of Trent, that he spent a whole night in perusing it.

CHAPTER 21. THE INTERIM – FAREL’S WRITINGS – DEDICATION – SYNOD – BOLSEC – BUCER’S DEATH – FAREL’S SUFFERINGS, AND JOURNEY TO GENEVA.

THE church of Berne, after the decease of Bertold Haller, not only fell into a state of internal dissension, but respecting the sacrament, it was at variance with the churches of Valais, many of whose ministers were inclined to Bucer’s views. The differences among the reformed churches on this subject were a source of increasing trouble to Farel, and he employed every means in his power to bring about a better state of things. At length, with the assistance of Calvin, he prevailed on the churches at Geneva, Neufchatel, Schaffhausen, St. Gall, and Basle, to sign an agreement to which the ministers of Berne also gave a verbal assent. Bullinger transmitted the articles of union to England. And through Calvin and Farel they were communicated to the friends of the gospel in France, where they occasioned great joy.

The dreadful storm that broke over the Protestants

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in Germany, the *Interim*,¹ and the fall of Constance, which had been weakened by factions long before the reformation, were events which deeply affected Farel. He looked upon the *Interim* as the device of Satan for the ruin of the church. “O, Saviour! Full of power and grace,” he exclaimed in a letter to Bucer, “can no prayers avail with you? Will you not, for the honour of your name, and for the sake of the light of your gospel, forgive these wretched people their multiplied transgressions against you? Why does your anger still burn against your flock as if you intended to destroy everything, so that the future appears even darker than the past?” He then notices the character of civil governors, whose duty it was to protect faithful pastors, punish the faithless, and hazard their lives for the truth; but who were so alarmed at the rustling of a leaf that they denied God, and Christ, and religion altogether. “Oh what dreadful depravity! To abjure that Saviour whom they had acknowledged, to proscribe and expel the precious gospel and the sacraments which they had received! What fellowship does Christ have with Antichrist, or the gospel of life with the soul-destroying mass, or the sacraments with the infernal superstitions of popery?” Then addressing his friend, he thus continued, “You and your colleagues are ambassadors of the Most High. The rod of God is entrusted to you for the purpose of ruling the church. A dreadful woe falls upon all those who teach anything but the word of God, or practise hypocrisy of any kind. As Christ must always be preached in order that he

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alone may reign, so must Antichrist be held up to abhorrence, that he may find no entrance. How the thought grieves me, if those whom I could have sworn would stand fast in the Lord in the

¹ The *Augsburg Interim* was issued at the Diet of Augsburg 1548, after Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, defeated the Smalcald League. Pending the *Council at Trent*, its 26 articles ordered Protestants to readopt traditional Catholic beliefs and practices, including the seven Sacraments; but it also allowed Protestant clergymen to marry, and the laity to receive Protestant communion. The Pope ordered all bishops to abide by these concessions to the Protestants.

face of an apostate world, those whom I so highly prized and valued, you who are a father and a pastor, and your colleagues – if these brilliant lights were to become so obscured as not to even enjoin the accursed things which they once abhorred, or at least use no opposition to them, or undertake nothing against the powers of hell, these legions of devils, but rather favour them! Lord Jesus! Open their eyes that they may see. Be mindful of your servants, and of what you have already wrought by them!” He then thanked the Lord for strengthening those of his servants who had not yet denied him. He declared that in the dreadful picture he had presented before them, he only sought to deter them from that sin which, in imagination, he had ascribed to them. “For,” he said, “shall we who are redeemed by God’s grace from the severe bondage of Antichrist, in which our consciences languished, devoid of faith, and obeying evil doctrines, now voluntarily adore the idol again, and recommend its adoration to others, to their destruction and our own? How much better would it have been for us had we never known the way of truth than thus to return to our former impurity!”

During the *Interim*, Farel’s “Letter to all the magistrates, churches, and pastors, to whom the Lord had led him, and who had assisted him in the work of the Lord,” made its appearance.

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In this tract, he gives a faithful and clear account of his being at first sunk in the grossest errors; of his changing from a blind bigot to a sceptic, and finally, after many struggles, of his attaining to a knowledge of the truth by means of the Scriptures. He exhorts his readers to cleave to the commands of the Saviour, and to assent to nothing which proceeded from the pope, the enemy of God. He exhorts teachers and pastors in particular, to perform their duties with assiduity, to be on their guard against every popish corruption, and to preach the Scriptures in their purity; he reminds them of the dreadful judgment which will come on all those who make their boast of the gospel, but deviate from it in life and doctrine. He concludes by saying, “Let us adhere firmly to Jesus, continue in his holy doctrines, daily improve in all that is good, and bring forth the real fruits of the children of God. Let us strive to obtain the enduring and heavenly inheritance in the exercise of that true and living faith which works by love, not doubting but that, as the word of God ‘endures for ever,’ we also shall live by it eternally.”

No sect that had up to now troubled the church, produced greater injury than the Libertines. The leaders of the party came from the Netherlands. Only a few appeared in Geneva and Switzerland under this name, which was so abhorred that it exposed them, everywhere, to capital punishment. Under the pretence of correcting the errors of Popery,

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they deluded the simple, and sapped the very foundations of religion. They spoke much of the Spirit, and by a certain apparent devotion of manner, deluded many, especially females. Similar to their general language, were the titles of the little works they disseminated, pretending to be “Introductions to a life of piety.” But in reality, they were the effusions of an ill-regulated imagination, full of vague speculations. In order to deceive the friends of the reformation, they made use of the language of the reformers. With similar views, a Franciscan imitated Calvin and taught predestination; but he made it an apology for sin. Against this man, Farel wrote his

“Sword of the true word of God.” He also boldly attacked the pernicious tenets of the Libertines, whose adherents not only gave themselves up to every vice, but even shamelessly undertook to defend them. One of their principles was that God had made men wicked as a foil to his own goodness. They also held that men were nothing more than machines moved by a superior power, so that when anyone performed the most wicked action, he only acted according to the will of God. By their pantheistic notions that at death the soul was merged in the Divine essence, or rather annihilated, they took away the belief in its immortality as a distinct, conscious existence. And this absorption was, they maintained, the only means of freedom from sin. Farel pointed out the contrariness of such sentiments to the doctrines of Scripture, and exposed the absurdity of what they termed spiritual exposition.

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He had been a witness of their wild imaginations, their pretended revelations, for even in Neufchatel their notions had found acceptance. Argument was of little avail with these self-imagined spiritualists, since they constantly treated their opponents as carnal, and therefore wholly incompetent to understand the spiritual sense of Scripture. In their opinion, Farel was only a minister of the letter, ignorant of the higher sense, and had never received the baptism of fire. [Farel], on the other hand, vindicated the simple and intelligible language of Scripture. “Beware,” he said, “as of infernal spirits, those who say that the Scriptures contain such profound mysteries that they are too deep and spiritual to be expressed. For though it is true that divine things are sublime and unsearchable, so that we must humbly ask God’s assistance to learn his holy will, to be governed by it, and to obey it; yet that which God has revealed for our salvation is so plain that no father can speak more intelligibly to his children than God speaks to us.” “Whether the papists boast themselves, the Turks conquer, the Jews continue hardened, heretics lift up their heads, or innumerable sects buzz around us like swarms of gnats, let the gracious Saviour be all in all to us; to Him we will firmly adhere, and we prefer his poverty and humility to all popish grandeur and all worldly riches.”

Farel had to maintain a conflict not only against the Libertines, but against false philosophers

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who made common cause with them and wished to be regarded as men of great genius. Likewise he maintained a conflict against the Anabaptists, and in some places against popery, which he regarded as the parent of every corruption of Christianity. He also surpassed many learned men of his time in zeal against the superstitious practices which were carried on by means of astrology and chiromancy.¹

He submitted his work, before publication, to his friends, Calvin and Viret. They were fully satisfied with everything except the style, which they complained was defective in perspicuity, and abounding in figures and allegories. In writing, as well as in speaking, his periods were too long, and his overflowing feelings were expressed in a rapid succession of interrogations, exclamations, and prayers. In return, Calvin joined Farel’s name with Viret’s in the Dedication

¹ *Chiromancy*: telling fortunes by lines on the palm of the hand.

of his *Commentary on Titus*, which [Calvin] intended to be a testimony to his contemporaries and to posterity of their inviolable friendship and harmonious cooperation.¹

The ecclesiastical regulations adopted in the year 1542 had only been partially carried into effect at that point. At the instance of Farel, a new synod was convened which Calvin, Viret, and Haller were invited to attend. The first two were present, and the last sent a friendly letter excusing his absence on the ground that he could not appear without special permission from the senate. Calvin's presence considerably influenced the proceedings, which were

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peaceful and unanimous. Twenty-eight articles were agreed to relating chiefly to marriage and the removal of those traces of popery which yet remained.

Farel observed with pain that there were preachers, particularly in the country, who became agriculturists, or for the sake of pursuing their pleasures (and some for worse purposes), neglected their studies and the duties of their profession; and did so at a time when everyone ought to feel, "what great need there was of men of God who would stand as pillars in the temple, for the glory of God and the welfare of his people."

The dangers to which the church was exposed brought upon Farel an increasing weight of care, and engaged him in a very extensive correspondence. In consequence of the *Interim*, Tossanus was uncertain whether he should leave the church at Montbeliard or not. He applied for advice to his Strasburg friends; and in several letters to Farel he laid open to him his hopes and fears. Bucer also acquainted him with his sufferings, dangers, and labours, and was much encouraged and comforted by his letters in return. Both complained of the civil powers which not only by their perfunctory mode of discharging their duties, but by directly hostile measures, prevented the right administration of church discipline. When Bucer ended his days in England, Farel wrote as follows: "Our friend has happily seized the prize, and left us struggling in the course below. We deplore our lot, and that of the church, in being

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deprived of a man so distinguished, and whose labours in the Lord's service were invaluable. While on earth his enemies persecuted this holy man, not indeed to the extent of their wishes, but of those limits which were set to the endeavours of Satan and his agents. But now, escaped from all danger, he lives in safety with the Lord. The same happiness awaits us. But at present we must expect persecution from the world, which, however, our faithful Father will so alleviate according to his promise, that we shall be able to bear it. Let not our courage then be depressed. We will persevere in spite of Satan and his efforts, and finish the work committed to us, which in the end will bring forth much good fruit. We know whom we serve."

A variety of painful events in his own congregation pressed heavily upon him, in addition to the loss of his friend, and the melancholy state of the church in general. The office which he held in

¹ Specifically, the Dedication contained in Calvin's 1549 *Commentary on Titus*, not the 1556 edition. It reads, "To two eminent servants of Christ, William Farel and Peter Viret, his dearly beloved brethren and colleagues."

the ecclesiastical court (greatly against his inclination) gave him much trouble, especially in reference to divorces. His conscientiousness was looked upon as severity, and his zeal as intolerance. Even his friends and his colleague wished him to moderate his censures. On hearing such opinions expressed of his conduct, he broke out into this lamentation: "I am already advanced in years, and have not sufficient vigour to urge those under my care, who require a continual spur. In the ecclesiastical courts I am a novice, and stand alone.

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I am honoured with the title of father, it is true; but my sons have little reverence for my authority." Many refused to submit to church discipline, and the council was lukewarm in everything that concerned the cause of religion and sound morals. The abuses of popery were treated with forbearance; learning and men of learning were held in contempt. His only hope was in God, to whom he addressed his supplications. "Those who ought to heal, cherish the deadly disease; and the more dangerous it becomes, the more sanguine¹ they are of attaining their object, in the overthrow of all that is good."

Farel, while he was inflexibly firm in maintaining what he believed to be the truth, was sincerely anxious to be informed of his defects by impartial observers. In writing to his friend Ambrose Blaarer of Biel, he says, "I conjure you to admonish me faithfully of what you see to be amiss, and remember me in your prayers. Thus you will profit me and the church also, far more than by your commendations, which proceed from an excessive attachment."

Afflicted himself, he sought by every means to aid his brethren in tribulation. He watched with great anxiety the course of events in Magdeburg and France, where the friends of the truth were suffering persecution. He offered to accompany Calvin, if he would undertake a journey for the purpose of obtaining protection for the faithful. And when his

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friend had incurred odium² for his attempts to repress the Libertines at Geneva, he and Viret immediately repaired there to plead with the senate on behalf of religion and its ministers, as well as the foreigners who, persecuted for their faith, had sought an asylum there.

¹ *Sanguine*: confidently optimistic and cheerful.

² *Odium*: Hate coupled with disgust.

CHAPTER 22. FAREL'S ILLNESS – ECCLESIASTICAL REGULATIONS AND OCCURRENCES – SERVETUS – THE LIBERTINES – PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THE PARISH PRIEST OF CRESSIER – CALVIN AND GENEVA – MONTBELIARD.

IT is not surprising that Farel's health should have suffered under his manifold trials and labours. He had already passed through one severe illness. But in 1553, he was seized with pleurisy so violent that Sarogin, his physician, gave little hopes of his recovery. In this distressing situation, he received a visit from the celebrated French jurist, Charles Du Moulin, who was anxious for a personal acquaintance with so distinguished a champion of the reformation. The next day Calvin arrived. During his stay Farel made his will. It began with expressing his gratitude to God, for the unspeakable mercy manifested to him, notwithstanding his unworthiness, particularly for having redeemed him from the curse under which the human race lay, by the death of his Son, and for having brought him out of the horrible darkness of popery to a knowledge of the truth. He then committed his

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soul and body to Christ until the great day of the resurrection. He spoke in thankful terms of the grace which had called him to be a preacher of the gospel, and implored the Divine forgiveness for all his failures and sins in so high a vocation. He avowed his unfaltering belief of the truths he had preached, and hoped that his death-bed confession might confirm those who had received the gospel from his lips. He bequeathed his little remaining property to his brothers, Gauthier and Claudius (to whom he had previously resigned his paternal inheritance), but trusted they would be satisfied with the title of heirs, and not appropriate to their personal use so inconsiderable a legacy. He enjoined upon them peace and unity, and especially, if they wished to be considered his brethren, stedfastness in the faith. He left a fourth part of his books to the library of the ministers in his district, and the rest to the sons of his brother Gauthier, and to his nephew, Caspar Carmel, the preacher. A third part of what was left of money and furniture, was to be given to the poor under the direction of the ministers, and the rest to his brothers to liquidate any debts that might still remain. Calvin subscribed his name as the first witness. Gladly would Farel have departed to his Lord and Master, but his desire was not granted. On the contrary, Calvin's wish that his friend might survive him, was fulfilled to his great consolation.

Farel had scarcely recovered, when a synod was held. The former governor was dead. Because

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his successor, Von Bonstellen, was on friendly terms with Farel, the wishes of the synod met with a better reception. In the course of a few months, several important regulations were published respecting the Lord's Supper, the preparatory instruction of the children, the choice of preachers and schoolmasters, baptism, marriage, the observance of the Lord's day, and forms of family prayer. Parents were enjoined to send their children for catechetical instruction, and children were to treat their parents with respect. If anyone considered himself aggrieved by

personal allusions from the pulpit, he was enjoined not to revile the preacher or his office, but to give information of it to the council, who would call the preacher to account. Though attending mass and wearing rosaries were prohibited, still it would seem that a hankering after them existed. The regulations determined the punishments to be incurred by those who treated or despised sacred things with contempt, or despised their parents; by those who were guilty of profanity, or any species of unchastity; by usurers, seducers of youth, drunkards, seditious persons, and persons who used licentious language. Dancing was entirely forbidden, as well as immodest dress, particularly for brides; but certain games and military sports were allowed. Fortune-tellers, sorcerers, and witches were to be punished according to their deserts, and gypsies were to be expelled from the country.

No allusion was made in these civil enactments to ecclesiastical censures, though Farel regarded them

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as necessary, as well as exclusion from the Lord's Supper, so that the church might attain its pristine purity and lustre. But upon this point, the assembly was not unanimous. Some churches in the province of Volangin practised the excommunication of offenders, and did not re-admit them to the sacrament until they had done penance publicly. Others did not approve of it, and appealed to the usage of the church of Berne. In consequence of this difference of sentiment, the question was proposed to several churches "whether it was according to the word of God, that those who had given public offence to the church, should do penance publicly?" Calvin and the Genevese, Blaarer and Tossanus, replied in the affirmative. The churches of Berne approved in general of church discipline, but maintained that the same forms could not be observed everywhere. "Every church," they said, "should practise what it has been accustomed to, and finds most useful." The clergy of Basle subsequently answered the question in the affirmative, in its whole extent.

Although Farel's colleague, Fabri, agreed with him on this point, yet [Fabri] seemed too lenient to him; and as their views often differed, a painful coolness arose between them which was the more to be regretted because they were, in heart, sincere friends. Farel complained that Fabri occupied himself with too many irrelevant matters, and was too pertinacious¹ of his own opinion. Calvin, who perceived that Fabri, by his conciliatory address, compensated for what was

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frequently repulsive in his venerable colleague, endeavoured by prudent suggestions to quiet Farel's complaints.

The state of affairs in Geneva, at this time, filled Calvin with perplexity. But anxious not to disturb his friend, he never acquainted him with his troubles. Farel, however, having heard of his situation through other channels, hastened to Lausanne to consult with Viret on the best method of affording him assistance. He was very uneasy because Calvin had not invited him to Geneva.

¹ *Pertinacious*: stubbornly unyielding.

“The origin and aim of our friendship,” [Farel] said, in one of his letters, “is Christ, and the edification of the church. Riches, honour, power, worldly pleasure, are not what we seek, but only how we may best serve the Lord.” “If you believe it to be for the glory of Christ, beseech, command, constrain me to come!”

While the Libertines were violently opposing Calvin, and seeking his downfall and that of the ecclesiastical discipline which he had introduced, Michael Servetus arrived at Geneva. His long concealment necessarily excited Calvin’s suspicion. One of his own scholars accused him, and the procureur-general instituted further process. The proceeding was generally approved of. The doctrine of Servetus was a medley of dogmas and blasphemies which excited the greatest abhorrence. Some things he had borrowed from the Libertines, others from the Anabaptists, and several originated with himself. Among the persons who conducted the investigation, were

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some of Calvin’s bitterest enemies. Relying on their support, Servetus rejected all advice, and was so misguided as to accuse Calvin of capital offences, which none of his other opponents had ever ventured to do. The passions of both parties were roused to the highest degree of excitement. Calvin complained of lost confidence. He believed that the church, the reformed faith, and his own life, were in danger.

There were many who regarded Servetus more as a blasphemer than a heretic, and blasphemy was at that time, and for a much later period, punished with death. This was the view taken by Bullinger, Musculus, and Farel. “I should regard myself,” wrote the latter, “as a criminal worthy of death, if I caused only one soul to apostatize from the Christian faith. I cannot therefore pass a more lenient judgment on others than I would upon myself.” Against Servetus were arrayed the law, public opinion, most of the leaders of the Swiss churches, the decision of the Bernese senate, Calvin, who was not only a theologian, but a civilian; the danger the church would be in of being charged with holding the same opinions if [Servetus] were allowed to escape; the conduct of his friends; and, not least of all, his own behavior. All these tended to confirm his judges in their sentence. He was condemned to the flames. And thus the church, in the very act of maintaining its purity, contaminated itself with an indelible stain.

Calvin, by the advice of his friends, now sent for Farel. He not only obeyed the call, but

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undertook the melancholy office of attending Servetus till his death. Accompanied by some ministers from the country, he exhorted [Servetus] to confess his errors; but so far from doing this, [Servetus] attempted to defend them. He expressed, however, a willingness to be reconciled to Calvin, refusing at the same time to acknowledge that he had erred, except through ignorance. It should be mentioned to Farel’s honour, that he presented to the senate a petition from Servetus, that he might suffer a less painful death, but without success.

While this tragedy was acting, the disputes upon church discipline were renewed with greater violence than ever. The consistory insisted on their rights against Phillibert Berthelier, an

excommunicated person whom the syndic, Perren, had admitted to the communion. Farel came again to Geneva in aid of his friends. He encouraged the lovers of order, by reproving the Libertines with his usual boldness and energy, in a public discourse. None of this class were present, but the report of the sermon so enraged them that, soon after his departure, a criminal prosecution was instituted against him, as if he had assailed the honour of the whole community. Summoned to answer for himself, he hastened to Geneva on foot, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather. Calvin was forbidden to let him preach; and on his arrival, his enemies threatened to throw him into the Rhone. An immense concourse of people assembled to hear his defence. Because Berthelier

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had ordered the workmen in the mint, who were under his control, to attend at the senate-house in order to act against Farel, a number of courageous young men formed themselves into a body-guard around him, so that no injury might befall their father Farel. Calvin, Viret, and the other preachers, exposed the malicious intentions of his accusers; and Farel himself, in a long and animated speech, vindicated himself from their aspersions. Paternal admonitions and reproofs, founded on the holy Scriptures (and only those he had delivered) were, he maintained, befitting his office. He disclaimed all intention of insulting the town, towards which, as everyone knew, he cherished the tenderest sentiments. His accusers, overpowered by his address, and awed by the assembled multitude, obeyed the commands of the senate to give their hands to Farel in token of reconciliation, and to acknowledge him as their kind father and teacher. He was dismissed with a request to retain the Genevese in his affectionate remembrance. He returned home, cheered by the friendly termination of the affair.

On his arrival at Neufchatel, he was under the necessity of defending himself against the slanders of Pierre, the pastor of Cressier, who abused Farel as “a savage man, a perverter of the truth, and possessed with two devils.” After a public trial, Pierre was convicted of slander, and ordered to beg pardon of Farel, the governor, and the inhabitants.

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Farel continued to discharge his pastoral duties with the same unwearied zeal which had always animated him. He became inured to personal insults, and adopted the wise course of leaving calumnies to refute themselves. He declared that he would rather be the one vilified by the malicious Bolsec, than that the gospel should be assailed by him in the person of Calvin. The storm still raged against Calvin, both in Geneva and Berne, where he was stigmatized as a heretic. “I must be made of wood and stone,” said Farel to his friend, “if I do not cleave to you with the tenderest affection. Christ has up to now worked beyond all our expectations, and he will effect still greater things. Let us stand undaunted. The battle is not ours, but the Lord’s. We are rather spectators than combatants. If we sow in tears, we shall reap with joy an abundant harvest. The Lord never forsakes his cause. He assisted Moses against the magicians, and destroyed Pharaoh with his host. And if he thus honoured the minister of the law, can you suppose that he will withdraw his aid from you? Antichrist and his adherents must be entirely cast down and annihilated, and the ministry of the gospel, which has been committed to you by

Christ, shall shine forth in all its splendour. Be satisfied that you serve the Lord, and that he ordains your labours and your sufferings. His will, and not ours, be done!”

Nothing gave Farel greater delight than to witness

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the progress of the truth. He rejoiced when it gained the ascendancy in Orbe where he had scattered the first seed, and where afterwards he had watered the crop in its progress to maturity. The fate of the people of Locarne, who were exiled for their attachment to the gospel, affected him deeply. He made a collection at Neufchatel on their account. “O you happy ones!” he exclaimed, “to whom it is given to prefer the gospel to every temporal blessing! It is delightful to the friends of Christ to hear how fathers are willing to forsake their sons on account of the word of God, how sons love Christ more than their parents, and how even young females cannot be restrained either by their parents, brothers, or tenderly beloved sisters, from choosing the gospel. What heart is so hard as not to be softened by this holy spectacle! It would be almost incredible, that the stony and cruel-hearted individuals, who thirst after such sacred blood, should not at last be brought to feel otherwise!”

He was gratified beyond measure with the flourishing state which the church at Geneva had attained, through the grace of God, after so many relapses and perils. It was now admired and considered as a model of the Christian life by pious foreigners who took refuge there. In writing to a friend, Farel remarked, “I was lately in Geneva, and such was the pleasure I felt, that I could scarcely tear myself away. Not that I wished to be the teacher of a church so large, and so eager for the word, but only to hear

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and learn as the lowliest of the people. Very different is my feeling from that of the man who said that he would rather be first in the mountains than second in Rome.¹ I would rather be the last in Geneva, than the first anywhere else. If the Lord and love for the flock entrusted to my care did not forbid it, nothing would keep me from coming to reside among that people to whom I have always been united in spirit.” The Genevese, in return, were not insensible to his affection for them, and the many proofs he had given of it in what he had done and suffered for them. They not only treated him with the utmost hospitality, and every mark of attention when he visited them; but the senate brought forward a proposal to retain him in Geneva with an honourable stipend, that no one might have cause to charge the Genevese with ingratitude.

But his satisfaction in the progress of the gospel in Geneva scarcely counterbalanced the pain which he felt at the changes which took place in Montbeliard. He clung with the heart of a father to the first fruits which the Lord had given him. And such was his esteem for Tossanus that there was no one whom he would have preferred for his successor or colleague. But it seems that some persons who favoured the views of Servetus had gained such an influence over him, that it exposed him, though unjustly, to the suspicion of holding similar sentiments. His old friends also remarked that after the Spaniard’s unhappy end, he had behaved towards them with some

¹ Referring to Julius Caesar’s comment.

degree of coldness. This manifested itself in a variety of expressions, particularly by his warning the newly appointed preachers against the errors of the Anabaptists, Osiander, Zuinglius, Œcolampadius, and Calvin. This alteration in his feelings, and his lumping such names together, grieved Farel exceedingly, because Tossanus was a pupil of Œcolampadius, and he was the confidant of all.

From this time Tossanus assumed a hostile tone towards the friends who had been so much devoted to him, for which he was faithfully reproved by Calvin. As for Farel, who had on many occasions reconciled the most discordant elements, his having failed on this occasion in making peace was a source of constant uneasiness. “How much I wish,” he said, “that we would consider that we do not live at Rome, but in the church of Christ; that we are not to strive for ecclesiastical preferments, but should hazard our lives for the defence of the gospel, and the truth of religion; that we are not standing before the judges of the Rota,¹ but before the Lord’s judgment-seat, and therefore we ought to act with so much the greater moderation and truth.”

¹ *Rota*: In the Roman Catholic Church, a tribunal of prelates that serves as its highest ecclesiastical court. It is named Rota (wheel) because the judges, called *auditors*, originally met in a round room to hear cases. The Rota was established in the 13th century.

CHAPTER 23. FAREL'S ATTEMPTS TO PROMOTE A UNION WITH THE LUTHERANS – HIS JOURNEYS ON BEHALF OF THE PERSECUTED PROTESTANTS – EVENTS AT PRUNTRUT – VARIOUS CAUSES OF ANXIETY.

THE controversy respecting the Lord's Supper, which for more than thirty years had been carried on among the Protestants, and the consequent divisions in the church, deeply grieved Farel. It caused him to reflect long and deeply on the best means of effecting a permanent union. The agreement with the church at Zurich, which he had brought about by the aid of Calvin, appeared to him one step towards a junction with the Lutherans, especially since Calvin had not been condemned by Luther or his adherents. The measure had been favourably received by many; others had learned to judge more favourably of the "sacramentarians," as the adherents to the doctrinal views of the reformed church were called. Contrary, however, to all expectation, the controversy was renewed more violently than ever by Joachim Westphal, a preacher in Hamburg; in some places verbal disputes ended in acts of violence.

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Although about this time Farel published a "tract upon the Sacraments," it was intended to show the object and utility of this sacred rite, rather than to discuss controverted points; nor did he suppose that a union could be brought about by polemical treatises. The means which appeared to him best adapted for the object which lay so near his heart, was a union of the Swiss churches themselves, and a conference between the most judicious and peaceably disposed individuals of both parties. But he soon found that the preachers of Berne could not be induced to sign Calvin's defence of "the Agreement."¹

For several years he laboured to obtain a conference. His hopes in reference to this matter were fixed on Bullinger. "The more appearances are against us," he said in writing to him, "the more we must hope and attempt everything in dependence on God who will crown the labour with success. May Christ lead those who know the truth to speak and act wisely and devoutly in this sacred matter; then we shall come forth as conquerors, and be instrumental in leading all those to the Lord who are at all disposed to embrace the truth."

Farel soon had an opportunity to ascertain more clearly whether the protestant preachers were inclined to a public conference. The Waldenses in the valley of Auvergne were threatened, not only with persecution, but with entire extirpation.² They sought assistance from their tried friends in Geneva and

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¹ The *Consensus Tigurinus* of 1549 is also known as the *Zurich Agreement*.

² *Extirpation*: to cut off from existence.

Neufchatel. When the danger became imminent, Beza and Farel resolved to entreat the protestant states in Switzerland and several German princes and cities, to intercede for them with the king of France. They first made an affecting and successful appeal to the senate of Berne, in which they were faithfully assisted by Haller. Bullinger was their interpreter at Zurich, where they were also willingly listened to. Such, likewise, was the case at Schaffhausen, where Simpert Vogt assisted them beyond their expectation. Sulier supported them in Basle, where the result of their application was favourable. In a few weeks, an embassy from the four cantons was dispatched to the court of France.

From Basle, Farel and Beza repaired to Montbeliard and Strasburg; from there they proceeded to the Palatinate. Everywhere they met with a friendly reception. But they could clearly perceive that the Lutherans were much displeased at the violent language employed against their views of the sacrament. Diller, chaplain to the court, expressed himself pleased with what the preachers offered in justification of their sentiments, but wished for further evidence to satisfy the Elector. The reference to Calvin's *Institutes* did not appear to him sufficient. Accordingly, they presented him with a printed copy of their Confession of Faith concerning the Lord's Supper. The next place that they visited was Goppingen. They were most kindly received by Duke Christopher of Würtemberg, who expressed in strong terms his desire to

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see peace in the church; in which he was joined by all his court.

A few months after, Farel and Beza again visited Zurich. Their journey was occasioned by the sufferings of their brethren in France. Henry II. had increased the gloom that prevailed in his kingdom after the defeat at St. Quentin, by new persecutions of the protestants. Their enemies pretended that the vengeance of Heaven had fallen on the country as a consequence of the indulgence shown by the king to heretics. The persecution raged with the greatest violence in Paris. The reformed church there sent Carmel, their minister, into Switzerland to inform their friends of their distress, and to obtain through their intervention the aid of the protestant states and princes.

As the former intercession on behalf of the Waldenses had been successful, they hoped that this also would be of use. They urged that a deputation should immediately be sent from Berne, consisting of individuals who possessed the greatest influence at court. They proposed Tellier, the treasurer, and Hans Mirabilis. The latter was chosen along with Claudius May. The senate of Zurich also manifested great sympathy, and urged Basle and Schaffhausen to manifest equal zeal. The envoys of the confederate cantons set off without delay on their mission; but before their arrival, many had fallen victims to the blind fury of their enemies.

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On arriving at Strasburg, Farel was grieved to find, instead of his ancient friends, many persons of opposite sentiments, and ill-disposed towards the Swiss. The clergy, however, assured the deputation that they would arrange a conference between the Germans and Swiss.

From Strasburg they travelled to Worms where, by means of a conference, an attempt had just been made to settle the differences among the protestants, and to enter into an amicable arrangement with the Roman Catholics. Farel was glad of this event, and had previously called upon Calvin and Blaarer to be present, and not to lose such an opportunity to make an approach to terminating the disputes respecting the Lord's Supper.

They found the German princes ready to intercede with the French king for the protestants who had been imprisoned. But the ecclesiastics were otherwise disposed, having taken offence at the nightly meetings which the persecuted protestants had been accustomed to hold. It seemed necessary to give a statement of the doctrines held by the French reformed church. In it they appealed to Calvin's Catechism, and declared that their sentiments coincided with those of the Augsburg Confession, with the exception of the article respecting the Lord's Supper, on which point they would be glad to explain themselves in a conference. For the present, they expressed themselves with caution. For they said, "The bread is the communion of the body," that is, it is that which, when we receive it, the Son of God is

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really present. They added, "he makes us his members by faith."

The clergy of Zurich, however, were decidedly averse to a public disputation. They declared, that they would attend nowhere without the permission of the senate. While, on the contrary, Calvin and his friends asserted, "We do not consider ourselves such slaves as to be afraid to converse with others on whatever may promote the well-being of the church." Farel and Beza did not escape reproaches for having conceded too much; but the cry of distress from their brethren impelled them forward. When their intercession on behalf of these unfortunate people was blamed, Farel exclaimed, "Oh, the satanic malignity of these hearts, who will neither do anything themselves for Christ, nor can endure that others should."

A new scene of exertion was now presented to Farel. About three years before, on the decease of Bishop Philip, it was represented to the ministers that a favourable reception would be given to a teacher of the protestant doctrines in the diocese of Basle; but no one had yet been found courageous enough to make the attempt. Farel's time had been fully occupied, as we have seen, with other important engagements. But no sooner were these fulfilled, than he entered on an undertaking well-adapted to the intrepid ardour of his piety. The first place where he preached was St. Leonard. He met with no opposition; the people heard him gladly, and on his departure many hundreds assembled to bid him farewell.

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Accompanied by his old attendant, Emar Beynon, the minister of Serrieres, he went from there to Pruntrut, where they were received in the most friendly manner. The mayor and town-clerk supped with them. The next day they appeared before the council. The deep interest with which all present listened to Farel's address, rendered him more than usually eloquent. The council received with approval and thankfulness the offer of his ministerial services, but intimated that a future time would be more suitable for their acceptance. Meanwhile, some of the councillors

were sent for by the bishop, who inquired what was the object of this visit, and immediately after summoned Farel and his companion. The syndic John Wandelin addressed him thus: "Farel, you came here formerly to sow your tares, and having been sent away by the late bishop, you have refrained up to now from repeating your attempt. We may reasonably be astonished at your daring to appear here again. But you are now advised, in a friendly manner, to retire, before any mischief befalls you." Farel then stated the chief subject of his preaching to be "Christ, and him crucified," and declared, that to call such doctrine "tares" was a grievous sin against the Saviour, and contradictory to the holy Scriptures. Besides, he had preached freely in Neustadt, and elsewhere in the bishop's jurisdiction, without ever being sent away, and had taught that which was the surest means of uniting princes and people, namely, obedience to Christ, the King of kings.

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He had received his commission from Christ, and was ready to submit to any punishment if it could be proved that he had preached false doctrine. The syndic approved of his principles, but excused himself from reducing them to practice. He declared that since the mass was not tolerated in the vale of Munster, and in the parts under the Bernese government, he would not permit its abolition within his own jurisdiction. Farel took a friendly leave of the inhabitants, and saw no more the multitudes of people whom the news of his arrival had brought from all quarters to Pruntrut.

Farel's appearance in the diocese was soon known to the archbishop of Besançon, who forthwith sent a grand-vicar to Pruntrut, accompanied by a monk, in order to counteract the impression made in favour of the evangelical doctrine. The grand-vicar professed himself ready to dispute with the preachers against their false, impious, and scandalous tenets. He gave orders that a courier should be dispatched for him if the heretical teachers came again, so that he might redeem his pledge. As soon as the people of Neufchatel heard of this, they sent (by the advice of Von Wattenwyl) Soral, minister of Budry, with letters to the council of Pruntrut. He arrived there on St. George's day. As the mayor and his deputy were both absent, some of the inhabitants who were sitting before their houses courteously invited him to be their guest. [Soral] had not been long in the place before the parish priest came to him, and in a great rage accused him

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of sowing tares. He called him a deceiver and a teacher of erroneous doctrine, and uttered very violent threats. A nobleman also, after reviling him in a similar manner, beat him with a club till he was in imminent peril of his life.

Farel, with his colleagues de Serrieres and Boudri, now repaired once more to Pruntrut. On the way and in the town itself they were assailed by some priests, and in vain attempted to procure redress. Nor were they more successful in their efforts to bring about a public disputation; so that they were obliged to return without having accomplished the objects of their mission.

This attempt to gain a footing in Pruntrut excited a great sensation, not only in Besançon, but throughout Burgundy. The archbishop and council of Besançon, the parliament of Dobe, and the

lord of Vergy, wrote to the Bernese to forbid their preachers from teaching beyond their own territory. The bishop of Basle also sent a message to prevent such visits. To gain over the inhabitants of Pruntrut, the archbishop distributed absolutions, and dispensed with the order for fasting. Still, however, the people showed a partiality to Farel and the reformed doctrine. In the following Lent, fresh means were employed to retain them in their ancient faith. The prior of the Dominicans at Besançon, a doctor of the Sorbonne, and an inquisitor, reviled Farel, Calvin, and Viret as “deceivers, heretics, and false prophets.” The parish priest of Nairmont preached in a similar strain.

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After Farel had received repeated accounts of these proceedings, he hastened to Berne. He arrived there on a holiday, a time when it was not easy to obtain an audience; but the bailiff Nageli expressed himself willing to assemble the senate after Divine service. The venerable minister was, however, obliged to stand for an hour before Von Wattenwyl’s door, exposed to the inclemency of the weather and the gaze of the people, and at length was received very ungraciously. He was so far successful, however, in his application to the senate, that they decided on writing to the bishop of Basle and the council of Pruntrut, to demand that the monk should be brought to trial. The answer received by the government of Berne was partly exculpatory, asserting that the monk had spoken nothing injurious to their honour, or to that of others; partly accusatory, alleging that Farel had published some noted tracts, respecting which he would perhaps be brought to trial himself. Calvin also had no inclination to involve himself and the Genevese in the dispute. When urged by Farel, he replied, “It would be a strange thing were I to require justice against a monk at a distance when I am daily reviled as a heretic before the gates of Geneva!”

A variety of cares and occupations devolved on Farel, besides these journeys on behalf of the church. He was consulted on the affairs of foreign churches, which were often of a complicated and critical nature. The divisions of the French church at Frankfort caused

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him much trouble. He was much interested with the case of Haubrac, a learned French schoolmaster who narrowly escaped the flames. He was still persecuted by the Roman Catholics for having read the gospels in the chapel at Lignieres, and for speaking contemptuously of the mass to some people of Landeron, who violently assaulted him as a consequence.

The whole district, as well as [Farel] himself, was exposed to danger in consequence of the numerous intrigues to detach it from the government of the duchess of Longueville, and to expel the protestant doctrine. The duchess herself came into the district. She conversed gladly on religion, and showed much zeal in its behalf. While at Geneva, she wished, at Farel’s suggestion, to have an interview with Calvin. The decision of the senate of Berne obviated the danger, and hope increased that the few remains of popery would soon disappear.

Farel’s celebrity occasioned his being visited by many foreigners. Among this number, besides several Poles, was Lissman, a learned Greek, who solicited him to draw up an appeal to the

Polish church and to some of the nobles, as well as to the king himself if he thought it proper. But while he was held in such consideration in other countries, he often had to lament the little good effected by his personal labours at home. In one of his letters, he says, "Everything with us is in confusion; no church discipline is exercised, no one is on the watch, nor is anything done to guide the wandering sheep into the right path. Everything tends to evil, and all that is good is in danger."

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He felt more and more that he stood alone. On hearing of Pellican's death, the images of his deceased friends, Ecolampadius, Bucer, Capito, Zuinglius, and Grynseus passed in solemn and affecting review before his mind. Pellican's love of peace especially delighted him, and he wished that all who were endowed with distinguished abilities might cultivate the same lovely temper which this good man exhibited to the very end of his life. None pleased him more than those lovers of peace who exerted all their powers for the restoration of unanimity.

CHAPTER 24. FAREL'S MARRIAGE – DISPUTE RESPECTING EXCOMMUNICATION – JOURNEYS UNDERTAKEN FOR THE WALDENSES, AND INTO FRANCE – LANDERON – CALVIN'S DEATH – JOURNEY TO METZ – SICKNESS AND DEATH.

“GOD created woman to be a help meet for man, especially in the holy state of matrimony. To help is the aim of love. Marriage binds the parties to a strict outward union; but how much more should it promote that unity of spirit which rests upon affection and true friendship! We clearly see in those married persons who live according to the Divine law, how the affection of the one sympathizes with the comfort or discomfort of the other. The man rejoices in the welfare of his wife, and the woman in the welfare of her husband. Her sorrows trouble him; while she not only grieves for his sufferings, but if her spouse is absent, joy departs till he returns to her. What sacrifices are too great for her to make if he is ill; and what will he regard as too great, if he can thereby restore her to health?

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So strong is their love that, with joy, they would endure for each other the sharpest sufferings. To those who wish to make progress in every virtue, what opportunities for the performance of the most sacred duties this state presents! What joy is felt, when progress is made in true goodness, and how it stirs up to constant and mutual improvement! If anything unpropitious occurs, how the most active and tender sympathy develops itself! So true is it, that the duties of love cannot be performed in any state so completely as in that of holy matrimony. He who himself 'is love' instituted, honoured, and commanded it; but he who was a murderer from the beginning, and hatred itself, has (as far as it lay in his power) annulled, disgraced, and forbidden it.”

Such were Farel's views of the marriage state which, from the beginning of the reformation, it was in general considered obligatory on the preachers of the gospel to enter into, so that they might not be exposed to the suspicion of those excesses which the conduct of the popish priests had connected with the very idea of celibacy. While he enjoined this duty on others, he did not feel himself justified in entering upon it during that stormy period of his life in which the ties of so endeared a connexion would have been in such constant danger of being broken by a violent death. But as he advanced in years, he felt the need for domestic solace and assistance. The widow and daughter of Alexander Torel of Rouen had fled to Neufchatel in order to enjoy

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the free exercise of their religion. The mother had long kept house for Farel, and the daughter was no longer young. His choice fell upon the latter. He communicated his intention to Calvin, who approved of his choice. And foreseeing that such a step would occasion much remark, he advised him not to delay, but to be immediately publicly betrothed and then, until the marriage ceremony was performed, to withdraw himself as decorum required. By delay, the affair became more public than Farel expected. He was now nearly seventy, and people who had been so long accustomed to see him single, were astonished that a man who, in all probability was on the

borders of the grave, should think of taking a wife; but men who were destitute of religious principle were very incompetent judges of his conduct. And most of his friends, on becoming better acquainted with his reasons for it, acknowledged their importance. After the bans¹ had been published three times, Farel set off on a journey. He committed the management of the church to Fabri, and entrusted his intended bride to the care of his friend, Bülot, a pious French refugee. The objects he had principally in view were to procure a conference, in order to effect a closer union with the Lutherans, and obtain assistance for Pruntrut. He returned in December, and was married in the course of that month. Six years after, he became the father of a son, who did not long survive him.

The reputation of Farel, as a zealous champion of

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the reformation, occasioned numerous applications, either for his advice by letter, or his personal interference. He visited Strasburg for the purpose of assisting the protestants at Metz who had lately made an application which promised to be successful, for the protection of their worship in public. He also undertook a journey on behalf of the Waldenses to Neustadt, Biel, Basle, and Mullhausen. Not long after his return home, he received letters informing him of the spread of the gospel in France, and stating that many hundred churches, among whom mass had been abolished, were longing for faithful pastors. He also received a special invitation to his native town, Gap, and at the same his colleague Fabri was urged to visit Vienne. Accordingly they went, accompanied by Eynard Pichon, minister of Dombresson. Farel, who had often lamented being compelled to live like an exile from the land of his fathers, trod with peculiar feelings his native soil which he now revisited after an absence of forty years. He arrived at Gap about the middle of November, and was received with joy and veneration, as the honoured instrument of leading thousands “from darkness to light.” Multitudes thronged to hear his first sermon, so that the church could not contain them; he was listened to with profound and uninterrupted attention. The syndics had previously requested the bishop’s vicar to prevent disturbance, and he kept his word. As Farel wished to avoid the reproach of acting clandestinely, he waited in the course of

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the same Sunday on the vice-mayor, accompanied by the chief syndic and the king’s advocate. He was immediately asked who had sent for him and given him authority to preach, since the royal edict had forbidden all such meetings under pain of death. Farel replied to these inquiries, and justified his conduct by an appeal to the Scriptures, and to recent events which had occurred since the publication of the edict – alluding to the fact that the brethren who were present at the disputation at Poissy had preached before the king, and that at Lyons and other places the gospel was openly published. The vice-mayor then requested him to refrain from preaching till he had informed the parliament of Grenoble and the governor. Farel, on the other hand, exhorted him to listen to the evangelical doctrine, describing the happy consequences of receiving it, and the awful punishment of those who opposed it. He was honourably conducted back again to the inn, and the same evening baptized a child.

¹ The bans of marriage are the public announcement in a Christian parish church of an impending marriage between two specified persons.

On the following evening all public meetings and the use of the churches were forbidden to the reformed party. The next morning, as Farel was coming out of the church, a servant of the vice-mayor delivered to him the prohibition, with a trembling hand. In the afternoon, the friends of the gospel met for prayer, and resolved to continue stedfast in the profession of that faith for which so many had already sacrificed their lives. They demanded of the vice-mayor a statement in writing of what he had done,

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in order to make an appeal to the king and his councillors.

Farel felt as if his "youth was renewed" in his native place, on beholding the fields thus ripe for harvest. He made no personal attacks on the priests, who showed more anxiety about tribute and tithes than about the doctrines of religion. But he dissuaded his hearers from anniversaries, masses for the dead, dispensations, absolutions, etc., as being contrary to the dictates of an enlightened conscience. He was much perplexed at the thoughts of leaving a place where there was still so much to be done and arranged. He entreated Calvin to send a preacher to take charge of the rising congregation until he could find a suitable person, or return himself; for at present he could not, consistently with his duty, leave his own post. He did not confine his labours to Gap. He met the friends of the reformation at Grenoble, and made a deep impression by an address which he delivered at the house of a merchant. He appointed his companion Pichon to be preacher there.

Soon after his return, hostilities recommenced in France, by which Fabri in Vienne, and likewise the church at Gap, were placed in circumstances of the greatest danger. During his absence, the Duchess of Longueville had arrived at Neufchatel with her son. The ministers availed themselves of her coming to settle several ecclesiastical questions. A synod was held, which confirmed anew the customary mode

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of choosing the preachers, and attempted finally to regulate church discipline, and to promote schools, of which several places in the country were still destitute. At Neufchatel they requested the aid of some well-qualified instructors, and the appointment of a female teacher for the girls.

The duchess corresponded with Calvin as long as she remained in the country, but could not obtain his presence at the synod. In his letters, he praises the courage and stedfastness of the duchess in her profession of the faith. In France, the persecuted found in her house a refuge and place of defence. Not long before her arrival, Lignieres adopted the reformation.

In Landeron, the reformation could not be established, owing to the influence of Solothurn; though, according to report, the popish party prevailed only by the majority of a single vote. The vicar of Landeron was appointed by Berne. But as the majority had decided against having a protestant preacher, the government received the revenues, and the parish maintained a priest at its own charge.

Various irregularities prevailed in the country, of which the governor made complaints to the senate of Berne. When the duchess arrived at Landeron with the young duke, she wished, according to her usual custom, to have the protestant service performed the next morning by a preacher who accompanied her. The inhabitants were assured that no allusion would be made to the catholic religion, nor would anyone be

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compelled to attend, since the service would be held only for the duchess and her retinue. It was further intimated that as the ruler of the land, she considered herself to have a right to the free exercise of her religion, especially since she allowed the same liberty to her subjects; but it was all in vain. The authorities of the town were the first to take arms. With rude threats and covered heads, they declared that they would throw the preacher from the pulpit. The duchess mildly pointed out the impropriety of preventing their natural sovereign from attending on the preaching of the gospel and the exercises of Christian devotion; but her condescension was unavailing. The alarm-bell was rung; the inhabitants armed themselves, surrounded the chapel, and obliged the duchess to desist from her purpose.

Farel heard of this transaction with great indignation, but believed that the priests were more to blame than the people. The duchess treated him with great kindness, and rendered him important aid in many unpleasant affairs. His attention was now chiefly directed towards France, where his friends Fabri and Viret were labouring with great success. He was especially glad to receive intelligence respecting the much-persecuted church at Gap. He encouraged and comforted his brethren. When the plague broke out at Lyons, he exhorted them to employ every effort to destroy the far more dangerous plague of popery. On their part, they fulfilled their vocation with equal affection and steadfastness. They

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visited not only those of their own persuasion who were ill of the plague, but the Roman Catholics also, and were ready to sacrifice everything, even life itself, for the gospel. "Neither my own life, nor my spouse, nor my children," said Fabri, "are so dear to me as my Lord Jesus, and his church."

Scarcely any event affected Farel so deeply as the loss of Calvin, whose earthly tabernacle at length gave way, weakened by intense labour and repeated sickness. When his end approached, he wrote as follows to Farel: "Farewell, my best and dearest brother! Since it is God's will that you should survive me, keep in remembrance our friendship which, as far as it has been useful to the church of God, will bear fruit for us in heaven. I do not wish that you should come here on my account. I am still suffering from difficulty of breathing, and expect every moment to be my last. My consolation is that of living and dying to Christ, who bestows unspeakable blessings on his people, both in life and death. To you and the brethren I once more say, farewell!" Farel immediately set out to take leave of his friend, and returned the next day, having had a very affectionate interview with him. "Oh, that I might have died for him!" he exclaimed, when he heard of his death. "What an admirable course he has happily terminated! God grant that we may

finish our course in like manner, according to the grace which he bestowed upon us!" He thanked God fervently that, contrary to his expectations, Calvin

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had been brought to Geneva, where he had done and suffered so much. The case of the church at Geneva after this irreparable loss, lay heavy on his heart.

Farel had, besides this heavy stroke, many trials to endure in Neufchatel. But in promoting the welfare of others, he forgot his own distresses and became less irritated and wounded by opposition. Objections had been constantly made to the discipline of the church. And when new difficulties arose, Farel was appointed as dean, with five other brethren, to wait on the governor and submit the regulations to his inspection. He regularly communicated to Viret and Fabri an account of whatever took place both in and out of the church. Fabri testified that during the thirty-one years in which he had been [Farel's] companion and colleague at Minten, Geneva, Orbe, Granson, Thonon, and for the third time, at Neufchatel, no misunderstanding had ever arisen between them.

In Lorraine, the reformation continued to make great progress, and spread particularly among the nobility. In consequence of the misrepresentations of the clergy, they sent a deputation to several protestant courts and states in Germany, requesting them to intercede on their behalf with the duke. A deputation of this kind came to Berne, with letters from the reformed preachers in Metz. On this and other accounts, Farel felt a desire to visit once more the church for which he had formerly suffered so

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much, and made such efforts to protect it from persecution. The ministers consented to his undertaking the journey and, to protect him at his advanced age from danger, the senate commissioned one of their number, Jonas Favargier, to accompany him. He was received at Metz by the senior ministers and the whole church with extraordinary respect and joy. On the very day of his arrival, he delivered a powerful discourse, which inspired the friends of the reformation with fresh energy. But the exertion was too much for his debilitated frame. On his return from the service, his strength was gone, and he was obliged to take to his bed. He was visited by people of all ranks. He exhorted every one, according to his station, to support the institutions and laws, both civil and ecclesiastical, and to promote to the utmost the welfare of the country and the church. With a dignity becoming a faithful minister of the gospel, he encouraged his brethren to approve themselves worthy of their vocations by their assiduity, faithfulness, and sincerity. He comforted and edified all that came to him, by his paternal advice. Everyone was astonished at his patience and resignation. His friends, amazed at his fortitude, said to one another, "See, this man is the very same as he has always been! We never knew him dejected, even when danger made our spirits fail. When we were ready to give up everything, he remained steadfast, firmly confiding in his Lord, and cheering us by his Christian heroism!"

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He made the same profession of faith in God and the Saviour which he had expressed in his will, and after languishing some weeks, gently fell asleep on the 13th of September 1565, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, fifteen months and fourteen days after his friend Calvin's departure. He was buried in the churchyard, about six paces from the great portal on the north side. Not only his own congregation, but all the churches of Neufchatel and Nalangen deeply lamented his decease. His property, as well as his whole life, had been devoted to the cause of God, so that he only left behind him about 300 livres, Neufchatel currency. His first biographer remarks that "without lessening the praise and commendation due anyone in reference to his anxiety, toil, and exertions in the work of the reformation and the ministerial office, and his entire self-consecration, Farel stood in the very first rank." The senior ministers, anxious that his merits should be known to posterity, proposed that materials should be collected for his biography, and that the aid of his friends in Geneva and Lyons should be requested for that purpose. Five weeks after his death, by the advice of the Genevese, Viret was chosen to be his successor. But on declining that honour, the choice fell upon Christopher Libertet Fabri.

The memory of Farel was held sacred by the people of Neufchatel. They spoke with veneration of the ministry of their much loved father, and in the deliberations of the ministers it was often said, "So it was

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in our father Farel's time;" or "So father Farel would have ordered it."

Calvin and Farel had always manifested an attachment to the church at Zurich, though they differed from it in some points, particularly in reference to discipline. When the Helvetic confession appeared, and was published at Geneva in the French language, the ministers of Neufchatel were mortified that their church had been overlooked. They wrote, therefore, to the clergy of Zurich, assuring them that their sentiments respecting the Lord's Supper were unchanged, and in accordance with their own, as they had been during Farel's lifetime. To correct the mistaken notion that their ministers could do nothing in ecclesiastical matters without the consent of the government, they declared to their brethren at Zurich, "When our forefathers, by the grace of God, received the doctrines of the gospel, it was done without the consent, and even with the disapproval of the government. For, by God's grace, we have so much liberty, that in religious matters no one can exercise any power over us. If our departed friend Farel had done nothing in his vocation without such consent, he would never have established the reformation among us."

The preceding narrative will have clearly defined the general outline of Farel's character. A few additional traits may render it more complete. The unshaken firmness he displayed in the greatest danger, was the effect of faith and prayer. "Never," said

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he, "will a messenger of God and a faithful preacher of the gospel give way to his adversaries, since God, according to his promise, imparts to his servants a power of utterance and wisdom which none can resist." There was no Divine promise to which he referred so often as to this.

Prayer was the element in which he lived. In his letters and writings he often breaks out into thanksgivings, prayers, and intercessions; or he calls upon God to arrest the opposers of his kingdom. Such was the inwrought earnestness of his supplications, that they often raised the hearts of all who heard them to heaven. Equally conscientious and courageous, he was anxious to act in all things according to the will of God. When he withdrew from Geneva with Calvin, and, lamenting the destitute state of the church, was doubtful whether, notwithstanding their banishment, they ought to have left it, he was encouraged by his friend's expression, "We do not desert the church; the church has deserted us."

He was faithful to his friends, and served them with all that he had. When he heard of their being in distress or danger, it cost him much anxious thought whether he should remain at home, or hasten to their aid. His deep affection for Calvin was on many occasions strikingly manifested, and he was very sensible how much he was honoured in possessing his friendship. "I cannot tell you," he said, "what I owe you. May Christ, who is my treasurer, and himself my supreme treasure, reward you for it." He not only entreated Calvin, but frequently urged

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him with great vehemence to write one commentary after another. He did so from a conviction that [Calvin] possessed the gifts requisite for exposition in a very extraordinary manner, and that, with the blessing of God, his works of this kind would be extensively useful. "Being an inconsiderable man myself," he said, "I usually require very much from those that possess the greatest excellence, and often press them hard to labour beyond their strength."

It was his conviction that everyone who had received superior talents was bound to devote them to the advancement of the kingdom of God. He was therefore particularly displeased with those "who had received distinguished gifts from the Holy Spirit; understood the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages; possessed an extensive knowledge of divine and human things, and yet, from lack of a sound and Christian judgment, or for self-interest – in order to gain riches or official situations, or to avoid the cross – abused their valuable gifts, using them to oppose the truth, and maintain falsehood to the dishonour of God, and the injury of their fellow-men; or else they buried their talents, and were of no use to others." It was his opinion that everyone should put out his talents to interest, like the faithful servants in the parable, but without fear. Hence, he considered Melancthon, whom he honoured on other accounts, as blameable for his reluctance to take bold and decisive measures, such as he always adopted himself and which he exhorted his friends to pursue.

Although Calvin and others frequently consulted him,

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and his judgment was much esteemed, yet he thought lowly of himself, and mistrusted his own powers. In matters of importance, he seldom acted alone. Though honoured by others as a veteran soldier of Christ, he was never heard recounting his own merits or sufferings. If he encouraged his friends or gave them advice, he merely gave his opinion as under correction, and

excused himself with the Latin proverb, *Ne sus minervam docet*.¹ He was often dissatisfied with himself, since he frequently prescribed himself tasks that were above his strength, and he acted more under the influence of sudden excitement than of patient resolution.

His character was strongly marked by frankness and candour, so that Æcolampadius, in writing to Luther, justly remarked that [Farel] could be known the first hour anyone was in his company. But with these virtues, [Farel] also had the failings so frequently connected with them. He was not sufficiently circumspect and prudent as to what he said, and before whom he spoke. He yielded himself up too much to first impressions, and often used stronger language against those who differed from him, than the occasion would justify.

If he disapproved of their counsels, he fearlessly opposed persons of the highest rank; and yet, no sooner did they require his aid, than he was ready to do them any kind service in his power. He was especially prompt to assist the poor. He consecrated his property, as well as his mental powers, to the service of the kingdom of God. His persecuted

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countrymen were the particular objects of his sympathy. Without undervaluing other nations, he clung with strong attachment to his own people. Once, on applying the expression of the poet respecting the Cretans, to a Fleming,² he prefaced it by saying, “I do not willingly make a distinction between one nation and another.”

Inflexible in his principles, he blamed even his best friends when they undertook anything which appeared to him improper. Undoubtedly, his zeal often carried him beyond due bounds. Instances of this (many of which, perhaps, stand upon very insufficient evidence) have been generally reported, and will descend to posterity; while no notice has been taken of the unobtrusive proofs he gave of moderation, patience, meekness, and placability. He often exemplified his own remark; “Every good man will yield to others, and even give up his own rights if it promotes the benefit of others, and prevents the wicked from acting wickedly.”

The ardour of his character was shown in his strenuous opposition to popery, and to everything connected with it. He manifested, if possible, still greater zeal against the Libertines, whose doctrines were subversive of all religion and morality. He also poured forth his indignation against those worthless preachers (generally monks) who exceeded in depravity the worst of their flock, neglected their churches, went about as comedians, and forsook their studies for the tavern.

He was aware of the natural heat of his temper,

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and took pains to keep it under control. His letters bore the impress of his ardent spirit, even in their form. It often gave him trouble to begin a letter; but once he had entered on a subject, he

¹ *Ne sus minervam docet* – a pig should not [*presume*] to teach Minerva (the Roman goddess of wisdom).

² Epimenides the Cretan says “All Cretans are liars.” A *Fleming* is a person from Flanders.

scarcely knew when to leave off. The same was the case with his sermons. Both friends and foes acknowledged him to be in the pulpit a Boanerges, a son of thunder. Animated, ardent, scriptural, and practical; making powerful appeals to the heart, or probing it by varied and searching interrogatories mingled with prayer to the Searcher of hearts, he carried his auditory away as with a torrent. Men of all ranks and classes, from the senator to the peasant, confessed the power of his eloquence. Strangers of rank came from a great distance to hear him preach. On one occasion, expressing his abhorrence of those who forbade the use of the holy Scriptures, he exclaimed, "My God, what an abomination! Can you, O sun, shed your beams on such a country! Can you, O earth, bear such people upon you, and yield your fruits to those who thus despise their Creator! And you, O God, are you so compassionate, so slow to wrath and vengeance against those who commit such great wickedness, and sin against you! Have you not appointed your Son, King over all? Shall that holy revelation which you have imparted through him for our instruction, be forbidden as a useless, and even dangerous document to those who read it? Arise, O Lord! Show that it is your will that your Son should be honoured, and the sacred

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statutes of his kingdom should be known and observed by all. Let the trumpet of your holy gospel sound throughout the world! Grant strength to all true evangelists, and destroy all the propagators of error, that the whole earth may serve you, and call on your name with the profoundest adoration!" Having himself witnessed the fulfilment of those words of the Lord, "I have not come to send peace on earth, but a sword," he placed over the sword in his family arms, the motto "Quid volo, nisi ut ardeat?" "What would I, but that it were kindled?" Luke 12.49.

He had a vivid sense of the dignity of the ministerial office. "Wherever the holy word of God is preached, and the sacraments administered and received," he remarked, "there is a Christian church. The keys of the kingdom of heaven are the knowledge of God, the word of God, especially the holy gospel (that food of the soul!), and those gifts which no man can give to another, but which God alone communicates by his Holy Spirit. Christ is the chief Shepherd. He will be the best under shepherd who treads most closely in his footsteps; and he who is farthest from him, approaches nearest to antichrist."

Farel's last production, entitled, "On the true Use of the Cross of Jesus Christ; on its abuse, and the idolatry practised with it: also on the authority of the word of God and human traditions, with a preface by Viret;" was a tribute of gratitude to the

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Divine goodness for rescuing him from that blind idolatry in which he had been educated. He was carried back in imagination to those times in which he thought himself capable of exorcising evil spirits by the sign of the cross. He called to remembrance his first pilgrimage into the holy mountains, to a holy cross near Tallard in the diocese of Gap, said to have been taken from the Lord's cross itself, and how he afterwards adored another cross at Paris, which it was pretended was made from the same wood, although the wood was of a different kind. These recollections filled him with penitential sorrow. The more deeply such superstitions had once been rooted in his mind, the more was he impelled in his old age to write against them in order that all who had

been infected with the same poison might be cured as he had been. He considered the legend of the finding of the cross, as the origin of image-worship. He refuted it by external and internal evidence, and evinced at the same time extensive reading and a correct appreciation of the fathers of the church, as well as much candour in his estimate of the character of Constantine. He argued very hotly against the adoration of the cross. Although it was urged that people did not adore the cross, but they celebrate through its medium the benefits arising from the Lord's death upon it. He admitted that this elevation of the mind from the sign to the thing signified, might be possible with a few individuals; but as the great mass of the people never rise beyond externals, that which is external, and is not

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commanded by Christ, must be put away. Owing to the propensity of mankind to be enthralled by the objects of sense, he looked upon the use of images as always a great temptation to idolatry, even when not professedly worshipped.

He confirmed the authority of the holy Scriptures, and showed by the testimony of the primitive fathers, that they were the only rule of Christian faith and practice. And he proved that the addition of ceremonies and external splendour only served to diminish the glory of the gospel, and to obscure the radiance of the great Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ. He encouraged Count John of Nassau, to whom he dedicated the treatise, to tread in the steps of his brother Adolphus, and to remove out of the way everything which exalted itself against Christ and his gospel. "Let us," he concludes, "beseech our blessed Lord, that he would form out of all a pure and holy church, free from all the filth of popery, and from all human traditions – so that Jesus and his commands alone shall be honoured, in all purity and simplicity, so that we may live in him without spot, and he may live in us by true faith, serving God our Father who ever lives and reigns with the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen!"

THE END.

W. Tyler, Printer, Bolt-court, Fleet-street.