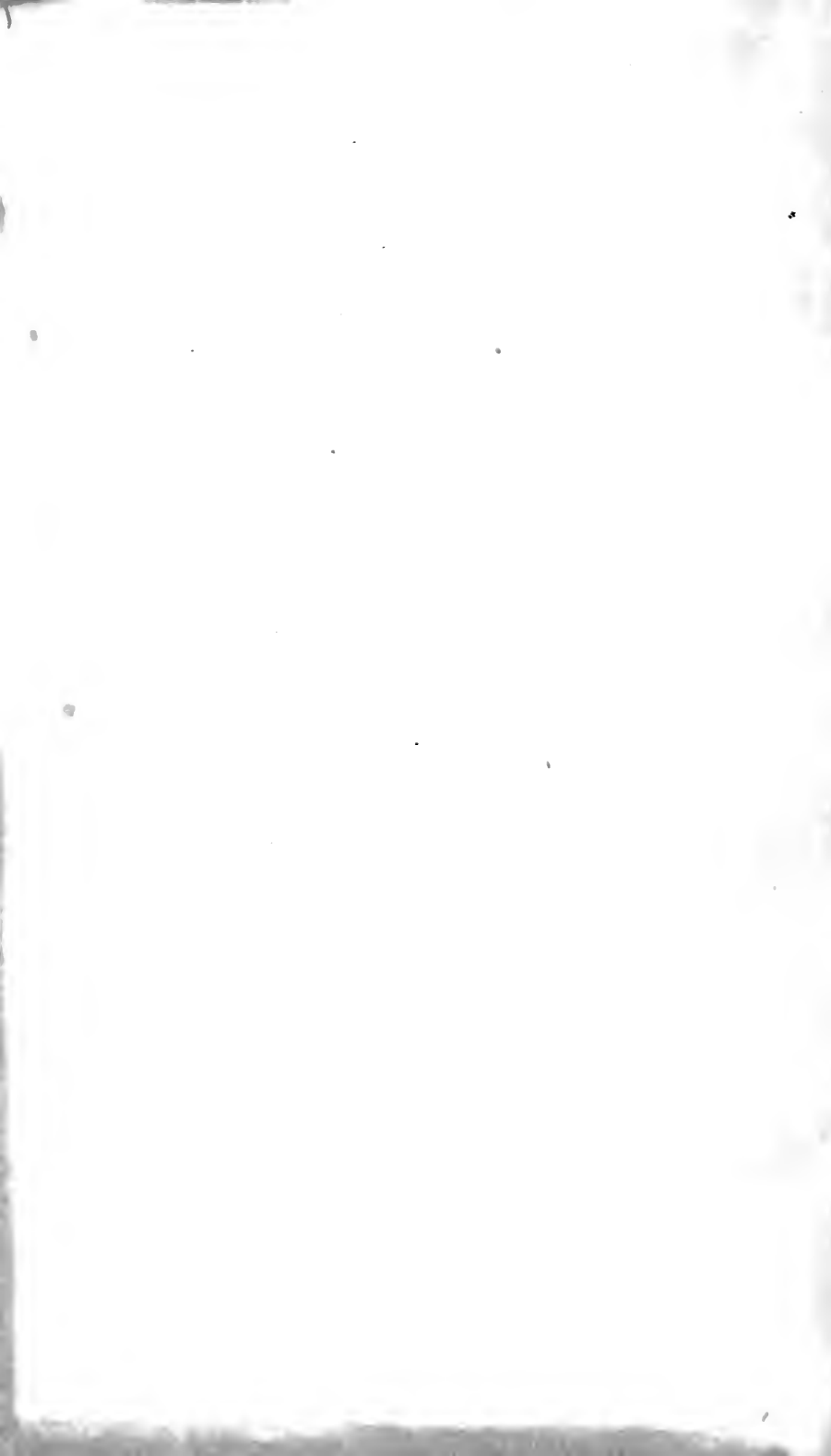




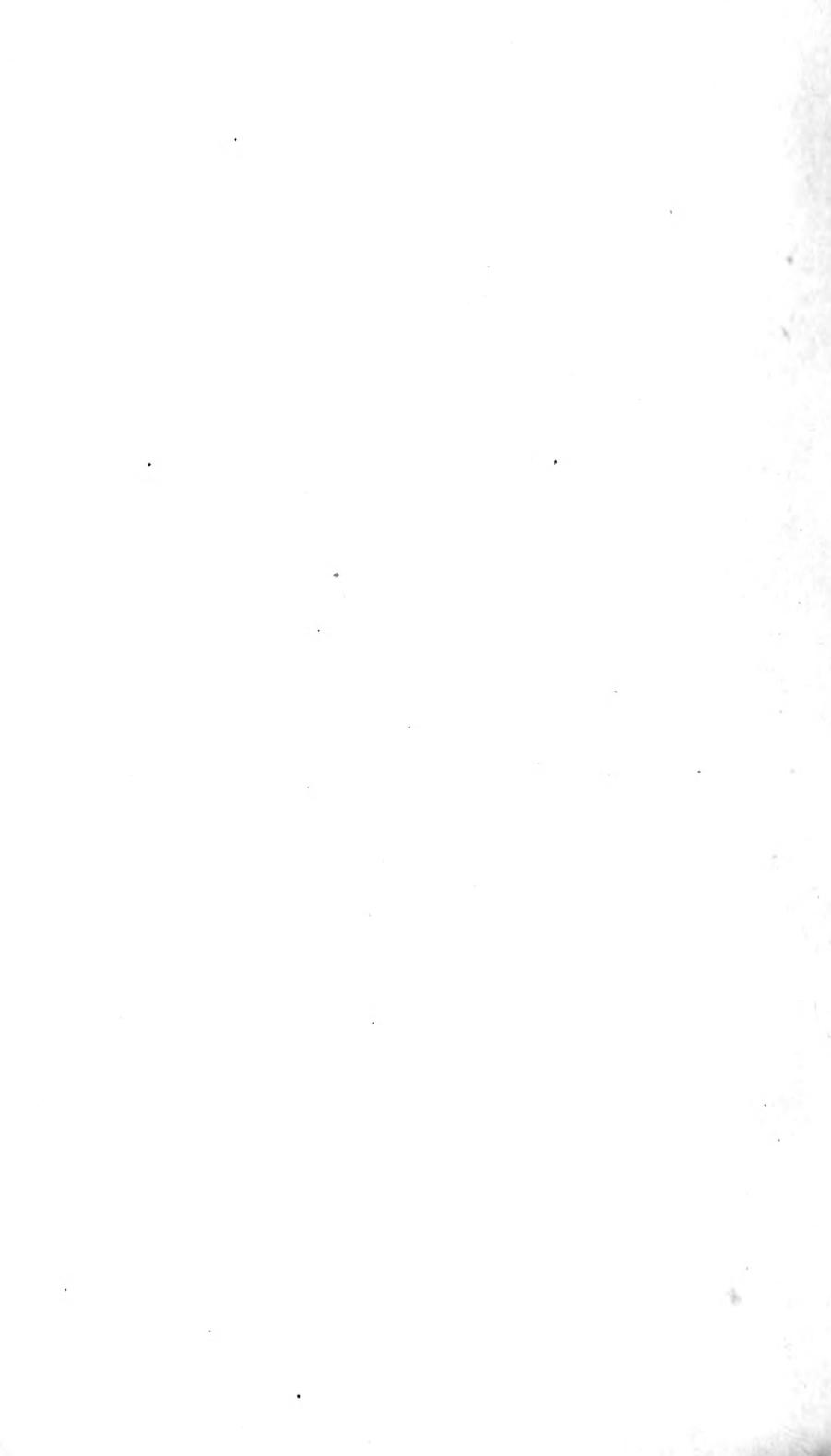
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LETTERS

OF

JOHN CALVIN

COMPILED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS AND
EDITED WITH HISTORICAL NOTES

BY

DR. JULES BONNET.

VOL. III.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN AND FRENCH LANGUAGES

BY

MARCUS ROBERT GILCHRIST.



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CALVIN'S LETTERS.

CCCXL.—To VIRET.¹

Consolations and encouragements—election of the New Syndics at Geneva.

GENEVA, 6th February 1554.

That the success which we had anticipated has not crowned your labours is greatly to be regretted. Nevertheless as this delay will probably not be lasting, let us bear it patiently. That so poor a reward should be paid you by that party which should at least have offered you some consolation, is certainly nothing new. Let it suffice that our efforts are approved of by the heavenly Judge of the contest, who exercises us not only by a hard warfare, but by one which brings but little honour, in order that we seek not for plaudits nor the crown of victory from men. In our own affairs nothing has as yet been decided. Privately I have been reconciled with Perrin and Vendel. Next Monday I shall be obliged to enter the lists. Amblard Corne, Peter Textor, Claude du Pan, and Michael Micaire have been appointed Syndics. In the election of the senate there has been no change. John Baudichon has been involved in a new trouble, for being summoned two days

¹ While the Reform was everywhere established in the Pays de Vaud, two forms of worship were still in presence of each other in the town of Orbe, the birth place of Viret. Relying on the Seigneurie of Berne, and his own indefatigable proselytism, Viret laboured zealously to abolish the last remains of the Catholic faith in his native town. On the 17th of January 1554, he wrote to Calvin:—"There is every hope of success, the greater number is on our side, and all the most worthy have been brought over, our adversaries are seeking in all directions for auxiliaries, but the disease seems incurable."—(*Library of Geneva*, Vol. 111 a.) But new incidents paralyzed the efforts of Viret, which were crowned with success only at the end of this same year.

before into the senate house, that he might make it up with Perrin, he allowed himself to be carried so far in the heat of argument, as to break out into violent and insulting invectives. Yesterday the cause was discussed in a tumultuous manner. As in the person of its first Syndic the dignity of the senate had been offended, Baudichon was ordered to make an apology in presence of the two hundred, without however any humiliating circumstances. As Perrin had obtained all he demanded, he showed himself indulgent. Besides Perrin is about to pay you a visit for the purpose of seeking a wife. He says that he had entered into an engagement for contracting a marriage with Prevot's sister, that the lady herself had consented, but her brother opposed it. I suppose that Prevot has valid reasons for his conduct. Lest, however, these complaints spread farther, you will do a worthy deed, if you call both parties before you. For if the marriage be not advantageous to a pious and most excellent woman, you will prevent Perrin from being any longer amused by vain hopes, or if no reasonable objections exist, she will be at liberty to contract these nuptials. Something seems possible to be done, and your authority will also contribute materially to effect it. Farewell, my most excellent and faithful brother. Salute M. Bèze, James, and the other brethren, as well as your wife and daughters. May the Lord protect you all and bless your labours.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCXLI.—TO AMBROSE BLAURER.¹

Friendly complaints respecting the silence of Blaurer—Despatch of several writings.

GENEVA, 6th February 1554.

You very seldom write to me, my most worthy and highly esteemed brother, and yet there is not one of the letters which

¹ In a letter of the 5th January 1553, Blaurer addressed to Calvin, with fraternal encouragements, the marks of the warmest affection. He thanked him for his letters

I receive from you that would not excuse a whole year's silence. For throughout them all there breathes not only so tender an affection towards me, but at the same time they reveal by such natural touches your whole heart, that I figure to myself I have the writer before me, such is their style. You have then no reason to make yourself uneasy, because you do not punctually discharge your duties on this head; for I am quite satisfied how entirely you love me. Though nothing would give me greater pleasure than to have, were it but a few lines, from you every day; yet, your convenience is dearer to me than this desire of mine, and I shall be perfectly well content, if you consent to pardon my own laziness. Respecting the state of the church here, I have as yet nothing certain to communicate to you. These last few years, evil disposed persons have not ceased on every occasion to create for us new subjects of vexation. At length in their endeavours to render null our excommunication, there is no excess of folly they have left unattempted. Everywhere the contest was long maintained with much violence, because, in the senate and among the people, the passions of the contending parties had been so much inflamed that there was some risk of a tumult. By the tactics of certain individuals a reconciliation has been effected among us. Respecting the affair however nothing has been as yet decided. Whether an end shall be put to this controversy, or a new one shall spring up, the issue of which I commend to God, I am determined not to shew myself too yielding. And yet I am not a man of such iron mould as not to feel the deepest distress, amounting to torture of mind, at the thought of the future dispersion of my flock, if I shall be forced to quit them. But since nothing else is left to our option, except with an humble reliance on divine providence

in these words:—"You cannot conceive, my man of God, how much they have comforted me, not so much on account of their subject, which indeed is gloomy enough, but because they were the first I received from you, and because they contained proofs of no ordinary affection of yours towards me. May Christ our Saviour for ever bind you and yours to himself, and out of the exhaustless horn of his riches, in such an afflicting state of affairs, never cease to cherish and relieve you."—*Library of Geneva*, vol. 110.

to discharge our duty to the utmost, we must needs persevere. Moreover a brighter ray of hope begins to break on us.

The little tracts which I have published up to this time, except four sermons in French which Baudouin has translated into Latin, have all been comprised in one volume by one of our printers. So I shall not send you a list which you can easily procure from him. Twenty-two sermons in French on the Octonary Psalm, as it is called,¹ were lately published. The commentaries on the scriptures were printed separately. What remained of my work on the Acts of the Apostles has now been brought out. I will send you a copy, but on the conditions which you yourself prescribe, namely, that this worthy man will count down the price. I have done the same thing with regard to my refutation of Servetus's impiety, of which he will bring you three copies. I have added a witty letter of our friend Beza's in the name of Passavent,² which will provoke a hearty laugh, I hope. Farewell, dearest of men, and faithful minister of Christ, may the Lord continue to direct you and your family by his Spirit, defend you with his protection, and accompany you with every blessing even to the end. My kindest wishes to your fellow labourer and your wife. My colleagues and a great many good men also salute you most cordially.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Zurich. Coll. Hottinguer, F. 43, p. 464.*]

¹ Twenty-two sermons, in which the exix Psalm is commented on, containing a like number of divisions into portions of eight verses each.—New Edition. Geneva, 1562, in Svo.

² A letter of Master Benedict Passavent, a satirical piece, in the style of Rabelais, addressed to the President of the Parliament of Paris, Liset, and greatly relished by the historian De Thou. See Haag, *France Protestante*, article Bèze, Bibliography, iv.

CCCXLII.—TO BULLINGER.

Reconciliation of parties—apparent tranquillity of the republic—announces the book against the errors of Servetus.

GENEVA, 23d February 1554.

I should feel ashamed, my most worthy sir, and respected brother, for having made no reply to your two letters,¹ had I not some excuse for my silence. The truth is, I was unwilling to write to you before matters were arranged, for fear that our bickerings should occasion you perplexity and anxiety of mind, knowing that these feelings would be shared with you by the best and most faithful of our brethren. And then we have been agitated by such a variety of incidents, that not one day has shone out on us without being overcast by the anticipated clouds of the morrow. At length affairs have come to this point, that all the parties are reconciled to one another. For the senate had been divided into factions, and so openly had the animosity of these factions manifested itself, that the wicked felt the vengeance of God impending over them. Nor were the good possessed of sufficient courage to aim at composing the state of the Church, about which so bitter a strife had arisen. In token of peace then the two parties shook hands, and an oath was administered, that no one should in future befriend evil causes. And in thus prejudging the case, the adverse party tacitly condemned itself. But in this plausible reconciliation, it is evident that legitimate order, the only certain pledge of peace, has been overlooked, or, at least, postponed. When called into the senate I professed that I pardoned those who sincerely repented, but gave them to understand at the same time that I was but one of the consistory, and that I had a hundred times rather suffer death than as-

¹ These two letters contained the expression of the warmest affection for Calvin, mixed with the most sage advice. The one bearing date the 13th December 1553, concluded with the following words:—"May the Lord by his Spirit bless this business (ecclesiastical discipline) and direct your hearts into the way of peace. Amen. Love us in the Lord, my dear Calvin, and pray for us along with the brethren."

sume to myself what was the common right of the church. We could not but perceive, that Satan desired nothing more than that from doubtful and undecided measures should arise some future handle for throwing every thing into confusion. But we are determined to be beforehand with him. Now, with less violence perhaps than before, our enemies will renew their disturbances, yet most certainly we shall be forced ere long to come to a collision. You now see but too clearly the motive of my silence, which is that I wished to throw a veil over our domestic disgrace. Yet know this much; that though the church is everywhere variously agitated, at Geneva it is tossed about by as many opposing currents as Noah's ark was during the deluge. From this also you may conclude, how very disagreeable it is to me that your illustrious senate should be annoyed by our disputes. Of this feeling you had lately one very striking proof, when respecting the spiritual government of the church you were not consulted. But what could I do? All good men pour their complaints in my ears, but none are able to apply a remedy. It is well for us, however, that we have a pilot to guide us, under whom we shall be safe from shipwreck—and then that we are at no great distance from the harbour. Meanwhile we must study the disposition of those along with whom the same voyage is to be undertaken.

The refutation of Servetus's blasphemy¹ will be sent to you, I hope, before my letter comes to hand. It is a short pamphlet, and hastily got up. Still it will be better, that its contents should have been written than nothing at all. I suppose that the troubles in England are known in your quarter, and in the meantime, while my letter is on its way to you, we shall perhaps gain some more certain information. Farewell, most honourable sir, and highly respected brother. Do not fail to salute for me, M. Gualter, your sons-in-law, and the other brethren. The Marquis of Caracioli, our friend Budé, and

¹ It was at the instigation of Bullinger, that Calvin had undertaken this work: "Endeavour, my dear Calvin, to describe exactly and piously for all pious persons, Servetus, with the manner of his death, that all may turn away with loathing from the monster."

my colleagues send you their best wishes. May the hand of the Lord protect you, and his Spirit direct you and bless your labours. Amen.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 241.]

CCCXLIII.—TO A SEIGNEUR OF PIEDMONT.¹

He exhorts him to perseverance in the faith, in giving to his children a christian education.

GENEVA, 25th February 1554.

SIR,—Though I am personally a stranger to you, yet being assured by trustworthy people that my letters will not be unacceptable, I have made bold to write to you, not having any other introduction but that which I have received from the authority of the Master whom I serve. His name, however, will, I presume, be a sufficient warrant, considering the reverence you bear toward him and his doctrine. And at the same time it is most reasonable that great and small should submit to his majesty, since the heavenly Father hath bestowed on him sovereign empire, in order that every knee should bend before him, not only of human creatures but also of angels. This, in sooth, is but badly understood by most men in these days. We see that the number of those who agree to obey in truth this great king is small indeed. But I have heard that God, of his infinite goodness, has touched your

¹ The name of this Seigneur is unknown. Piedmont, at that time subject to the French dominion, had remained a stranger to the influence of the Reform. The evangelical doctrines faithfully preserved by the Waldenses for ages in the asylum of the Alps, and revived by a new spirit, were disseminated at Turin and thence over the whole country, "so that," says Beza, "in a very short time there was a society of those professing the Reformed religion, established at Carignan, Pontcarlier, Poyrin, Villefranche, Ville-neuve d'Ast et Castillon, which has nevertheless been dispersed by persecution." A courageous minister, Alexander Guiotin, founded in 1557 the Reformed Church of Turin. *Hist. Eccl.* tom. iii. p. 336 and the following. We read in the registers of the company of Geneva, 6th September 1557:—"was elected for Piedmont Master Pasquier Barnot and set out the 14th of September." *Ibidem*, December, 1558:—"Master Christophe, the son of the physician of Vevay, set out to go and administer the word of God in the town of Thurin."

heart, so that you desire to be a christian, not in name only but in reality. If I express myself thus, it is because the word christian passes glibly indeed from the lips of all, but when it is required of us, to humble ourselves beneath the gospel, which is the sceptre by which Jesus Christ wills to reign over us, almost all shrink back; in which fact we see that it is but too common a thing from hypocrisy to wear like a mask the title of christian, and by so doing profane it. And it is not a small nor a vulgar virtue to approve by deeds that we desire to be the disciples of the Son of God, to the end that he also may avow us for his followers. For that reason you are so much the more bound to recognize the mercy of God in advancing you thus far. For it is not of our own impulse that we come thitherward, but only inasmuch as he hath been pleased to draw us. And that this goodness may have greater lustre by being better known, he hath chosen us out and set us apart from among those to whom we are otherwise alike. Thus then the poor blinded creatures that we see groping around us are but so many mirrors in which to contemplate our miserable condition, and so magnify Him who has withdrawn us from this horrible darkness of death.

Moreover, sir, consider well the value of that infinite treasure, God's truth, which has been entrusted to you, that you may be a good and faithful steward thereof. For of those very persons who make a profession of the pure doctrine of the Gospel, we see that the greater part are satisfied with having some vain imagination or vague notion of it. Hence it is that a goodly number of those to whom God has given some savour of his grace, break forth into double wantonness, till in the end, they become quite brutalized. For God will not be mocked nor despised. And seeing the corruptions that every where abound, and the assaults that Satan now directs against those who wish to walk uprightly, we have great need to lift up our eyes on high and ask for strength and constancy in order to withstand them. On your own part, I fancy you will experience more of them than it is possible for me to point out. I mean of those hinderances which clog our progress, or turn us aside from serving God with purity. Above

all because under the tyranny of antichrist, if a man will live like a christian, he must by continual training learn to die, so that no difficulty plead an excuse for him when the honour of his God is in question. And if Jesus Christ spared not himself for our salvation, it is not reasonable that our lives should be deemed more precious than his. Inasmuch then, as nothing is more odious than to be reputed a true christian, so must we practise that lesson of St. Paul's, not to be ashamed of being hated and contemned for this title. And indeed if we desire to be exalted to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, we must bear the opprobrium of his cross. Thus I entreat you, according as necessity may remind you, to shake off your sloth and bestir yourself to do battle valiantly against Satan and the world, desiring to be dead unto yourself so as to be fully renewed in God. And because we must know before we can love, I entreat you also to exercise yourself in reading the holy exhortations that may be helps to this end. For the coldness we observe in certain persons, arises from that carelessness which disposes them to fancy that it is enough to have relished cursorily some passage of the scriptures, without laying down as a rule to profit by it as need should require. On the contrary, we have to practise what is said by St. Paul, that by contemplating the face of Jesus Christ in the mirror of the gospel, we may conform ourselves to him from glory to glory. Whereby the apostle means that in proportion as we draw nearer to Jesus Christ, and know him more intimately, the grace and virtue of his Spirit will at the same time grow and be multiplied in us. So then be it your constant care to profit more and more. And besides all that, you have to think of your children, whom God has confided to your charge for this end, that they should be dedicated to him, and that he should be the supreme Father of them as of you. It is true that many persons are prevented from discharging their duties towards their children, because their single desire is to further the advancement of their offspring in the world. But this is a pitiful and perverse consideration. I entreat you then since God has bestowed on you a race of children gifted with good dispositions, and as you value this inesti-

mable treasure, to take measures for having them brought up betimes in his fear, and preserved from the corruptions and pollutions by which we have been surrounded. I am aware that you have not waited for my exhortations to begin this happy work, but that you have provided for them a man endowed with knowledge to instruct them and zealous in the discharge of his functions; but because both father and children should be entirely devoted to God, and because the obstacles which Satan lays in the way of so good an end are almost insurmountable, it is highly necessary that you should train them up for the possession of a heavenly inheritance, rather than that of perishable wealth and honours here below.

Whereupon, in conclusion, sir, after having recommended myself to your kind favour, I supplicate our heavenly Father to have you in his holy protection, to increase in you what he has bestowed of his knowledge of the truth, and so to direct you by his Spirit, that he may be served and honoured by you, till we be received into the glory of his immortal kingdom.

Your humble brother and servant,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

CCCXLIV.—TO THE BRETHREN OF ORBE.¹

Vows and counsels for the establishment of religious unity in their city by the abolition of the Catholic worship.

GENEVA, 4th March 1554.

The love of God the Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the communication of the Holy Spirit, be always with you.

¹ To the well beloved brethren of Orbe, who greatly desire the pure preaching of the gospel, and the undefiled worship of God with the advancement of the kingdom of Christ.

The town of Orbe, the birth place of the minister Viret, had been divided since the year 1532 between the two forms of worship, the Catholic and the Reformed; the

Though in addition to the hearing of sound doctrine, and the reading of the word, you have also our most excellent brethren, Viret and Farel, who, I doubt not, assiduously strive to stir you up to holy zeal by their pious exhortations which I am confident also are listened to by you with a ready and well-disposed mind, nevertheless I could not resist my inclination to send you these few lines, that you might have my judgment respecting yourselves and your affairs. And certes you stand in need of no ordinary encouragement, since those firebrands of strife have been kindled by Satan against you. When the rectitude, then, of my intentions shall be manifest, I flatter myself that my zeal towards you will so meet with your approbation, that my exertions in your behalf will not be fruitless. Indeed when I reflect on your earnest desire to restore among yourselves on a firm foundation, the pure worship of God, I make no doubt but that the present condition of your city is to you a source of sorrow, inasmuch as the superstition and impiety of Popery which have corrupted the worship of God, and cover his holy name with blasphemies, still maintain a footing among you. Meanwhile you should account it an inestimable treasure, that the Lord has bestowed on you the privilege of having no longer any thing in common with that evil, nay, what is more, that you have it in your power not only not to participate in the evil,

former placed under the patronage of Friburg, the latter under the protection of Berne. The Protestants having demanded that the religious question should be regulated by a majority of votes, and Berne having seconded this request, the magistrates of Friburg were obliged to yield, and the decisive proof by voting was fixed for the 30th July 1554. Informed of this news by Viret, Calvin wrote to the Protestants of Orbe to exhort them to perseverance, union, and zeal, tempered by prudence and charity, in order to obtain the conversion of their fellow-townsmen. But the point in question was not so much to convert, as to subject them by the force of a majority to the evangelical faith. On the 30th of July, 1554, the inhabitants convoked on the public market place, and divided into two parties were counted by the magistrates, and it was found that the number of the Reformed surpassed by eighteen heads that of the Catholics. The proof being judged decisive, the Roman Catholic worship was abolished, in despite of the rights of the religious minority. The example of Orbe was followed at Montagny and at Grandson. On the 2nd December of the same year, the Seigneury of Berne published an ecclesiastical regulation, and the parish of Orbe was placed under the authority of a consistory, whilst the priests, the monks, and the nuns withdrew to Friburg, or to Savoy. Ruchat, tom. vi. p. 70, and Pierre-leur, *Chronique de la ville d'Orbe*.

but that there exists among you a certain regularly established church, to retain you under the yoke of the Lord. This will appear a great and incomparable blessing of God, if you cast your eyes on the condition of those who are miserably bowed down under the yoke of bondage. One motive for anxiety however still subsists, which is that many things still offer themselves to your sight which militate against the glory of God. Especially when every thing among you had been arranged so securely, and in so desirable a manner, that we could not but conclude that you would be thoroughly purged and delivered from all the pollutions of antichrist. Wherefore to have so bright a prospect clouded by disappointment, cannot but be a matter of bitter regret. The enemies of our faith also, no longer shackled by their fears, avail themselves of the opportunity, proclaim their triumph and laugh God to scorn, so that this crowning sorrow is superadded to your other sorrows. And yet it should not be anything new to you, that Satan, the constant scope of whose endeavours is to hinder the advancement of Christ's reign, should put in practice his devices, which after all tend only to fill up the measure of God's blessing, since, but for the obstacles which the Lord throws in his way, he is fully prepared at once to cast down every thing and scatter it to the winds. In the meantime, indeed, while he is held in constraint by God, he nevertheless bestirs himself that he may do all the mischief he can. But what should afford you no ordinary consolation, is the unquestionable fact that you are standing forth in the defence of God's rights and cause. So then let this hope animate you, that the Lord will not abandon his own truth which is singularly precious to him. Arm your hearts therefore with courage for the time, and persist with equal constancy in the course you have entered upon. Impress this on your minds, that God has assigned you your post for the trial of your faith and patience. And should you be cheered by no prospect or means of accomplishing in future what you are now aiming at, what at least should support you, and add to your consolation, is the inward conviction, that you are laying yourselves out for God's service, and proving to him

your obedience. But you have an additional motive to confirm you in this right line of conduct, since even in this untimely birth, you can rejoice in no mean fruits of your travail. For that promise of the Lord holds good, that we do not lose our pains, when his word shall go before us, unless we seem to beat the air. Recognize then the effect of that promise in the increase of the Lord's flock, which you now behold, and which, beyond all doubt, will drive from your city the abominations of antichrist. For what God has been pleased to leave undone for the present, he will accomplish in his own time. Now then is the season of the struggle and the contest with various temptations, as in truth the kingdom and dominion of the Son of God among men, is not wont to be established without laborious and painful efforts. But when Satan inflamed with such fury rushes against you, what a disgrace it will be, if you are found a-wanting to yourselves! And why? Because he is striving to his own destruction, and you stand up for that cause with which your salvation is connected, and in which you are thoroughly persuaded that the victory has been prepared for you, if ye shall go on courageously. Moreover the enemies of the faith are twice wretched; as by their blindness of mind they reject as much as in them lies the grace of God, they should move your commiseration, rather than by their acts produce in you any feeling of uneasiness. To such a degree the deadly distemper betrays itself with which Satan has fascinated them, since they so recklessly shun their only hope of salvation, and hold it in abhorrence. For which reason let not your commiseration for them diminish your courage, but on the contrary, strive to procure an unknown blessing for those even who spurn it. And this result ye will obtain, when, no longer as members of a lacerated body, but with one and the same mind and spirit, ye shall invoke the same Lord. Nothing is to be spared to obtain such a result, nor can any remissness here be at all excused. Wherefore we must so much the more demand of God a spirit of fortitude and constancy, that we may never faint in mind. Nor is a spirit of pious and holy prudence less necessary, that as your enemies are ever on the watch to

ensnare you, you may hold out without offence against all their attacks. If you follow this line of conduct, the Lord will either bring down the swelling pride of those who are thus animated towards you, or will render them more equitable and peaceable, so that they may not so fiercely kick against the pricks. Whatever turn matters may take, proceed with deliberate purpose, that whatever course God may have appointed you to run, you may continue to the last in accomplishing it. Let this single consideration suffice you, that you have the assurance that God approves of your labour, when you declare a truceless war against those abominations which militate against his worship and honour. Nor do those things escape my attention, which you will encounter in this business of the Lord's to shake your constancy, unless that single virtue which comes from on high make you overleap all obstacles—the virtue on which depends all our progress, and well-founded expectation. Here all of us jointly pray that God would grant you all these means, that he would encompass you with his protection, and fill you with spiritual gifts, to the end that you may be more and more stirred up to dedicate yourselves entirely to him.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 92.]

CCCXLV.—TO VIRET.¹

Recommendation of several English and Scotch refugees.

GENEVA, 9th March 1554.

This brother, a native of Scotland, will fully explain to you, I have no doubt, with what intention he repairs to Zurich. I am told that, under King Edward, he distinguished himself by his active and faithful services in discharging the functions of a teacher. I had no leisure to receive him as I could have wished; but my want of attention on the present occasion, I

¹ At this period of the dispersion of the Reformed Churches of England, Lausanne and Vevey had received numerous exiles. Nevertheless these refugees seem especially to have settled at Zurich and Geneva. See *Zurich Letters*, passim.

shall make up for, on his return. You will salute for me with kindest wishes all the English brethren who are resident among you; you will inform them at the same time, that no letters respecting pecuniary matters have come to my hands. Up to the present moment I have been necessarily in complete ignorance of every thing respecting the affair. Nicolas the servant's son has behaved in an absurd and very impolite manner not to inform them, at least, when he passed through your town. Now, that I am made aware of the circumstance, I shall take care that the money be immediately counted down. Farewell, most excellent and worthy brother, may God be present with and extend his protection both to you, to our friend Monsieur Beza, your wife and daughters, and all other friends.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.*—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107 a.]

CCCXLVI.—TO THE BRETHREN OF WEZEL.¹

Entreaty not to break the unity of the Church because of some diversities in the ceremonies.

GENEVA, 13th March 1554.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be upon you always through the communication of the Holy Spirit.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,—We have to praise God

¹ Expelled from England by the intolerant policy of queen Mary, the members of the foreign congregation of London were scattered over the Low Countries and Germany. Some withdrew to Wezel, where other refugees had preceded them, but where the intolerance of the Lutherans gave an unwilling welcome to these sad victims of the religious revolutions of Europe, (1554.) Called upon three years afterwards by the magistrates of the country, to sign a formulary consecrating the dogma of the *real presence*, these exiles preferred the sufferings of a new banishment to the abjuration of their faith. Some of them withdrew to Frankfort, the senate of which received them with humanity, and obtained from that of Wezel a precarious toleration for the small number of exiles who had not yet quitted that asylum. The Reformed church of Wezel, composed of diverse elements, had been organized in 1554, by the cares of an able minister, Francis Perucel, and under the suggestions of Calvin. See the Latin correspondence of the Reformer, and Ruchat, tom. vi. pp. 157—159.

because from the troubles which now disturb the peace of the world, he has granted you a place of refuge in which you are at liberty to serve and worship him. And not only for that, but because he has afforded you means to assemble in his name, to exercise yourselves in the hearing of his word, to call on him with one accord, and make a pure confession of your faith. This is no slight favour at a time when the world is turned upside down. It remains for you to profit by it, and prove yourselves so much the more zealous in glorifying him who has bestowed on you so liberal a gift, to the end that it might fructify. With regard to the form to be observed in receiving the sacraments, it is not without reason that you entertain doubts and scruples, for nothing is better than to abide by that pure simplicity which we hold from the Son of God, whose ordinance ought to be our single rule, to which also the usage of the Apostles was perfectly conformable. And indeed the moment we deviate ever so little from it, our admixture of human invention cannot fail to be a corruption. But it seems to us that your condition is different from that of the pastors of the place and the great body of the people. If the pastors did their duty, they would employ all their endeavours to retrench those superfluities which do not tend to edification, or rather which serve to obscure the clearness of the gospel. The governors on their part would also do well to see to it. It is a vice to be condemned so far as they are concerned, that they keep up these unmeaning mummeries—which are as it were a residue of Popish superstitions, the recollection of which we should strive as much as in us lies to exterminate. But in your capacity of private individuals, not only you may lawfully, but what is more, you should support and suffer such abuses as it is not in your power to correct. We do not hold lighted candles in the celebration of the eucharist nor figured bread to be such indifferent things, that we would willingly consent to their introduction, or approve of them, though we object not to accommodate ourselves to the use of them, where they have been already established, when we have no authority to oppose them. If we were called upon to receive such ceremonies, we should hold

ourselves bound according to the position in which God hath placed us, to admit of no compromise in resisting their introduction, and in maintaining constantly the purity which the church confided to us already possesses. But should our lot be cast in some place where a different form prevails, there is not one of us who from spite against a candle or a chasuble would consent to separate himself from the body of the church, and so deprive himself of the use of the sacrament. We must be on our guard not to scandalize those who are already subject to such infirmities, which we should certainly do by rejecting them from too frivolous motives. And then it would be for us matter of deep regret, if the French church which might be erected there should be broken up, because we would not accommodate ourselves to some ceremonies that do not affect the substance of the faith. For as we have said, it is perfectly lawful for the children of God to submit to many things of which they do not approve. Now the main point of consideration is, how far such liberty should extend. Upon this head let us lay it down as a settled point, that we ought to make mutual concessions in all ceremonies, that do not involve any prejudice to the confession of our faith, and for this end that the unity of the church be not destroyed by our excessive rigour or moroseness. No doubt you ought by all honest means to preserve the greatest sobriety possible. For which purpose it will be proper modestly to require of those who have the power, not to constrain you in every thing and on every occasion, to their peculiar modes. But we are far from advising you to abandon the advantage of having a christian church in that place, from the mere consideration of difference in ceremonies. The important consideration is, that you do not yield to a faulty pliancy in the confession of your faith, and that you make no compromise as to doctrine. No doubt it is your duty to shun contentions, and not only to maintain a modest attitude, but even to declare that your intention is not to take from the importance of the sacraments, but rather to magnify the spiritual gifts which God has so bountifully bestowed upon us. But having confessed that in the eucharist we are only made par-

takers of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and that our souls are fully nourished by them, be on your guard to exclude the errors with which it is possible that some persons may be entangled, who go farther than that confession. At least do not disguise what God has given us to know on these points, when you shall be called on to do so. Although one of our brethren had already written to two of your company, nevertheless because our beloved brethren of Lausanne have declared that our advice should be added to that which they wish to give you, we were unwilling to spare our pains, being ready to serve you in greater things when God shall give us an opportunity, whom we entreat to preserve you in his holy keeping, to govern you by his Spirit, and increase you in all good, after having commended ourselves to your fervent prayers. Your most humble brethren in our Lord,

The Ministers of the Church of Geneva.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CCCXLVII.—TO BULLINGER.

Recommendation of two English refugees—state of parties at Geneva—fresh persecutions in France—military movements of Henry II.—thanks for a work sent him—publication at Bâle of a pamphlet on the repression of heresy by the sword of the magistrate—divers salutations.

GENEVA, 28th March 1554.

These English brethren,¹ immediately after the death of king Edward, had crossed the sea. They then brought me a letter of recommendation from our friend Hilles,² whose probity is well known to you. Since that time they have conducted themselves with so much honesty and modesty that I have no hesitation in recommending them to you, especially as they will not call for your services, except in one matter which will be neither displeasing nor troublesome to you. The

¹ Cheke and Morison.

² A pious Englishman who had retired to the continent during the latter years of the reign of Henry VIII. We have his correspondence with Bullinger. *Zurich Letters*, 1st series, tom. i. p. 197, 275.

matter in question is to present them to some faithful companions with whom they may pass into Italy.¹ Not that they ask you to undertake this commission, but because they hope, if you drop a word about them to some friend or acquaintance, this will be of great advantage to them. Our condition here is pretty tranquil for the present, considering that matters have been far from being happily settled. The Lord has looked favourably on his flock which he has collected from various quarters. For the wicked had put all their devices in practice before they gave way. Would that our patient suffering and meekness could disarm their perverseness. Certes it will be impossible for them to deny, that my own personal wrongs, which were indeed very grievous, have been passed over by me in the spirit of meekness; and in truth I make no doubt but that the Lord, suspending for a short time the punishment which they have deserved, and which they cease not daily to provoke, will spare his own elect. For in that party I see as yet no signs of amendment. Just as if nothing had transpired in France, respecting our disturbances, an immense number of men has flocked together from all quarters to celebrate Easter. And though the king had stationed guards to watch all the passes, and the prefects execute most punctually his orders, and though the lieutenant also, a most infamous traitor, from a neighbouring watch tower, besets them with all the traps in his power; nevertheless the ardour of their piety has triumphed over all fears to such a degree, that good men break through every obstacle.² In France they exercise their wonted cruelties. The king has lately

¹ Morison did not make a long stay in Italy. He died of the plague at Strasburg in 1556. John Cheke wrote from Verona to Calvin, 7th April 1555. "The constancy of the English in adhering to the religion of Christ is wonderful. No one of all that I have yet heard of, can be forced to recant. Many willingly and with alacrity offer themselves to death rather than return to their vomit. The ignorant take the kingdom of heaven by violence, and in constancy surpass the learned." *Coll. Dupuy*, vol. 268.

² We find the confirmation of this fact, and a proof of the pious hospitality of the magistrates of Geneva, in a letter of Theodore Beza to Bullinger:—"There is nothing but sad news from France. The Genevese, we have heard, about eight days ago have assigned a certain portion of land for founding a new town for four hundred families of exiles, whose arrival is expected." Letter of the 6th May 1554. *Arch. of Zurich*.

proclaimed through all the provinces, that he will inflict punishment on the sluggishness of the judges, just as if they were accomplices, unless they proceed with greater rigour in their perquisitions against the professors of our faith. In the mean time I do not know what is to be augured from his total change in the form of forensic proceedings. He is arming troops that he may foment new troubles, and envenom more and more the commotions which exist in England. At Marseilles, he is equipping a powerful fleet, but he seems to direct the principal brunt of the war against Italy, unless the Emperor shape his course away from the scene of hostilities. He is also said to be levying forces among your people. In fine, he has his hands as full of business as if he intended to turn heaven and earth topsy-turvy. But as he is swayed by the very worst counsels, he relaxes nothing of his wonted cruelty and pride against the reformed doctrine. Of so many machinations which, as if in God's despite, he is devising, I expect nothing but a sad and inauspicious issue.

For your sermons I return you my most hearty thanks, not only because you have sent me a copy, but also because in them I see that there is a friendly and honourable mention made of myself. In vindicating our churches from the malicious slanders which these brands of discord never cease to vex them with, you have done a good work; but what advantages you have secured from the king of Denmark I have still to learn. For I suppose that you already know with how much inhumanity he lately received John Laski, and a crowd of exiles, that he brought along with him. A violent edict enjoined Laski to quit the Danish territory on the instant, and during a furious tempest. Writing to our friend Beza, you mentioned something of a doctor Westphal. I have now procured his book, but I should like to know, if it is worth while to answer it. If you think so I will bestow three days' labour in penning a reply. A short time ago a book was also published clandestinely at Bâle, in which under feigned names Castalio and N. . . .¹ argue that here-

¹ Doubtless Curione or Martin Borrhee, professors at Bâle.

tics ought not to be repressed by the sword.¹ Would that the pastors of that church at length, though late, aroused themselves to prevent the evil from spreading wider.

Farewell, most accomplished and highly esteemed brother; in my name present the kindest salutations to M. Gualter, Pellican, your sons-in-law, and the rest of the brethren and pastors. The Marquis de Vico, our friend Celso Martinengo, Budé, my fellow pastors and numerous friends all salute you. May the Lord continually protect you, and your family, and govern you by his Spirit.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Gotha.* Vol. 404. p. 23.]

CCCXLVIII.—TO BULLINGER.

Explanations respecting the book against the errors of Servetus—answers to three questions of Knox.

GENEVA, 28th April 1554.

Your last letter was delivered to me by our brother, M. Thomas Lever.² I chanced to be from home at the moment, so that he could not avail himself of my services in procuring a comfortable lodging. Nevertheless things turned out well in my absence, for the Lord directed them to a better host than any that we could at random have selected. He indeed and his companion loudly proclaim that they have been provided for to their hearts' content. And certainly such is their merit, that all good men should strive to assist them with advice, and console them with sympathy during their exile. One of them will shortly set out for Strasbourg on private business, but with the intention of speedily returning to us;

¹ It is the book entitled *de Hæreticis*, tracts or dialogues against the treatise of Calvin, in which he attempts to shew that heretics ought to be repressed by the sword of the magistrate: in Svo. 1554, reprinted in 1612. The German author of Calvin's life, M. Henry, pretends, with some appearance of probability, that this book was not written only by Castalio, who is attacked in it.

² An English refugee, who was afterwards a member of the foreign congregation of Frankfort. See *Zurich Letters*, vol. i, p. 150.

Thomas will remain quietly here, as he has found that this repose contributes to afford him a little more relief from his distress.

In my little treatise,¹ I have been under a constant apprehension lest my brevity should occasion some obscurity. This, however, I have not been able to guard against, nay with deliberate intention and induced by other reasons, I have not even sought to guard against it. For what I had not only principally but I may say singly proposed to myself, was to make manifest the detestable impiety of Servetus. But an eloquent treatise on the matters in question would have seemed a fetch of cunning, and by the pomp of its style, not well fitted to refute tenets so impious. In my style, I do not perceive that stateliness which you speak of; on the contrary, I made it my constant endeavour, as far as it was possible, to give, even to the unlettered reader, a clear notion of the perplexing sophisms of Servetus, without any troublesome deduction or laboured explication. However, it does not escape me, that though I am concise in all my writings, in this one I have been more than usually succinct. But let it only appear, that with sincere faith and upright zeal, I have been the advocate of sound doctrine, and this single consideration will have more weight with me than that I should repent of the work I have undertaken. You yourself, from your affection towards me, and the natural candour and equity of your temper, judge with indulgence. Others animadvert on me with greater harshness, that I am, forsooth, a master in cruelty and atrocity—that I now mangle with my pen the dead man who perished by my hands. There are also some not malevolently disposed, who could wish that I had never touched on the question of the punishment of heretics. For they say that all the others, in order to avoid odium, have expressly held their tongues. But it is well that I have you for the partner of my fault, if fault indeed there is, since you were my prompter and exhorter. Look then that you get yourself ready for the contest. You have been informed in one of my letters, that your book on justifying grace was received by me

¹ See p. 20, Note 1.

some time ago. Moreover that labour, which I trust, will be useful to the Church, cannot but be grateful to me. I wish that the aptness of your readers may correspond to your diligence. Your preface reminded me that I ought to think of what was to be done by us, of which I had previously written to you. For though any thing more foolish than the book of that good Westphal can hardly be conceived, yet because you see that the minds of the princes are corrupted by such calumnies, of which we have one sad example in the recent conduct of the king of Denmark, it seems to be our duty to obviate such an occurrence, by all the lawful means in our power. Besides a refutation coming from the pen of any private individual would carry with it less weight. On the other hand I see how difficult it will be to obtain the assent of all the churches. Do you then reflect in your wisdom, if any method of which we should not have to repent can be found.

Most willingly I looked over the answer which you gave to the Scotsman.¹ He had talked over these matters with me before he came among you. As I had freely exposed to him in familiar conversation my opinion, he did not press the subject any further, and not even after his return, did he ask me to communicate to him my ideas in writing. The substance of what I expressed orally moreover tallied with what you had written. For respecting hereditary succession in monarchies, I had taken nearly the same view as yourself.² On the second head—whether it is lawful for us to uphold the

¹ We read in a letter from Bullinger to Calvin, dated the 26th March 1554:—"I have included in this the answer we have given to the Scotsman who was recommended to us by you. You will deliver it to him when an opportunity offers." Who is the personage thus designated? The learned Simler conjectures that it is Goodman or Knox, and seems to incline for the former. It is also the opinion of M. Heyer in his interesting memoir on the English Colony established at Geneva, from 1555 to 1560. *Mémoires de la Société d'Archéologie*, tom. ix. p. 355. But there can be no doubt that Knox is here intended, who in the month of May, 1554, had paid his first visit to Calvin, and received from him a letter of introduction for Bullinger, as he himself informs us: "I have travellit through all the congregations of Helvetia, and reasonit with all the pastouris and many other excellentlie learnit men, upon sic matters as now I canot commit to writing, gladlie I would be tung or be pen to utter the same to Godis glorie." *The Works of John Knox*, Edinburgh, 1846, tom. iii. p. 225.

² See these questions with the detailed answer of Bullinger, "an answer given to a

gospel by force of arms, there was not the least discrepancy between our ideas. About the government of women I expressed myself thus: Since it is utterly at variance with the legitimate order of nature, it ought to be counted among the judgments with which God visits us; and even in this matter his extraordinary grace is sometimes very conspicuous, because to reproach men for their sluggishness, he raises up women endowed not only with a manly but a heroic spirit, as in the case of Deborah we have an illustrious example. But though a government of this kind seems to me nothing else than a mere abuse, yet I gave it as my solemn opinion, that private persons have no right to do any thing but to deplore it. For a gynæocracy or female rule badly organized is like a tyranny, and is to be tolerated till God sees fit to overthrow it. If any tumult shall arise for the sake of religion, I pronounced that to me it seems the better and the safer course, to remain quiet till some peculiar call for interference should clearly appear—that it is our duty rather to ask God for a spirit of moderation and prudence, to stand us in aid in the critical moment, than to agitate idle enquiries.

The state of our church still continues to be wavering, but I am obliged to break off, because since the time that I found fitting messengers to whom I might venture to entrust my letter, I have been prevented by the pressure of other business from continuing it, as I should have wished, any further. Farewell then, most accomplished sir, and to me highly esteemed brother in the Lord. Do not fail to salute in my name, M. Gualter, Pellican, and the other pastors. In their turn, my colleagues, the Marquis de Vico, and many other friends salute you. May the Lord continually protect and bless you and your family.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich, Colloq. Gest. vi, 105, p. 597.*]

certain Scotsman in reply to some questions concerning the kingdom of Scotland and England." Knox's *Works*, tom. iii. p. 221 and the following.

CCCXLIX.—TO FAREL.

Gloomy prospects of Geneva—foreign news—ultra-Lutheran intolerance in Germany.

GENEVA, 25th May 1554.

Because out of that vast mass of subjects which the opportunity of writing to you suggests to me, I have no leisure, occupied as I am at present, to make a choice, I am forced to write to you a short and dry letter. To the state of our own affairs I dislike to allude. I wish that some change would speedily furnish me with a less uncertain argument. But, believe me, the insolence of the bad spreads more wildly than ever. I augur no good from it. I pass therefore to other persons. Immense preparations of war threaten Italy. The devastations committed in our Picardy will perhaps exempt it from paying any taxes this year. As it is shrewdly suspected that the emperor is marching upon Naples, the king is drawing together his troops to act in that quarter. The king of Spain has disembarked in England. How long he will maintain his present quiet attitude is uncertain. I suppose that in your part of the world, people are not ignorant of the convulsions in Germany. You will learn from a letter of M. Laski,¹ which I send you, in how savage a manner these madmen conduct themselves, who, under the name of Luther, are at present making an onset upon us. In a small compass you will find a copious detail, which I have not yet had leisure to peruse. Send me back the letter and the papers as soon as you can, that I may give him an answer. Dear Farel, how I wish that all men would accustom themselves to bear their cross, and at the same time surmount all stumbling-blocks! Above all, this should be our study that the disciples of Christ may feel no surprise because affairs are everywhere in disorder and confusion. I dispense with more particulars, because I have not sufficient time.—Yours, JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

¹ This letter is preserved among the manuscripts of the Imperial Library of Paris. (Coll. Dupuy, 268.) See the following letter.

CCCL.—TO JOHN LASKI.¹

Expression of sympathy under his trials—loud complaints of the intolerance of the German theologians.

GENEVA, May 1554.²

I have not replied to you, very distinguished sir, and much honoured brother, so early as you expected, because I thought my delay would occasion you no great inconvenience. For though a young Frieslander set out from this place, since I received your letter, I did not think fit to trust him with my answer, which I hardly thought would reach you sooner by the very circuitous route which he intends to take. Another person left this shortly after, but he too purposed to hold an indirect course. Moreover M. de Sechelles, who had brought me your letter, quitted us abruptly, leaving with me Mr. Cheke and Mr. Morison who were afterwards obliged to set out for Italy. This is the reason why I allowed a very suitable messenger, to go away empty-handed, one, at least, who would have taken care, that whatever I wrote should be safely

¹ See vol. ii. pp. 360, 361, Notes. On the death of Edward VI., the congregation of Protestants under the charge of John Laski, obtained permission to quit London and embark for the Low Countries. A storm dispersed their little fleet, and the ship in which Laski sailed, found shelter in the Danish port of Elsinore; but the intolerance of the Lutheran ministers did not long respect this asylum. Favourably received at first by Christian III., a mild and pious prince, Laski was before long violently attacked by the theologians of the court, Westphal and Bugenhagen, who represented the wandering members of the Church of London, as so many infidels, unworthy of the name of Christian, styling them the Devil's Martyrs. Led away by their counsels, the king ordered the refugees to evacuate the country, and they were obliged to re-embark during a tempestuous season, and sail through a thousand perils in quest of some more hospitable shore. This shameful violation of hospitality, renewed by the Lutherans of Lubec, Hamburg, and Rostock, excited the lively indignation of the Reformed Churches of Switzerland, which we find eloquently expressed in this letter of Calvin to Laski. Having retired to Friesland, where he had a few years previously founded several churches, Laski very soon afterwards directed his steps to Frankfort, where we shall find him again at a later period.—Krasinski, *Hist. Relig. des Peuples Slaves*, C. viii. pp. 135, 136, and Hospinian, *Hist. Sacr.* p. 394.

² Without a date, but written doubtless about the end of May 1554, in answer to a letter of Laski of the 13th March. (Imperial Library of Paris. Coll. Dupuy, vol. 268.)

and faithfully delivered to you. Now if you expect that I shall pay you with interest for my delay, you will be mistaken. Nor indeed do I suppose that you have any great wish for a favour of this kind, which would take up your time without much profit. For I am not furnished with a subject like that of your letter, the perusal of which, though far from being gay, was yet both profitable and delightful. And if the account of your wanderings gave me the most poignant sorrow, the adventures themselves possessed that kind of interest which rendered them, I frankly avow, an admirable subject for a narrative. I doubt not but many others share my sentiments on that head. Your pains then were well bestowed in writing out these details, and perhaps it will be expedient to give them by and by a wider circulation. For my own part, I have already reaped from them no contemptible fruits, though it was with the saddest and bitterest feelings that I learned the cruelty of the Danes. Good God!—so much inhumanity in a christian people, that the sea itself was merciful in comparison! When the report was spread about here, that a signal had been hoisted by the king to the unfortunate brethren, who, exiled from England, were in quest of a new retreat, there was so sudden a burst of joy, that one would have thought that this single act sufficed to procure him immortal honour. Now I fear he has called down on his head the terrible vengeance of God, no less than he has covered himself with infamy in the eyes of men. And the more I had celebrated his humanity, the bitterer is my disappointment to find, that his mild temper had been so much exasperated by these intermeddling busy bodies, whose perfidy is no less detestable than their cruelty, for it was their duty rather to have appeased him supposing he had been irritated. But a diabolical fury it would seem has seized upon all that maritime region; the contagion has spread into Saxony and the adjoining countries to such a degree, that they know neither bounds nor shame in venting their rage on us. A most delectable spectacle, you may be sure, to the Papists! The more reason why we should make an effort to devour these evils in silence, since we cannot publish them without bring-

ing dishonour on the gospel. And yet as it was clear to me, that the intemperance of that party was hateful to all learned and moderate men, I conceived that we ought not to maintain an absolute silence; and certainly it was not my fault that some expedient was not adopted by us, at the very first, for putting a check upon them. Our most excellent brother, Bullinger, took a different view of the matter, and thought that our victory would be best secured by our silence and forbearance. Lest my assiduity should give offence, or beget mistrust, I have abstained from busying myself too much about the affair. Of late, however, he has changed his mind, tired, I suppose, of giving his enemies so much advantage, and has of his own accord exhorted me to confute in a short tract their atrocious calumnies. This I have promised to do. But as I was busily engaged with Genesis up to the time of the fair, and as I required the general assent of those whose defence I had undertaken, I have done nothing to it as yet. As soon, however, as I shall have fairly set about it, I hope to produce a lucubration without much delay. But to return to yourself, reverend brother, I think you have set an example doubly praiseworthy; first, in having contended you and your companions with the savage ferocity and haughtiness of that wild monster,¹ not less mildly and modestly than with dignified sedateness; next in having preserved the same uniform course of moderation, as often as others, with like violence, have let loose their rage against you. In considering the undisguised defence of the truth of so much importance, that after being cruelly tossed about both by sea and land, you have not shrunk from affronting for its sake a fresh exile, you have by such steadfastness offered to God, a sweet-smelling sacrifice, as well as given to all pious men a useful example. I rejoice that the Lord has at length looked down upon you, so that you have found a tranquil haven, in which

¹ We read in an account of the voyage of Laski, and his expulsion from Elsinore by the Lutheran ministers, the following passage:—"There was among them one of the principal ministers of the word of God, (if God will allow me to give him this title,) who, when he was so hardly pressed, by one of our people, that he had nothing to answer, exclaimed, Hold your peace or I will run you through the body with this boar spear."

you may not only find rest, but also employ yourselves in profitable labour for the cause of God and of his church. May the Lord enrich with every blessing that very illustrious lady¹ who has so kindly and graciously extended to you her maternal hand.

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCLI.—TO THE BRETHREN OF POITOU.²

Christian exhortations—instructions relative to the use of the Sacraments.

GENEVA, 19th June 1554.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be always upon you, through the communication of the Holy Spirit.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,—Though we feel due compassion for your captivity, yet have we wherewithal to rejoice and praise God for the constancy with which he hath endowed you, in such measure that neither fear nor threats prevent you from cleaving to him and to his truth. This also is your duty, for it is perfectly right that his honour should be preferred to our own life. Moreover we know that, on quitting the world to arrive at the heavenly glory, we make an exchange which brings us in an inestimable gain. Wherefore, my brethren, take courage, as you have done hitherto, to walk in uprightness, stretching towards the mark which is laid before us. Should a great part, even of those who have tasted of the truth of God, go astray to their perdition, be not corrupted by their example; for you know that the path of salvation is styled narrow, because very few lay their account with humbling

¹ The countess of Embden, who after Calvin's death engaged in a pious correspondence with Theodore Beza.

² To the Brethren of * * * without any other indication. The attentive comparison of this letter with that of the 3d September following addressed to the brethren of Poitou, induces us to believe that it was also addressed to the scattered congregations of this province, before the period at which they were definitively transformed into churches.

themselves to follow Jesus Christ in sharing his cross, but rather choose to divert themselves with their vanities. You do well also to assemble yourselves, both to invoke the name of God in common, and also to receive good and holy instruction, according as God gives grace to some to edify the others. For, considering what frailty there is in us, such exercises are necessary for us, till we be removed from this world. Especially when Satan makes such efforts to destroy our faith, we have so much the more need to be thoroughly fortified.

In what concerns the use of the sacraments, it behoves you to proceed with such precautions that you build not except on a solid foundation. When you meet together, each one may produce what has been given him by God, and whoever has received more should in like manner distribute more abundantly. And those who have not yet made so much progress should, with all humbleness and modesty, receive what is laid before them. But to teach is a very different thing from administering the sacraments. For to have a man who may distribute to you the holy supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, first of all he must be elected and chosen by you with common accord. And in order to do this you must have a certain established body constituted as a church. You must be resolved to follow up the train and order of assembling yourselves, which you have already begun. Not that we require of you a public confession, for we are well aware of the strict bondage in which ye are held, and under these circumstances it is quite sufficient that the little flock should assemble in secret. So that, in fine, it is necessary that you should have *this decent pretext and this concord in continuing together*, both for joint prayers and for the preaching of the word, in order to have the form of a church. This presupposed, when there shall be found among you a man fit to be called to the office of pastor, it will be his duty to minister unto you in the sacraments. But take heed that those who thus come together apart to receive the sacraments in such purity as God hath ordained, do not mingle in Popish superstitions, but that you may be in reality separated from everything that is opposed to our Lord Jesus Christ. Further remember that it is not for us to sepa-

rate what God has conjoined, and that along with the use of the Lord's supper, we are required to have baptism also. For if, after having communicated at the table of our Lord Jesus, you should carry your children to the priests, this would be a pollution not to be endured. We say not this to slacken you from what is good, for our earnest desire is that you should enjoy, like ourselves, the means and helps which God hath ordained to fortify your faith. But certes it is better to abstain for a short time from what is good and profitable than to profane holy things by levity. In that case, when you see that you cannot obtain what is requisite for the use of the sacraments, lament in prayer to God that he may advance you and supply your deficiencies, to the end that you be not always deprived of the blessings which he has left to his children, and strive rather to correct the vices which prevent you from being sharers of them, than to nourish yourselves in your infirmity.

As I was limited for time you will excuse the brevity of this letter. The brethren salute you,—only I do not comprehend who this Mr. Richard can be, whom you speak of. For we have no one in our company of that name. To conclude, we pray God that he would be pleased to increase in you his grace, conducting you by his Spirit in all prudence and virtue, to make you subservient to his glory and to have you in his protection, till we be all called away to reap the eternal inheritance which has been acquired for us by his only Son.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

CCCLII.—TO MADAME DE CANY.¹

He urges her to quit the spiritual bondage in which she is held captive, by withdrawing to Geneva.

24th July 1554.

MADAME,—I hope by this time God will have touched you in good earnest, to make you quit the captivity in which you

¹ On the back of the letter in Charles de Jonvillers's hand writing is: "He wrote this letter to Madame de Cany, who, he had been told, was on the point of leaving France. A person named A. Dymonet carried it to her."

have so long languished. Not that I think that heretofore the intention you had to that end was not good, but because you marched so slackly that it was not the way to advance rapidly. If God has let you feel the spur a little, it should not be for you matter of too much surprise. For if Lot, who had so great a desire to get out of that bottomless pit, Sodom, yet needed the angel to seize him by the arm and pull him out, as it were, by force, still more is it necessary that the God of mercies should come to the aid of our sloth or lukewarmness. Now that you are on the point of escaping, be vigilant to turn the opportunity to good account. I say this because it appears that you have yet some intentions of *going backwards and forwards on business*, a thing which I by no means approve of. For you have delayed but too long already, and there is danger that God may upset your plans. If you wait for a full winding up of your affairs, you will never see the end of them. Besides God wills that we quit for his sake not only some portion of worldly goods, but life itself. Reckon then that he spares you enough, and more than enough, in giving you wherewith to support you during the rest of your life; and remain satisfied with that. For certainly if you do not shut your eyes on what you leave behind, ceasing to regret what is at present rather an incumbrance to you, you will never be ready to seek Jesus Christ. There is still another consideration. God desires to teach us to trust to his providence. Thus seeing that you cannot regulate everything, resign into his hands what might long retard you. I do not give you this advice because I take pleasure in making you poor, neither am I urged on to too great a precipitancy. Therefore I entreat you, in the name of God, to make short work with the undertakings that put off your departure. Having taken a firm resolution, if you proceed with courage, I am convinced that in less than a month you will get over what you fancy would require half a year. But you must not lose a moment in breaking through all restraints.

Moreover, because it is our belief that every obstacle will be thrown in your way, we have made it a point to provide you with some assistance, even before it was required of us.

With this view we have begged the bearer to undertake the journey, judging that he would spare you considerable embarrassments. God has offered him to us in the very nick of time. As for his probity, it is so well known to us, that we have no doubts on that head. I should have no hesitation in confiding to him the greatest treasures, if I had them. In the next place, he is a man of great experience, who will be able to manage your case as well as we, or better than we could by any written instructions. Thirdly, he is well known and especially by persons of note. Therefore I beg of you not to neglect the opportunity which God now offers you. For that the intimation comes from God we make no doubt.

Madame, to conclude, after having commended myself to your kind favour, I pray God to increase you in prudence and virtue, to direct you in everything according to his will, and to have you in his protection.

Your servant and humble brother,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

CCCLIII.—TO CHARLES DUMOULIN.¹

Congratulations on the subject of the chair obtained by Dumoulin in the University of Tubingen—eulogium of Melchior Wolmar—sage counsels.

GENEVA, 29th July 1554.

I hope you will excuse me, my most worthy sir, if since the time you went to settle at Tubingen you have not received from me any letters. For as I had nothing worth writing

¹ To that most accomplished man and highly honoured friend, M. Charles Dumoulin, Jurisconsult.

Charles Dumoulin, one of the most celebrated jurisconsults of the sixteenth century, born at Paris in 1500, and deceased in 1566, descended from a noble family, connected with that of Anne de Boleyn, the unfortunate wife of Henry VIII. He declared early for the Reformed doctrines, and joined in 1542 the little flock of the Church of Paris. Nine years later, in 1551, in a bold commentary composed on the occasion of the differences that had taken place between the king of France, Henry II., and Pope Julius III., he attacked the abuses of the Church of Rome in the collation of benefices, and thus incurred dangerous enmities, to which he was abandoned by the ungrateful

about, I fancied that the omission of this duty could not be very disagreeable to you. At last I have received in one day a couple of letters from you, whence you will conclude that the former of them before it came to hand must have been straying a good while on the road. Heartily do I congratulate first yourself and next the many persons who shall derive advantage from your instructions, on your appointment to an office worthy of your rank, and in which you may usefully employ your talents for the public good. That you should have encountered some molestation, though I am, as you may well believe, very sorry, yet this should not seem at all surprising to you. For as in the town you now inhabit, there is still a numerous residue of the dregs of the Papist population, it is not possible that you should want bitter enemies. There is also a class of morose people as thoroughly dogged as they are fond of contentions, who cannot like or even abide any one who does not chime in with their own set. It is better however to deaden the attacks of these people by a sage moderation, than to engage with them in open warfare. And for your imitation on this point, I think I might propose to you as a model, Melchior Wolmar,¹ that most distinguished man, adorned with the rarest virtue, whose firmness was so inflexible, that it never gave way to their brutality, and yet he never repelled their violent attacks so much by his vehemence, as he destroyed the effects of them by a calm and equable temper. For I have no doubt also that these men obtain more favour at court than is compatible with the public interests. And hence it happened, I suspect, that when I dedicated to the illustrious Duke certain commentaries which you know, he never deigned to show by a single word that

monarch to whose service he had lent the aid of his learning and talents. Obligated to quit France, he repaired successively to Basle, Geneva, and Neuchatel; and accepted in 1553, a law professor's chair at the Academy of Tubingen, in the states of the Duke of Wurtemberg. He there opened his course of lectures with much distinction on the 25th February 1554, a few months before the period in which he received this new letter from the Reformer with whom he had maintained an intercourse for several years. See vol. 110 of the manuscript of the Library of Geneva.

¹ Melchior Wolmar, Calvin's professor at the University of Orleans. See vol. i. p. 29, Note 1.

my courtesy was agreeable to him.¹ For which reason I am of opinion that you should study to make these men feel that they have to do with a peaceable and gentle, but by no means a timid man.

About a printer, if any proper one should present himself, I shall certainly not neglect your commission. But here is how the matter stands: It is difficult to detach from this place those who are in competent circumstances. Poverty detains others; nor indeed do I fancy they could be of much use to you unless they came well provided with all that is requisite for carrying on their art. I may add that if it will be necessary to have all the apparatus of their workshop transported along with them, the expenses would be greater than the thing is worth. Farewell most accomplished sir, and ever respected friend, may God continue to govern you by his Spirit, and surround you by his protection and favour. I have lost all hope of your wife's arrival.² This is a sad thing for me, but on the contrary it is pleasant to learn that the threatening cloud that, it was reported, was ready to burst on your head, has been dissipated. If M. Vergerio is among you, will you courteously salute him in my name? Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

I was about to send this by a young Frieslander, but as I had resolved to join another to it for M. Melchior, I have delayed up to the present moment.³

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

¹ It is the commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians, dedicated to Christopher, Duke of Wurtemberg, 1st February 1548.

² Louisa de Beldon, daughter of a recorder of the Parliament of Paris. She rejoined her husband, to whom she was nevertheless piously devoted, but two years later, and died in 1556.

³ September 7th.

CCCLIV.—TO THE DUCHESS OF FERRARA.¹

He sends to her a minister to support her amid the persecutions which she endures for the cause of truth.

GENEVA, 6th August 1554.

MADAM,—My anxiety has been so great since your old servant² passed by here, that it has at last made me change my design; for if you have been in perplexity, I assure you that I too have had my full share; and though on the first view I had thought it best to suspend the journey of the man about whom I had written to you, after diverse reflections, it appeared to me that at least he could not fail to offer to you his service in your present necessity; for if we let slip this opportunity of assisting you, there may be danger of our coming too late to your aid, not to mention that the time seems to me very tedious, inasmuch as I have had no news of your state. And would to God, that I were at liberty to offer you my services in person, but because God keeps me confined here, I have selected the bearer of this letter³ as the man, as far as I can judge, the best calculated to render you every kind of service, both in what concerns his doctrine, and his fitness for the situation of almoner. I think him so well qualified that you will have occasion to praise God for it. As he is a gentleman of an honourable house, he can be so much the better employed in his connections with those who seek to drive away the good, when in the eyes of the world they have not the advantage of birth. No doubt our attention should be

¹ See the note, vol. i. p. 295. At the top of the letter we read these words written by the hand of Charles Jonvillers:—"He wrote this letter to the Duchess of Ferrara by one named Colonges, who went to her while the poor lady was deeply afflicted by the pursuit of her nephew, the king of France; and he left this about a month after Lyon Jamet passed through this town in post, going towards her to solicit her to make no longer any Christian profession. It is he whom he names her ancient servant."

² Lyon Jamet, the friend of Clement Marot, and secretary of the Duchess of Ferrara.

³ The Minister Francis de Morel, surnamed Monsieur de Colonges.

fixed on the main point, and what is more, nobility of birth is not a thing to be desired, did a man value himself on that account, seeing that he would thereby be prevented from serving God. But you will find in this man, as I trust, neither vanity nor pride, since he is one who believes that the children of God should be directed by a spirit of modesty and humility. Moreover though he is courteous and affable towards his inferiors, humble towards those to whom honour is due, modest towards all; yet withal such is his exemplary life, his habitual self-possession, and his becoming manner in teaching, that these qualities would give him authority to acquit himself of his duty in what you desire of him. Of the zeal and devotedness which he has to render you service, you may judge by this, Madame, that upon his first entry upon his functions he has preferred being a partaker of your cross, and suffering along with you in your straits, to waiting till he might come to you without any fear of molestation. This trait dispenses me from giving him any further recommendation; only I beg of you, Madame, to receive him not as one sent by me, but rather directed to you by God, as indeed I doubt not but you will experience that your heavenly Father has intended to confer on you this benefit. In the mean time he will inform you, that there is a virtuous lady who has promised him, that she will enter your service when it shall please you to send for her.¹ I am aware that in such a place, a woman of the humble class would not only be exposed to envy, but even to suspicion, and looked upon with an evil eye. For that reason, I reckon it an advantage, that the lady in question is of honourable birth, and what she seeks is the privilege of being able to serve God in serving you. Though I have never seen her, I have been so long accustomed to hear her virtues commended by many estimable people, that I hope your house will be blessed in possessing her. But I leave the bearer to inform you of the rest, with whom you

¹ The Duchess of Ferrara had asked Calvin for two widow ladies, to have the care and direction of the young ladies of her house. This demand is exposed in a piece entitled:—*Memoir of Louis de Mauray, master of our wardrobe and valet de chambre at Ferrara, to communicate and shew to Monsieur d'Espeville.*

will have it in your power to discourse more fully on that and other subjects.

Wherefore, Madam, in conclusion, after having humbly commended myself to your kind favour, I entreat our heavenly Father, to keep you in his holy protection, to direct you by his Spirit, and to increase you in all good, to the end that he may be more and more glorified in you.

Your most humble servant,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

CCCLV.—TO SULZER.

Revival of the Sacramentarian quarrel—complaints against Castalio—vindication of the exiles settled at Geneva.

GENEVA, 7th August 1554.

Since ignorant and headstrong men, who are renewing the quarrel of the Sacramentarians in Saxony, cease not to breed disturbances,¹ some method must be adopted to moderate their violence, or at least to appease their clamours, and conciliate to our side the pious, the serious, and the learned. Nothing occurs to me better fitted for that purpose than to demonstrate by a short tract, that our churches entertain sounder and purer sentiments on the subject in question, than the calumnies of their enemies give out. I am planning something of that sort for the moment when I can command a little leisure. In the mean time my preface to the book of Genesis, dedicated to the sons of John Frederic, Duke of Saxony, is in the press. In it I recommend indirectly the study of peace and concord. Castalio, believe me, is a creature not less malignant,

¹ Joachim Westphal, minister of the Church of Hamburg, had published the preceding year a pamphlet entitled: A jumble of confused and jarring opinions respecting the Lord's Supper, in which he strove to prove the profound disunion which, in spite of the apparent unity of formularies, prevailed among the Swiss churches, on the question of the sacraments. This writing was the signal of theological disputes, which greatly exceeded in violence those of which Luther had been the witness or the author, and which embittered the last years of Melancthon. Hospiniani, *Hist. Sacr.* tom. ii. p. 383.

than unmanageable and contumacious.¹ Under the mask of charity and even of modesty, he dissembles the most inconceivable arrogance. He and some others patched up that pamphlet stuffed with the most atrocious outrages against me, with the intention of its causing some sudden attack to be made upon me. They have been egregiously mistaken, for the senate voted that the work should be given to me for my perusal, and it was an easy task for me, not only to dissipate those clouds of slander, but even to make redound to my honour, what they had so odiously reproached me with. But I can far more patiently endure to be made the butt of their personal attacks, than every now and then to see the unfortunate exiles of Christ who are living here, molested daily by new vexations; though the Lord even in this matter hath hitherto held out to us a helping hand, so that we should not be overcome. If you wish to know more of our condition, the messenger will give you a faithful account of it. He is the son of the secretary of the senate, and an excellent and upright young man. Farewell, my most accomplished and respected brother. May the Lord stand always by you, may he govern and protect you. My colleagues respectfully salute you. In the name of us all you will present our best wishes to yours.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 83.]

¹ Already separated from Calvin by his free opinions respecting the authority of the sacred writings, Castalio had completely exasperated the Reformer by maintaining, on the occasion of Servetus and Bolsec, the cause of toleration, a cause so little congenial to the spirit of that age.

CCCLVI.—TO DOCTOR MARBACH.¹

Defence of the French Church of Strasbourg—explications on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper—appeal to the memory of Luther, Capito, and Bucer—offers to repair to Strasbourg in order to appease there the religious dissensions.

GENEVA, 25th August 1554.

It is now nearly a year and a half, since I have been compelled to hear, from time to time, not without the deepest distress, reports respecting the dissensions of the French Church established in your city. For while a few wicked and perverse men wish to give annoyance to our brother N.,² their violence has been the occasion of rending, by evil contentions, the little church to which the Lord had granted a quiet asylum among you. Nor is it surprising that these are sad and bitter tidings to me; since the dispersion of that flock which the Lord permitted me formerly by my labours to collect, and for a season to foster, would give me like anguish with the tearing out of my own bowels. But though I vehemently desired, that some remedy should be speedily applied, yet, because I trusted that whatever disturbances had broken out, would be easily appeased by your prudence and moderation and that of your brethren, I deemed it more eligible to remain quiet, lest I should be needlessly importunate to you, or seem to distrust your impartiality. But when the reports were that matters were daily becoming worse, I thought it high time for me to write to you a few words. Nor in truth did

¹ A tendency to be less and less tolerant manifested itself at Strasbourg after the retreat and death of Bucer. At the head of the ultra Lutheran re-action was John Marbach, a native of Lindau, near Constance, no great scholar, but a fiery and popular preacher. Bucer having heard him preach for the first time, had said to Peter Martyr:—"That presumptuous divine will do much harm to the church, and will ere long overturn what we have established here." This anticipation was but too surely realized, when Marbach, pretending to bring all the congregations of Strasbourg to adopt a common formulary respecting the Lord's Supper, directed his attacks against the ministers of the French Church founded by Calvin. See Maeder, *Histoire de l'Eglise Française de Strasbourg*, and Schmidt, *La vie et les travaux de Jean Sturm*, in 8vo. 1855, p. 115, and the following.

² The minister Garnier, pastor of the French Church.

my grief allow me to keep silence any longer. Whilst I am revolving the matter in my own mind, lo, a more agreeable intelligence is brought us, that a measure had been adopted by your illustrious senate to bridle the perversity of five knaves, and your troubles for the present were so far appeased, that your state was at least supportable. Would that all things were so settled according to your wishes, that I should have only to congratulate you, and that simply and upon solid grounds. But as there still remains some lurking suspicion and apprehension of the future, I have thought it my duty to task my zeal for the cure of this evil. But there were, as far as I can understand, two chief causes of the whole evil. In the commencement, N. was denounced as entertaining and teaching sentiments different from yours respecting the Lord's Supper. I do not say by whom, or with what intentions the method of bringing about a reconciliation was entered upon. An enquiry was set on foot. But if the affair was handled with good faith, it ought to have been fairly set at rest. The accused party made public a confession of his faith—how true, how sincere, how complete that confession was, I stop not to enquire. It is sufficient for me that it was not disapproved of. For that reason I have hitherto concluded in my own mind, that your silence, if it did not imply an entire approbation of the opinion of your brother and fellow-pastor, at least, shewed that it might be tolerated. That in the meantime you practised clandestinely against him, by crooked ways, I am not at all disposed even to suspect. What then was left me to conjecture, except that you had granted greater latitude than was proper to five knaves for throwing the church into confusion? For this question ought to have been closely investigated by you all, whether it is lawful, or decent, or in a word, right and proper, that five turbulent individuals, notoriously dissenting from the remaining body of the faithful, should be countenanced in their opposition to their pastor. But since this wound has also been healed, I return to the former consideration. What more can be demanded of N., than he has already complied with, I cannot very clearly perceive. It becomes you to take care that he be not pressed too

severely. If Luther were now alive—that illustrious servant of God, and faithful teacher of the church—he would not be so bitter nor implacable as not willingly to admit of this confession; that those things are really imparted to us in the sacraments, which are there symbolically represented; and that it is for that reason that in the holy Supper we are made partakers of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. For how often did he profess that he had no other motive for his contestation, unless that it should be clearly recognized, that the Lord does not mock us with empty signs, but that he fills us inwardly with what he represents to our eyes, and that so the effect is connected with the visible sign! We are agreed on this point, unless I am greatly mistaken, that the supper of Jesus Christ is not a theatrical show of spiritual food, but that in reality it bestows on us what it symbolizes; because in it pious souls feed on the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. But in this instance, my task is that of an intercessor and not that of an adviser; yet this I must freely say, that those persons, who, not content with this moderation, should degrade a brother from his ministry, would shew an undue degree of moroseness. Add to this the disgraceful example it would furnish, of a man duly and regularly called to the office of a pastor compelled, without the legitimate sentence of the church, to abdicate his functions, at the mere beck of the senate. I know that such practices are beginning to creep in everywhere, but I have also already observed, more than once, that they recoil on the heads of those who have wittingly and willingly betrayed the rights of the church. The sainted memory of Bucer and Capito, whose faith, prudence, learning, and integrity, have been so thoroughly proved, that memory which is still, and will, I trust, long be venerated among all pious men, throws, like a torch, a flood of light on this point; so that whatever is decided by you on either side of the question, may be more clearly ascertained and more notable for an example. But assuredly these men, such was their scrupulousness in maintaining order in the church, would have ten times rather suffered death, than approved, I do not say by their consent, but even by their silence, the violent degradation of

a pastor. If indeed you hoped that any advantage would result from my meeting with your colleagues, I should not spare my pains. Nay, I would come among them the more willingly that I see I have been mixed up to a certain degree with this controversy. Besides it would be very painful for me, that the form of doctrine which I formerly freely professed among you, both in the school and the temple, should now be repudiated. But that I may not seem importunately meddlesome, I have judged it proper not to proceed further in this business, than by counsel, entreaties, and exhortations to urge you to procure the peace, first of a pious brother, and next of an unfortunate little church. If I shall hear that I have obtained what I so ardently desire, we shall all have occasion to congratulate one another. I bid you farewell, distinguished sir, as well as your fellow pastors, my very dear brethren, who along with you govern that church—and to whom, if you think fit, I should wish you to communicate the contents of this letter. May the Lord shield you all by his protection, direct you by the spirit of prudence, uprightness, equity, and constancy, and bless your labours. Amen.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCLVII.—TO JOHN SLEIDAN.¹

Marks of fraternal confidence—blame pronounced on Melancthon—persecutions in France and Italy.

GENEVA, 27th August 1554.

When I learned lately from a letter of our brother N., that of the three whom the senate had set at the head of the French

¹The celebrated historian of this name, who was born in 1506 in the electorate of Cologne, and died in 1556 at Strasbourg. After having studied with distinction at the Universities of Liege, Louvain, and Orleans, and having been attached to the person of the Cardinal du Bellay, he quitted France to escape from the rigour of the persecutions, and settled at Strasbourg, where he was employed in several important missions, and prepared his important work, "on the state of Religion and the Commonwealth," (*de Statu Religionis et Reipublicæ*.) which has ranked him among the most exact and

Church you are one, I was, as you may well suppose, greatly delighted, and this joy, I hope, will be lasting. For I conclude that it is rather by divine direction than by human counsels that this task has devolved on you, that by your good faith and prudence you might compose all the differences which Satan has hitherto stirred up. You will do well then to take precautions beforehand not to afford the wicked any pretext for raising disturbances. Thus, to my heart's desire, the interests of this little flock have been consulted for. And if I do not exhort you to do your duty, it is no timidity on my part which occasions this omission, but because I deem such exhortation superfluous. I know not how much I ought to congratulate myself on Philip's agreement with me in one thing, since in the most important matters, catching at the approbation even of the philosophers, he openly opposes sound doctrine; or lest he should provoke the resentment of certain persons, he cunningly, or at least, with but little manliness, disguises his own opinion. May the Lord endow him with a more courageous spirit, lest posterity suffer great detriment from his timidity. Within the last three months, five or six persons have been burnt in Gascony, in whose death the Lord has sublimely triumphed.¹ Lately, also, in a town of the Venetian dominions, a pious man, with whom I was well acquainted, confessed Christ with admirable constancy to his last breath. Here we have nothing new, but what is equally known to you. Farewell, most distinguished and ever respected man, may the Lord protect and bless you and your family. Of the Turkish fleet more certain intelligence has been brought us, that having burned certain towns, laid waste the sea coast, and taken five thousand men prisoners, it has sailed back to Greece.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 85.]

profound historians. Of a conciliating and moderate temper, Sleidan always studied to appease the religious differences in the country of his adoption, and his influence was frequently invoked by Calvin.

¹ Sleidan was then employed in writing his history, for which he was always in quest of precious facts. On the 28th December 1553, he wrote to Calvin: "About the middle of September I wrote to you, most distinguished sir, about my history of religion which I have carried down from the earlier periods at which it began, almost

CCCLVIII.—TO PETER MARTYR.¹

He engages him to defend the sound doctrine on the question of the Sacraments, and gives him an account of the steps he has taken in favour of the French Church at Strasbourg.

GENEVA, 27th August 1554.

Though our common friend Sturm, when giving me his advice respecting the dedication of the commentaries, had added that you entirely coincided with him, yet it has given me much greater pleasure to learn the fact from your own letter. One thing I fear is that my labour, about which you shew yourself so anxious, shall not have the good fortune to be much esteemed. But how comes it, that you say not a word about your own commentaries on the same work? From the answer you had given to Robert Etienne, while you were yet in England, I expected that they would be published in a short time. Wherefore I am dissatisfied that the Church should be any longer defrauded of the fruits of them, which I am confident will be abundant. For in the present heterogeneous mass of books, it is especially necessary that we should

to our own times. "I pray you, let me have your aid in this work, which, as I hope will be one of general utility." *Library of Geneva*, vol. 113. In another letter dated the 2d April 1554, Sleidan announced to Calviu the completion of his history, asking him to send him the "Martyrologie de Crespin," then printed at Geneva. *Ibidem*, vol. 109.

¹ Peter Martyr Vermily, one of the principal Italian Reformers of the sixteenth century, preached with success the gospel at Naples, Lucca, and Florence, and withdrew voluntarily from his native country in 1542, to avoid persecution. Welcomed eagerly by Bucer at Strasbourg, he afterwards followed him to England, occupied the chair of Divinity Professor in the University of Cambridge, and returned to the continent on the death of Edward VI. Become again professor in the academy of Strasbourg in 1553, he displayed the most profound erudition, and in the Sacramentarian dispute, ranged himself on the side of the divines of Zurich and Geneva. United with Calvin by the ties of an affection founded on an entire harmony in their views, he wrote to him on the 9th May, 1554: "Lastly, I would not that you remained in ignorance of how much pain it has occasioned me and the other good men, that things so foolish and false have been spread against the truth and your name. . . For our part, as often as we have been asked, both publicly and privately, we have defended the cause of truth and yours, to the best of our abilities, especially Zanchi and I." *Opera*, tom. ix. p. 92.

be able to lay our hands on the grave, learned, and solid lucubrations of pious and orthodox men, who are endowed with equal judgment and authority, both for the purpose of asserting purity of doctrine, and of having this doctrine transmitted to our posterity sound and entire, as also for the purpose of confuting the foolish levity of those who embroil everything. I am truly grieved on account of Philip. It is not enough for him then, either to be wavering from suppleness of temper to the side where the favour of men impels him, or by his silence to be betraying the truth, unless he can at the same time endeavour to incline, to his own timid inaction, men of understanding whom he had better strive to imitate. But you have acted nobly in professing that you would be the voluntary defender of the true doctrine. For thus by your example a rule has been prescribed to him up to what point peace is to be cherished, that he may at length learn to emit some sparks of manly virtue. He was disposed to pay too servile a court to your colleague, to whom, by the advice of M. Sturm, I have written¹ that I might reconcile him to N. Whatever turn the affair may take, I shall never repent of having attempted something. But if any have fallen away, your duty is to bear the more courageously on that account the burden imposed on you; which when I plainly perceive that you do, I am more and more confirmed in the opinion that you have been detained where you are by a wonderful providence of God, in order to succour an afflicted church. I beg of you to salute M. Zanchi in my name; the Marquis sends you his kindest respects. Farewell, most excellent man, and my truly honoured brother; may the Lord always stand by you, govern you, and bless your labours. If your letter had been put into my hands earlier, my exhortation to the princes would have been, according to your advice, more copious; but I received it after the middle of August. My colleagues salute you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 83.]

¹ It is the letter to Marbach. p. 54.

CCCLIX.—TO MELANCHTHON.¹

He deplores the silence of Melanchthon, and urges him to apply himself to the controverted questions of Election and the Lord's Supper.

GENEVA, 27th August 1554.

Though I am sorry and much surprised, that you did not answer my last letter, yet I can by no means bring myself to suspect that this occurred from any haughtiness or contempt on your part, feelings which I know to be most alien to your temper and manners. For that reason, having chanced on this messenger, who has offered me his services in conveying a letter to you, I have thought that I should make a second attempt to see whether I might not be able to draw something from you. I do not express myself thus, as doubting of your friendship towards me, which indeed has always been unbounded, but because your silence, as I esteem it to be detrimental to the Church of God, cannot for that reason but be painful and annoying to me. I wrote to you lately respecting that article of doctrine, in which you rather dissemble your own opinion than dissent from us. For what else can I suppose of a man of the most penetrating judgment, and profoundly learned in heavenly doctrine, when what you conceal as a thing unknown to you, cannot but force itself on the ob-

¹ In a letter dated the 14th October 1554, Melanchthon, replying to the reproaches which were addressed to him by Calvin, thus justified his attitude in the Sacramentarian dispute:—"In regard to the exhortation contained in your last letter to me, to repress the ignorant clamours of those who are renewing the contest about the adoration of the bread, (*περι ἀρτολατρείας*), know that certain persons are raising this dispute principally from hatred to me, that they may have a plausible reason for oppressing me. I have had many conferences with learned and good men on many contested points On these matters so highly important, I should like exceedingly to converse with you, whom I know to be a lover of truth, and to have a mind exempt from hatred and other foolish affections I do not despair of our having a conference before my soul departs from its earthly prison. For though, by reason of my advanced age, I am not far from the goal of this career, yet am I in daily expectation of being anew exiled." This touching complaint, without disarming Calvin, no doubt moderated the free-spoken exhortations which he addressed to the German Reformer.

servation of every one, who is, however superficially, versed in the sacred scriptures? And yet the doctrine of the gratuitous mercy of God is entirely destroyed, unless we hold that the faithful, whom God has thought fit to choose out for salvation, are distinguished from the reprobate by the mere good pleasure of God; unless this also be clearly established as a consequence, that faith flows from the secret election of God, because he enlightens, by his Spirit, those whom it seemed good to him to elect before they were born, and by the grace of adoption grafts them into his family. Weigh well in your wisdom, how absurd it is that this doctrine should be impugned by the greatest of theologians. You see that the manifest discordance which is certainly remarked between our writings has a pernicious tendency. Nor do I prescribe this law for the removal of our discrepancy that you should assent to me, but at least let us not be ashamed to subscribe to the sacred oracles of God. And, indeed, whatever method of reconciling our differences it shall please you to adopt, that I will gladly embrace. Behold how illiterate and turbulent men are renewing the Sacramentarian quarrel from your quarter. All good men lament and complain, that these same individuals are encouraged by your silence. For however audacious ignorance is, still nobody doubts, if you could bring your mind to speak out openly what you think, but that it would be an easy task for you to appease, at least in part, their violence. Nor indeed am I so forgetful of what is due to human feelings, as not to revolve in my own mind, and also to point out to others, with what sort of men you will have to deal; in what anxiety and perplexity the troubled state of affairs must keep you; and how necessary it will be for you to have an eye in all directions, to discover what obstacles impede and retard your course. But no consideration should have such weight with you, as to induce you by your dissimulation, to give a loose to frantic men to trouble and disperse the churches. Not to mention, moreover, how precious a thing we should deem an undisguised profession of sound doctrine. You know that, for upwards of thirty years, the eyes of an innumerable multitude of men have been fixed

upon you, who desire nothing more than to prove their docility to you. What! are you ignorant to-day what numbers are held floating in doubts in consequence of the ambiguous manner of teaching, to which you too timidly adhere? But if you are not at liberty to declare, candidly and fully, what it would be advantageous to have made known, at least you should make an effort to bridle the fury of those who brawl unseasonably about nothing. For what, I would fain ask, do they aim at? Luther, during his whole life, loudly proclaimed that all he contended for, was but to assert the efficacy inherent in the sacraments. It is admitted that they are not empty figures, but that what they typify is in reality imparted to us—that there is present in baptism an efficacy of the Spirit which cleanses and regenerates us—that the Lord's Supper is truly a spiritual banquet, in which we feed on the flesh and blood of Christ. In calming then the tumults which these absurd men have stirred up anew, the cause seems too favourable to permit you from fear of odium to hang back, and in the distinguished position which you occupy, you cannot moreover, if you would, escape from its various fluctuations. Endeavour only that the brazen wall of a good conscience may enable you to stand up courageously against these, and whatever violent attacks the whole world may bring against you. For when, by the partisans of Osiander, I hear you described both as versatile and more devoted to profane philosophy than heavenly wisdom, the reproach wounds me more deeply, than if malevolent or wanton men upbraided you with what it would be not only honourable to avow, but glorious to exult in. Farewell, my very dear sir, and highly respected brother. May the Lord continue to shield you with his protection, and govern you by his Spirit, even unto the end.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 82.]

CCCLX.—TO PERUCEL.¹

Counsels to the Church of Wezel respecting the ceremonies.

GENEVA, 27th August 1554.

I rejoice that you have found a place, in which you may devote your labours to the church of God: and I pray the Lord that he may govern you by his Spirit, in order that you may faithfully defend the station in which he has placed you. Moreover, because with regard to the ceremonies, you have not that liberty allowed you which were to be wished, you will make it your study to render it evident to all, that you endure rather than approve whatever shall be superfluous. In a letter to my brethren, without at all thinking of you, I declared openly and frankly my sentiments on that subject. My authority will be of no service to you among those whom my advice will displease. That testimony will, I fancy, have more weight with others, than if you ventured to avail yourself of anything written to you privately, because there would be a lurking suspicion that this was obtained by favour and solicitations. These two things must always be especially kept in mind by you: not to suffer any thing to be imposed on you inconsistent with the edification of the church, nor which a calm and pure conscience will not suffer you to undertake. I am even in hopes that something will be obtained from the senate and the pastors, provided there be no wrangling. For nothing more exasperates and whets them on to resistance, than the belief that they and their sentiments are condemned. But you yourself, being on the spot, will be

¹ Francis Perucel, one of the members of the Foreign Congregation of London who had fled to Wezel. In a letter written to Calvin, he gave him interesting details about the situation of the French Church of that city, and at the same time concerning the difficulties by which the new church was surrounded. These difficulties arose principally from the pretensions of the magistrates of Wezel to regulate the ceremonies in a Lutheran sense, and to fix the sense of the Lord's Supper which the refugees considered less as a sacrament, than as a pledge and testimony of divine favour. See the Letters of Perucel to Calvin, 1554, 1555. *Library of Geneva*, vol. 114.

better able to perceive what may be expedient. Wherefore I prescribe nothing. Farewell, distinguished sir, and dearest brother. May the Lord govern you by his Spirit, and bless your labour. My colleagues affectionately salute you. For the brethren, from my heart, I implore the grace of God and blessings of every kind.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 83.]

CCCLXI.—TO VALERAN POULAIN.¹

Counsels for the direction of the French Church at Frankfort.

GENEVA, 27th August 1554.

I rejoice that, after having been long and furiously tossed about, you have at length reached a harbour, where you may at least collect your thoughts. I also congratulate not only you individually, but many pious brethren who will reap the fruits of your labours, that in the place where you now are, a station has been offered to you in which you may usefully exercise yourself, and devote your attention to the little flock, which has been assembled by your care and assiduity. It is indeed a sad and miserable spectacle to see the churches scattered like the members of a mangled body. But what if this dispersion is to warn us, that the moment is at hand in which God will assemble in the heavens his children, who can hardly find a place of refuge upon earth? Meanwhile let the fugitive brethren, after all their wanderings both in body and mind, accustom their thoughts to their final migration. But that they may remain peaceably in their precarious asylum, it becomes you to set them an example of modesty and moderation. For that purpose you will, I trust, find no small aid in your fellow pastor, M. Morell, to whose candour of mind, and mildness

¹ See the note, vol. 2, p. 210. Expelled from London with the congregation of foreign Protestants that were dispersed on the accession of Queen Mary, Valeran Poulain had just arrived at Frankfort on the Maine, where the prudent toleration of the magistrates permitted him to collect and reconstitute a part of the flock of which he had been the pastor. *Arch. of Frankfort*, and *Letters of Geneva*, vol. 112.

of character, as well as soundness of doctrine, all good men bear honourable testimony. Wish him in my name all kinds of prosperity. My colleagues send to both of you their best wishes. Farewell, dearest brother. May the Lord always stand by you, govern you by his Spirit, and bless your labours.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 83.]

CCCLXII.—TO GASPAR LISER.¹

Influence of the writings of Calvin in Germany—instructions relative to discipline.

GENEVA, 27th August 1554.

I should certainly be too boorish and unpolite, my very worthy brother, did I tax with forwardness or temerity your courtesy in writing to me. As I perceived that it proceeded from kindness towards me, so it becomes me to receive it with feelings of gratitude and satisfaction. For that reason I willingly learned that you sought my friendship, (for which I profess myself bound to you,) and from your letter I have received an accession of joy, in being informed that very many persons have from my writings reaped fruits that I have no reason to regret; in the number of whom you include yourself. For this blessing of God adds not a little to my courage, when I reflect that, in this malignant age, there are yet pious and learned men who not only profit individually by my lucubrations, but strive with faithful zeal to diffuse them more widely, and hand around from one to another, to use a homely phrase, the advantages they themselves feel. Let us hold on in this course, dear brother, and let a holy interchange of God's gifts flourish among us, which, all ambition and envy being banished from our hearts, may edify the church. It also gives me

¹ M. Gaspar Liser, Pastor of the Church of Nurlingen.

In a letter to Calvin dated the 26th February 1554, Liser praised in the most flattering terms the theological writings of the Reformer. "Continue, my dear Calvin, in that pious labour and task which you have undertaken to explain the holy scriptures, and do not desist till you have gone over the whole of the prophetic and apostolic books, provided the Lord (which we earnestly entreat of God) prolong your life so long." *Opera*, tom. ix. p. 81.

the greatest pleasure that you approve of my zeal in calming the discord which but too unhappily burst forth at the beginning of the Reformation.¹ Would that the same modesty reigned everywhere! But already men not less turbulent than illiterate are springing up anew, whom I know not what fury instigates without any reason to renew the strife. But it is our duty quietly to oppose ourselves to such firebrands, that the conflagration may not spread wider. I congratulate you on the tranquillity of your churches, but it is greatly to be regretted that you do not possess, along with it, the sinews of discipline so necessary to insure its continuance. Nor does there seem any way of remedying this evil, unless the pastors, who are touched with a serious concern for the reign of Christ, should come to a mutual agreement. For I would not venture to be the author of a measure, authorizing one individual, without calling in others to deliberate with him, to attempt anything. Moreover I have never thought it useful to entrust the right of excommunicating to single pastors. For the thing is odious, of doubtful example, apt to merge into tyranny, and the Apostles have transmitted to us a contrary practice. But that you should labour strenuously to stir up your fellow pastors is not only what I advise, but vehemently press on you. I have not written to Brentz. In a short time I expect to have a better opportunity which I shall not let slip. My tract on the necessity of reforming the church, is a supplicatory exhortation to the Emperor and the orders of the Empire, which you will find among my miscellaneous works. Farewell, most excellent brother. May the Lord govern you by his Spirit, support you by his strength, and bless your labours.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 82.]

¹“We also approve of that pious zeal with which you endeavour to bury in oblivion that most unhappy strife that had been stirred up respecting the Sacrament of the Eucharist. . . and do not suppose that your pains and trouble have been lost in this affair. For many persons, rendered more equitable towards Zuingli and Ecolampadius, have adhered completely to your opinion.”—*Ibidem*.

CCCLXIII.—TO THE BRETHERN OF POITOU.¹

Double duty to assemble together in holy meetings, and to profess publicly the gospel.

3d September 1554.

The love of God our Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be always upon you, through the communication of the Holy Spirit.

DEARLY BELOVED SEIGNEURS AND BRETHERN,—We have to praise our heavenly Father, that he has fortified you anew, to the end that with increased courage and resolution you might exercise yourselves in his service, and not only each of you individually, but also all of you in common. And in fact we have need to stir one another up, considering our natural weakness, and the numerous obstacles that retard us in the accomplishment of our duty. Doubtless it is not all, to come together to pray God and hear his word; nevertheless it is a powerful and necessary help to us, seeing that of ourselves we are but too sluggish. Wherefore, my brethren, let this be your end in meeting together, to confirm yourselves in the faith of the gospel, and go on increasing in all holiness of

¹ The introduction of the Reform into Poitou, it would appear, should be dated from the period Calvin himself lived in Poitiers (1534.) The evangelical doctrines then found numerous adherents in the magistracy and the schools of this learned and literary city. Among them people remarked the juriseconsult, Albert Babinot, Philip Veron, procureur, the advocate, John Boisseau de Laborderie, and the student, John Vernou, the predestined martyr of the new faith. These first disciples assembled in a garden of the street *des Basses Treilles*, and in the caves of St. Benoit, not far from the town. They listened to Calvin eloquently discoursing on the knowledge of God, and taking God himself to witness for the truth of the gospel which he announced to them. The seed sown by the Reformer in the soul of some disciples was propagated over Poitou, and the church of Poitiers was formed in 1554, according to the instructions of Calvin himself. It received from Geneva (May 1555) the minister James Langlois, to whom was adjoined (April 1557) Claude Chevalier. See Florimond de Roemond, *Histoire de la naissance et du progrès de l'heresie*, L. vii. C. 14; Pierre de Farnace, *Vie de Pierre de la Plae*, p. 11; the *Registres de la compagnie de Genève*, and different MSS. quoted by M. Crottet, *Petite Chronique protestante*, p. 121 and the following.

life. But at all events, deprive not yourselves of the blessing of invoking God together with one accord, and receiving some sound doctrine and good exhortation, to make you hold on in the right path. For though each one can and should also pray to God in secret, and having retired apart, and though each can read in his own house—notwithstanding well-pleasing to God is the sacrifice of assembling ourselves to pray to him with one mouth, and offer up to him the solemn homage both of our souls and of our bodies. And it were much to be desired, that we could do so before the world: but since by the malice and tyranny of men we are forestalled of this privilege, the least we can do is to praise God along with his people, as the scripture exhorteth us. To do this, small flocks group together here and there, till in the end the whole body of the church be collected in the kingdom of heaven. I know well that you cannot give a regular form to any assembly, except with doubts and fears. I know also, that the enemy lies in wait for you.¹ But we must not, for all that, allow the fear of persecutions to hinder us from seeking the food of life, and continuing under the guidance of our good Shepherd. Thus casting your cares upon him, take courage, for he will prove that he has at heart to watch over his poor sheep, and that to him peculiarly belongs the task of saving them, were it from the very jaws of the wolf. Even when the dangers are apparent, we must not, for all that, from excess of timidity withdraw from the fold. In fact, we see what awaits those who stray from it, how they gradually wax more and more indifferent, till they lose relish for all spiritual good, and finally become aliens to the way of salvation. Wherefore, brethren, be constant, and shew that the zeal which has stirred you up to begin well, was not like an empty puff of air, and let every one, according as he shall have more

¹ The progress of the Reformation in Poitou, gave occasion to the most rigorous measures against the Reformed. In 1542, while the Grands Jours were held at Poitiers, a commission presided by the mayor of the town, John Estivalle, Seigneur de la Gueffrie, made the most active perquisitions in the cellars and barns where the Protestants were suspected of assembling. Some were seized and condemned to perish at the stake. In 1554, they let loose their rage on several persons *who ran over the country and preached in private rooms and in secret.* Crottet, pp. 120, 124.

opportunity, strive to labour more abundantly. Let those who have suitable houses feel themselves honoured in being able to consecrate them as temples to God; let the others not grudge their fatigue. Let the great attract the little, and those who have a good example set them, be ashamed not to follow it. I mean not, however, that you should take no precautions against exposing yourselves to unseasonable dangers. Up to this point, God does not condemn our prudence in avoiding the rage of the unjust. It is for that reason that I consider the compact into which you have entered, that no one without the consent of the society should disclose to a living creature the order of your proceedings, to be both excellent and lawful. Assuredly then you are justifiable in guarding as far as it is possible against every danger, provided always you go straight forward, and never swerve from the right path upon which you have entered. For between fool-hardiness and timidity, there is a moderate apprehension, which does not quench in us the virtue of the Holy Spirit, neither turn us aside from those helps which God hath appointed us. Seeing then the foolishness and want of good faith which now abound in the world, remain, dear brethren, quietly in your hiding place; but do not for all that shut the door on those, who desire to come like yourselves to the kingdom of God. Let each one strive to attract and win over to Jesus Christ, those whom he can, and let those whom a careful examination shall have proved worthy of it, be received with the consent of all. Moreover, let such an exercise dispose each of you to discharge his duty, in governing better his own household. For on your return home from such a company, you should shew that you have been strengthened to act better than heretofore, and to carry back with you an odour of holiness, which may be diffused over every member of the family. Finally, let your whole life correspond to your profession. Shew that the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is a light to your path, that you err not like the children of darkness. And forasmuch as the world is now so corrupt and perverse, be so much the more vigilant not to prick yourselves among the thorns. The time of our pilgrimage is short, so that if

we reflect on that immortal glory to which God invites us, we shall have no occasion to faint by the way. On the other hand, if we meditate on the inestimable goodness which our indulgent heavenly Father has shewn us, and the precious treasures of grace which in every form he has shed on us so abundantly, we shall be base indeed if we are not touched by his love, so as to forget or despise whatever belongs to the world, to break all the ties which hold us back from him, and disentangle ourselves of every obstacle that clogs our march. Whereupon, my well beloved brethren, after having commended myself to your fervent prayers, I entreat our heavenly Father to hold you in his holy protection, to guide you by his Spirit in all prudence and uprightness, to confirm you in full virtue and constancy, and to make use of you more amply, not permitting his enemies to gain any advantage over you, whatever they may devise.—Your brother,

JOHN CALVIN.

[Fr. copy.—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

CCCLXIV.—TO A GENTLEMAN OF PROVENCE.¹

Explanations on the subject of Baptism.

GENEVA, 6th September 1554.

MONSIEUR AND DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER, — I have learned that God has within these few days visited you with a twofold affliction—first, in taking to himself the child with which he had blessed you, and next that some worthy brethren are scandalized because you have not had him baptized in time, though the means were within your power. Now, I will not stop to console you because God has deprived you of a treasure which you hoped long to possess, for I am persuaded that without being reminded by others, you have recourse to those remedies which are fitted to mitigate your sorrow; and

¹ *On the title*, in the handwriting of Charles de Jonvillers, is:—"He wrote this letter to a gentleman of Provence who was at Thurin, where the case happened about the scruple entertained about a child that had died before having received baptism."

what is more, that you have already so profited by them, that you are able with a tranquil mind to return thanks to the Father of goodness, who has brought you to feel that we cannot do better than submit to his kind will, especially when he does us the favour and the honour to acknowledge us for his own, both in life and death, when we live and die to him. With regard to the child's dying without having been baptized, our worthy brethren would certainly have occasion to be scandalized at it, had that taken place from indifference or contempt, for baptism is too sacred a thing to be left in the background. However not only those who make no account of it, but those also who put it off out of ambition to trick it out with pomp and gaudy shew, are to be condemned. In your case, in point of fact, all you have to do is to declare to the brethren what were your intentions, to take away all subject of scandal. For when they shall have heard the truth of the fact, they will have reason, I think, to be satisfied. If your intentions had been to reside in those parts as one of them, you could not, without offending God and your neighbours, have brought up your child without having it baptized. Not that those who present their children to be polluted with Popish superstitions are to be held excusable, otherwise than that they cannot reject the visible sign of the Christian religion, without at the same time marking their contempt for God. But your intention was quite different. For foreseeing the evil, you were desirous to take refuge, even before the period of your wife's confinement, in the bosom of the Christian church, or at least, should that be found impracticable, you thought of conveying the child soon after its birth, along with its mother, in order to have it baptized according to the ordinance of God. And this would have been an open declaration, that so far were you from despising baptism, on the contrary, from the deep respect in which you held it, you wished it to be pure and entire, such as it was instituted by our Lord. Such a delay, forming a part of the confession of your faith, ought not to offend the godly. For had the thing fallen out as you expected, such an act was no more to be blamed than your departure. I can readily believe, that there may

be some who would take offence that people quit the country in which they live, because they feel that they themselves are condemned by this example. But if they act badly, it is not a reason why they should subject others to conform to them, nor exact that what is their vice should be erected into a law. Among those who approve of what is good and give not their sanction to what is evil, I take it for granted that it is lawful for a christian man to withdraw himself from the pollutions of Popery, and also that it is not only lawful, but obligatory, for him to take with him his infant child in order to offer it with purity to God, and have it baptized without Popish superstition. Now God has been pleased to deprive you of that blessing. He knows wherefore. No doubt it was his will to humble you in this matter. But this does not prove that the act was to be condemned, since your intention was both pious and praiseworthy. If any one reply that your child has been deprived of baptism, which is the sign of salvation, I answer that its condition is not the worse for that before God. For though baptism be the seal of our adoption, yet we are enrolled in the book of life, both by the gratuitous goodness of God, and by his promise to that effect. By virtue of what are our children saved, if not by that of the saying: I am the God of thy offspring? But for that they would not be capable even of being baptized. If their salvation is assured by the promise, and the foundation on which it rests is sufficiently solid of itself, we must not conclude that all the children who die without baptism go to perdition, for in our desire to honour the visible sign, we should do great injustice and dishonour to God, derogating from his truth as if our salvation were not firmly established on his simple promise. Since then on your part there has been no contempt of the sacrament, it brings no prejudice to the salvation of your child, that it died before you had leisure or the means to have it baptized. Thus there is no cause for scandal to those who are unwilling to take offence without reason. This you may easily shew to all the brethren in order to appease them. Whereupon I conclude after commending myself affectionately to you and your excellent spouse, and to the prayers of you both, as I

on my part entreat our merciful Father to have you in his holy keeping, to fortify you by his holy Spirit, and to further you more and more in all good.—Your humble brother,

JOHN CALVIN.

[Fr. copy.—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

CCCLXV.—TO BULLINGER.

Defence of the Consensus—attacks of the Bernese clergy on Calvin.

GENEVA, 18th September 1554.

When your letter was delivered to me, the day before yesterday, by our friend Morel, a messenger presented himself here opportunely, by whom I might have let you know how much pleasure it afforded me. But a complaint which confined me to bed, this morning, prevented me from writing back to you as I had intended. Now, though I had already made my apology to the messenger, yet I have felt a wish to hold a little gossip with you, rather than send him away quite empty-handed. I will send ere long the defence of our Consensus.¹ But lest you should by chance anticipate something very fine, I must give you notice beforehand, that it will be written hurriedly, and without much expense of labour or correction. Of the state of our affairs, I write to you nothing, except that we are still floating in suspense, that through our sluggishness, the profligate are allowed to make game of us with as much sauciness as impunity. Meanwhile, I am more than atrociously outraged by our neighbours. For the preachers of the Bernese territory denounce me from the pulpit for a heretic, worse than all the Papists put together, and the more snappishly each one falls foul of me, the surer he is if meeting with encouragement and protection. Because I had sufficiently experienced that nothing was to be hoped for from our own

¹ It is the answer to the attacks of Westphal (p. 52, note 1), and the writing entitled: "A defence of the sound and orthodox doctrine respecting the Sacraments," Geneva, 1554, Zurich, 1555. In this first answer, Calvin abstained from naming his adversary, not to embitter the dispute by personalities. Hospiniani, *Hist. Sacr.* tom. ii. p. 419.

brethren, whom these injuries, however, ought to affect, I maintain as profound a silence as if I were dumb. The wicked may be satiated and the envious glut themselves to their heart's content, for any obstacle that I throw in their way. In the mean time the Lord will look down from heaven and will be avenged. Farewell, most accomplished man, and highly honoured brother. Salute in my name, M. Pellican, M. Gualter, Zuingli, your sons-in-law, your wife and family. May the Lord have you all in his keeping, and load you with blessings of every kind. I do not reply to M. Charles Du Moulin, because I had written to him a short while ago. I am not a little apprehensive lest his moroseness should be hurtful to his defence of the good cause.¹ I am anxiously waiting, as well as many good men, for the result of the convention at Baden. Again, farewell. My colleagues, and many friends respectfully salute you. Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich, Gallic. Scrip.* 24. Gest. vi. p. 20.]

CCCLXVI.—TO THE SEIGNEURS OF BERNE.²

Complaints on the subject of the invectives pronounced by several Bernese ministers against the clergy of Geneva.

GENEVA, 4th October 1554.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL, PUISSANT, AND HONOURABLE SEIGNEURS,
—After presenting to you our humble commendations and services, we beg you to excuse us for having recourse to you

¹ See the letter to Dumoulin and the prudent counsels which the Reformer addressed to him, p. 47.

² While Calvin had to struggle against the party of the Libertines at Geneva, he was exposed to the keenest attacks on the part of some of the Bernese clergy. Protectors of the double revolution which had given independence and the Reform to Geneva, the Seigneurs of Berne saw with extreme regret the diversity of ceremonies which separated the two churches. They especially protested against the doctrine of excommunication which Calvin energetically maintained, and which seemed to them a blow aimed at the civil power. From these different motives, they willingly shut their eyes upon the liberties taken by some of their ministers, and shewed themselves but little disposed to repress the attacks made upon Calvin and the ministers of Geneva. *Arch. of the Church of Berne.* Ruchat, tom. vi. p. 119, and the following.

to complain of the outrageous and scurrilous reports which are set afloat respecting us in your country, not so much to defame our persons, as to expose the gospel and christianity itself to disgrace and ridicule. You are aware, messeigneurs, that up to the present time we have never troubled you with our quarrels, not that we have not often had just cause to inform you of the calumnies that have been propagated about us, but because we had rather hold our peace than occasion ennuï and molestation to your Seigneuries. Now that we are compelled to break silence, we trust to have of you a courteous and ready hearing, and that of your kindness you will be disposed not only to lend us an ear, but even to remedy the evil, which we have thought proper to bring to your knowledge. The question is not now about our persons, for if we had been falsely blamed, justice lies open to us as to everybody throughout the whole of your country; but because those of whom we now complain, inveigh principally against the doctrine which we teach, a subject not to be handled in law courts, nor made matter of pleadings; for that reason we have thought proper to seek redress from your excellencies. I have no occasion to point out to your Seigneuries, the blame and disgrace which will accrue to the Gospel, if the preachers of the country of Berne, and other of its subjects shall call the preachers of Geneva heretical. Your own experience will make that but too clear to you. Even if there should be some difference in point of doctrine, considering how closely we are watched, and how we are carped at by the enemies of the faith, it were but fair, in order to shut their mouths, to employ prudence and moderation. But since God has granted us the grace to be bound together on both sides in strict concord, those who clamour and bluster against us shew by that, not only that they seek for nothing but disorder and subjects of scandal, but that they are at the same time like firebrands which destroy the sacred union, which by the grace of God has hitherto subsisted between us. Your preachers by the same grace live together in concord. Demand of them on what terms they are with us; for if they do not protest that that there is as strict a fraternity and as cordial a harmony

between us as any one could desire, we ask not to be favourably entertained by your excellencies. But if they declare, as we are convinced they will, that there is no pique nor controversy between us, this ought to be an unanswerable argument that our detractors consult neither your honour, advantage, nor tranquillity. On our part we can confidently protest, that it has always been our endeavour to remain strictly united according to the truth of God with all your ministers. So that in supplicating you to deign to undertake our cause, we require of you nothing but to defend the honour of God and your own.

Now the case we beg of you to examine is the following. In an assembly of the class of Morges, in presence of a great many people, an individual so calumniated our brother, Master John Calvin, that the rumour is current all over the country of his being condemned as a heretic. This word moreover was frequently reiterated. Since that time Zebedee, a preacher of Nyon, at the nuptials of the son and of the daughter of the Seigneur of Crans, speaking of the doctrine which we hold, and which we are prepared to seal with our blood, said publicly from the pulpit, that it was a heresy worse than any of the errors of Popery, that those who preach it are Papists, and that they would commit a less dangerous error in maintaining the Mass. In the meanwhile one Jerosme,¹ who, as you know has been banished on account of his errors from Geneva, makes no scruple to call our brother Calvin a heretic and Antichrist. Consider, right worshipful Lords, if we can smother over such an affair without being traitors to God, who has given us in charge, as saith the Apostle, not only to

¹ Banished for life from Geneva, Bolsec retired to the territory of Berne, and lived successively at Thonon and Lausanne. But the license of his opinions and the coarse violence of his attacks on the ministers of Geneva drew on him anew the severity of the magistrates. Expelled from the country of Berne as he had been from Geneva, he returned to France, wandered from city to city and vainly solicited the title of minister from the synod of Orleans (1562). Rejected by the Reformed churches, he returned to the Catholic church and avenged himself for the rigour which he had encountered at Geneva in publishing an outrageous pamphlet against the memory of Calvin. It is the book entitled "*History of the life, manners, acts, doctrine, and death of John Calvin,*" par M. Hierosme Bolsec, Lyons, 1577.

instruct the docile, but also to resist the gainsayers. Wherefore we confidently hope, that as faithful and Christian Princes, you will hold out a hand to us in this matter, and that you will not suffer the church of God to be rent by divisions under your protection, nor the gospel to be ill-spoken of. Nay, since abstaining from raising troubles and disturbance, we have peaceably recourse to you, that this consideration will dispose you so much the more readily to apply an efficacious remedy to the evil, that so God shall be glorified, the scandal taken away, and the audaciousness of those who seek only to throw everything into confusion, repressed. Thus shall we be bound more and more, being relieved by your equity and impartial justice, to pray God for your prosperity, as in fact we do supplicate him to have you in his holy keeping, to govern you by his Holy Spirit in all justice and righteousness, making subservient to his glory the authority he has conferred on you.

When you shall be pleased, right worshipful Lords, to give orders for more fully ascertaining the fact, we are prepared to confirm every particular, as it has been here set down in writing, though there will be but little need of a long enquiry, as public rumour has made it everywhere notorious.—Your humble servants, the ministers of the word of God in the Church of Geneva.

JOHN CALVIN.
ABEL POUPPIN.
FRANC. BOURGOIN.
RAYMOND CHAUVET.
MICHEL COP.
DE SAINT-ANDRE.
JOHN FABRI.

[Fr. copy.—Archives of Henry Tronchin at Geneva.]

CCCLXVII.—TO THE SWISS CHURCHES.¹

Defence of the Consensus and refutation of a tract of Joachim Westphal.

GENEVA, 6th October 1554.

Already four years have elapsed since the summary of our confession concerning the sacraments made its appearance, a work which we imagined would at last entirely extinguish those unhappy contests, which had too long exercised pious and learned men. And certainly in that brief compendium we had comprised what might suffice to tranquillize well disposed minds. The result, moreover, attested not only that our purpose had been duly appreciated by serious and judicious men, but that the measure itself had met with their approbation. And if in certain individuals there still lurked a greater obstinacy, or, as is but too common in a disturbed state of affairs, a more deeply rooted suspicion than was compatible with their coming to an immediate agreement with us, yet did they testify by their silence, that nothing seemed more desirable to them than to cultivate a good intelligence and tranquillity. In the mean time men of no education indeed, and turbulent, while others hold their peace, have assumed the license of making an outcry, so that from their violence, unless it be checked, a new conflagration is to be apprehended.

¹ To the faithful ministers of Christ, the Pastors, teachers, and fellow Christians of the Churches of Zurich, Berne, Basle, Schaffhausen, Coire, and the whole country of the Grisons, of St. Gall, Biel, and Neufchatel, our very upright and ever to be honoured brethren.

In his first tract, Westphal had attacked as mendacious the union between the French and Swiss Churches, on the question of the sacrament; he opposed to this the agreement of interpretation and of faith which reigned, he said, among the different Lutheran Churches, whilst by the rashest explanations, he himself substituted for the semi-spiritual doctrine of Luther, a new conception of the sacrament to which he attributed a gross and physical efficacy, which Luther would have reprobated. His attacks had not failed to plunge into the greatest perplexity, the minds it should have been his business to re-assure and bring back to the unity, so laboriously established by means of mutual concessions. Calvin, addressing himself to the Churches of Switzerland, strove to consolidate the work which he had so successfully accomplished some years before. Hospiniani, *Hist. Sacr.* p. 419, and the following.

But because they are few in number, and possess no sort of merit to procure them credit and authority, or rather a blundering and insipid babbling renders them not less ridiculous than they are odious, they might justly be treated with contempt, were it not that, by giving themselves airs of pleading the public cause, though they are persons of no note whatever, they nevertheless by false pretexes deceive many of the simple and unlearned class. But when we see that they are doing much mischief, and our patience but increases every day their audacity, a just and imperious necessity urges us to cry out in our turn. And yet, in truth, though their writings are disseminated every where, by which the good are afflicted, the weak perplexed, and the profligate armed for the strife, it is with reluctance, and after a painful struggle that I have brought myself publicly to combat their folly. But deeming it cruel to the good and simple not to extricate them from error, by exposing the fallacies which mislead them, I can no longer refrain from openly taking the field against these men's perversity. I wished also to remind the grave and learned men, whose names have been used as a mask by these scoundrels, that it was their duty to see that this insolence do not gain ground. For not to mention that it becomes all pious men to bestir themselves to prevent the conflagration, which Satan is lighting, by means of these firebrands, from spreading wider, it certainly more peculiarly concerns the men I mention, than it does us, that the foolish ferment should be assuaged, which may boil over to the common disgrace of many churches. Ignorant and besotted men, while they are rekindling the Sacramentarian war, audaciously boast, in the very first pages of their books, that they are entering the lists for the whole of Saxony and the neighbouring countries. While many lend credit to that assertion, some are drawn in by the pious respect which they entertain for the Saxon churches; others ridicule these churches for employing such illiterate and paltry advocates; others are surprised at the excessive forbearance of the saner party. But the impious and avowed enemies of Christ derive as much pleasure from our mutual bickerings, as prize-fighters do from the

skirmishes of the fencing school. Since then all dissimulation is base, which leaves a free and unrestrained passage for so many evils, let learned and prudent men look to it, whether it be not incumbent on them to moderate those headstrong attacks, whence they see so much detriment accruing to the church. And since I desire that all who are not utterly intractable, or have not yet compromised themselves by too extravagant a conduct, should return quietly to their sober senses; nay, that no one should complain that the door is closed against his repentance, I shall allude at some length but to one individual, and that too without naming him. He then, whoever he is, after having, in braggadocio style, professed himself the most valorous champion of the orthodox faith, avows for his teachers, great and distinguished men whom I love and venerate, and calls them in to his aid as auxiliaries. Lo, under what auspices he would engage the leading doctors of the church in a contest with us, that like bad scholars these should follow the rashness of their master, as soldiers placed behind the ranks for a body of reserve. But what kind of enemies does he assign them to combat? Those to whom he gives indeed the name of Sacramentarians, but as he defines the word, it is evident that his attacks are directed against those who, in the bread of the Eucharist and the blood of Jesus Christ, recognize nothing but empty signs. If so it is, let this irregular and self-chosen warrior lay down his arms, and leave the field to legitimate and capable leaders. There are renowned churches among the Swiss, and the Grisons, among which ours also is reckoned. From among these at least some skilful chiefs will come forth, to lead the van, and will draw along with them a vast body of troops to support, not less valiantly than faithfully, in the defence of their just opinions, the brunt of this war. For which of us does not maintain that there is something real, figured under the sacred symbols? But having thus precluded, while, enumerating one by one men against whom it is quite ridiculous to bring forward the accusations which he lays to their charge, he publicly produces the formulary of our agreement, in which the error he mentions is distinctly repudiated, can any

thing be conceived more impudent or more preposterous, than this man's conduct? Nor need we rest the defence of our cause on any thing else, since he himself indeed quotes our own words in which we confess that in the Lord's Supper the body of Christ is truly imparted to believers. What! When it is asserted that there is a true imparting, is there nothing left but the bare and empty sign? There remains to him the pitiful subterfuge of a vain quibble: viz., that it is of a spiritual eating that we speak. Would he then have it to be a carnal one? But he does not think that we discern a real body; as if, forsooth, like him, and fellows of his sort, we conjured up a phantom instead of a body. We, on the contrary, when we know that there was but one sole body of Christ, which was offered up as a victim to reconcile us to God, assent at the same time that that very body is offered to us in the Lord's Supper, because, in order that Christ may communicate to us the grace of the salvation which he has procured, it behoves that body first to be appropriated by us and the flesh of Christ to be made vivifying in us, since from it we derive spiritual life. For these very words we have employed in the summary of our *consensus*, of which he himself, citing certain passages, dishonestly and perfidiously dissembles this capital point. What! When he had premised that he would quote to the letter the things which had been published by us, by what right did he allow himself to detach violently the connected members of a sentence, for fear the full confession harmonizing with the context should meet the eyes of his reader? Is not this in truth acting like a mad dog which snaps at the first stone it comes to? But elsewhere, and indeed a little after, he produces from our writings distinct testimonies respecting the real import of the signs which he mendaciously asserts to be denied by us. And this knave reproaches us with double dealing, asserting we delude the simple by our prolix disquisitions on spiritual manducation. As if in truth it were possible for any one to manducate Christ spiritually, without having at the same time Christ abiding in him, without coalescing with Christ's body, and living in it, which result again cannot take place, unless

Christ himself, as he was once offered up as a sacrifice for us, do not exhibit himself to be enjoyed by us. Whence it follows, that his flesh is also vivifying. Having precluded thus pompously about the appearance of an error which he combats, he then strives to create hatred against us, for the discrepancies of our opinions. It is the property of heretics, he says, to differ from each other. Should I grant this, In what, I ask, does it apply to us? He answers, because according to some the bread signifies the body—to others it is a symbol, to a third party, a memorial, to another, a representation—some deem it a testimony or seal of communion, some a commemoration of his flesh delivered up for us, some an attestation which typifies spiritual grace, and others in fine hold it for a participation in his body. Who can fail to see that he is prevaricating? For these forms of expression, so aptly agreeing, form the highest eulogium that could be bestowed on our *consensus*. And lest the bare enumeration of the words should appear rather obscure, this ingenious man has delineated in a chart this discrepancy. But while he sees that in words Matthew differs still more from Paul, and Mark from Luke, of whom some call it the cup, others the *blood* of the testament, others a testament through blood; to solve this knotty point, he opposes to their differences our contradictions, not in words alone, but also in the sense. What then! Do the terms—sign, signification, figure, symbol, representation, convey a contradictory sense—words that have so close an affinity, that by any one of them all the others are immediately suggested? And it is for reasons like these, that turbulent men, from the shores of the frozen ocean, cast about their firebrands to involve all Europe in a conflagration. But what answer will he make respecting himself and his associates? Now he declares the words of Christ: that the bread is his body, to be clear of themselves and to stand in need of no interpretation, and a moment after, he does not deny that in them there lurks a trope. Need I inquire with whom this madman is engaged in conflict who so directly crushes himself? But let him name at least the trope, which does not dispense us, he says, from taking the bread to mean the body in

a proper sense. Assuredly every trope implies a departure from the literal meaning. Now, indeed, he is fairly caught, for, when laying down his own opinion, he dissents from many whom he calls heretics, it will be found that he himself is one of these heretics. Unless perhaps, that he alone should be exempted from this unlucky term of reproach, he will shew that the interpretation which he gives to this trope has been implicitly sanctioned by public and unanimous consent. But on this point he maintains a cautious silence, lest he should be found pronouncing a judgment on a matter which is unknown. Add that in other passages he confesses that some of us make use of expressions equivalent to those employed by persons of unquestioned orthodoxy, but attach to them a different signification. Where then will be found that discrepancy in words, which alone makes heretics even of those, whose only reason for dissenting from others, is that they may not subscribe to errors? Stupid ass! what man does not see that the oxen of your country bellow more rationally than you speak? And yet I do not dissemble, that he afterwards collects divers opinions, which, though they are not in reality irreconcilable, do nevertheless present a greater appearance of contradiction. But first, if an expression has dropt from any one incidentally, he maliciously lays hold of it, as if it were a full definition; next, when every man has, and should be allowed to have, his own way of expressing himself, he unfairly, not to say barbarously, imposes on all the necessity, not only of saying the same thing, but also in the same manner. Does not St. Augustin, nay, does not St. Paul express the same idea, when he declares that we are all one bread? Another has said, that the memory of our redemption is celebrated in it, exactly indeed as we learn from St. Paul, and from the Son of God, the common Master of us all, that the intention of the Lord's Supper is, that we should have a solemn announcement of his death. From this no one but some tragical Orestes would ever raise a tragedy. But granting that dissensions existed for some time, because the matter could not be sufficiently cleared up immediately in the beginning, was it pious or humane to tear up afresh a

wound that was cicatrized? Lest any variety should trouble pious readers, lo, our *consensus* is interposed. This good zealot sees that all whom he calls Sacramentarians, understand and express themselves in the same manner. Nor, if those excellent and distinguished servants of Christ, Zuingli and Ecolampadius, were still alive, would they change a single word in that resolution. For that man of glorious memory, Martin Bucer, when he had read it, congratulated according to his piety, in a letter written to me, the whole church—and how much spite this knave according to his rancorous spirit bore to Bucer, is abundantly proved by his abuse of him. And indeed, not that I might retaliate his calumnies, but that instead of his foolish reproach I might re-establish the true argument, do I thus handle him. It is the property of the Devil to calumniate, whence also he derives his name; it is the property of the same to spread darkness over the light; it is the property of the same, in fine, because he is the father of discord, to disturb the peace and violate the unity of the faith. When all these properties are openly recognized in that censor of ours, in what light he is to be viewed can be doubtful to no one. But, because it becomes us to labour to defend the cause of truth, and to cherish peace, with no less zeal than Satan plots for the overthrow of both, I have thought that something should be attempted in this affair, my very excellent, and truly to be honoured brethren, that those who have hitherto been rather unmanageable might become perhaps more pliable, or, at least, that pious, grave, and moderate teachers should be directed to bring to reason hot-headed fellows of this sort. And, because the extreme conciseness of our former writing lays it open to the cavils of certain persons, nor does it entirely extirpate the doubts too deeply implanted in the minds of many, that no scruple should remain in them, the best method appeared to me to be, to explain our mind more fully, that the confession might be the same, but rendered clearer by greater copiousness of expression. The individual to whom I have but too often alluded, reproaches us with such a chaos of opinions, that no one understands another. But I believe that I am too well ac-

quainted with the sentiments of you all, not to be confident that I have set down nothing here, but what every one of you would have written. For I do not arrogate to myself the privilege of dictating to you, or of taking the lead, but I profess to you my entire submission, on this condition, that according to your own judgment you shall decide whatever may be most expedient. And this task I have undertaken with the greater confidence, that I had already experienced, and you had testified by an evident proof, that a similar labour which with pious assiduity I had freely undertaken, received your approbation. Farewell, my best, and ever to be respected brethren. May the Lord stand by you, govern you by his Spirit, and bless your labours. My colleagues respectfully salute you.¹

—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich. Gest. vi. 105, p. 601.*]

CCCLXVIII.—TO JOHN PAULE.²

Instruction relating to the manner of conferring Baptism.

11th October 1554.

Respecting the counsel which our well beloved brother John Paule has asked of us, we have judged it most proper to give an answer in writing, in order that all whom it may concern, may be more fully instructed thereupon.

If there is a man living under the tyranny of the Pope, who, abstaining from the idolatries and pollutions which there abound, desires at the same time to offer his children purely unto God, and have them baptized according to the right rule of the gospel, his zeal is holy and praise-worthy. For in reality it is great baseness when a treasure, such as children are, is granted by God, so soon as it has been bestowed

¹ Follows a long memorial on the Sacraments signed by Calvin. *Arch. of Zurich, Gest. vi. 604, 611.*

² Aleiat John Paule, of Savillian in Piedmont, received citizen of Geneva the 10th November 1555. He was one of the principal members of the Italian Church, established in this city. He had at a later period some contests with Calvin respecting the dogma of the Trinity.

to pollute it with the superstitions which men have mixed up with the holy ordinance of baptism. But since this sacrament is a solemn reception into the church of God, or rather a testimony of burghership in the heavenly city into which are enrolled all those whom God adopts for his children, above all things it is to be observed that it is not lawful to administer it except in the society of professed believers. Not that it is necessary to have a public temple, but assuredly it is indispensable that there should be a certain flock assembled, forming a body constituted as a church, and recognizing for its pastor, the person appointed to baptize. For should a child be baptized in private and without witnesses, the ceremony would in no wise correspond to the ordinance instituted by Jesus Christ, nor to the practice of the Apostles. It is then requisite that the child should be baptized in a society that keeps itself separate from the pollutions of Popery.

When then the persons of whom we have heard shall have at their disposal such means, and shall be disposed to assemble in the name of God, though they should form but a small flock, we pray God that he would fortify them in that virtuous zeal which he has bestowed on them to dedicate their offspring to God our Father, and to our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. When it shall be notified to us that such is the case, we shall take care, as in duty bound, to furnish them with a fit and proper person to discharge this office.

JOHN CALVIN.

In the name of all his brethren.

[Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 145.]

CCCLXIX.—TO FAREL.

Opinion of the Swiss Churches with regard to the Consensus—sad news from Ferrara
—arrival of a new member of the family of Budé at Geneva.

GENEVA, 1st November 1554.

I am greatly delighted that you approve so heartily of the defence of our *consensus*.¹ I wish the inhabitants of Zurich

¹ See the letter to Bullinger, p. 74.

may share your opinion. But as I see that they are mollified, I am pretty nearly confident, that they will neither delay nor demur to subscribe. I shrewdly suspect the Bernese in their usual way will excuse themselves by alleging that they did not receive the permission of their senate; nor will timidity alone prevent them, but they will also abstain because they had rather foster in silence an obscure dissent, than communicate frankly to one another what they think. If we obtain however at Zurich what I expect, they will have to be urged even with importunity to give their adherence. It will then be your business to be instant with Bullinger, that he may extort something. I doubt not but we shall have the worthy Blaurer with us, and not only from his piety and learning he will subscribe to us, but from his singular courtesy, and excessive affection for me, he will also extol with eulogiums the feeble tract which you too have praised too liberally. Nothing will retard the inhabitants of Basle, except the bland temper of Sulzer, who takes a pleasure in caressing and coaxing everybody. But God will direct all these things. I do not know whether I wrote to you about the rumours with which the whole neighbourhood resounded, of my being condemned for heresy; how, having dispatched John Favre, we laid a sharp complaint before the Senate of Berne, and that then, indeed, the senate promised that they would take the matter into consideration. As yet however no answer has been sent back.

Of the Duchess of Ferrara we have sad tidings, and more certain than I could have wished. Overcome by threats and outrages she has fallen off. What can I say, except that an example of constancy is rare among princes? A brother of our friend Budé, who was a groom of the bedchamber to the King, has arrived here. Though he is a valetudinarian, he wishes nevertheless to pay you a visit ere long. In the mean time he salutes you and his other friends very affectionately. About the trouble in the church of Strasbourg, we could not but be very anxious. To interfere with them, would not only be useless but hurtful, so I shall remain quiet. Our colleague has not prefixed to an edition of the Catechism, the names of the brethren. He gives out that their number is so incon-

siderable. I intended to write by him respecting our affairs. Our enemies, unless we make head against them, are plotting — what I do not clearly foresee. The sluggishness of our own party, it is impossible to rouse.

Farewell, my most worthy brother, may the Lord always stand by you, sustain you by his strength, and govern you by his Spirit.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCLXX.—TO THE PASTORS OF ZURICH.¹

Some explications on the subject of corrections proposed for the defence of the Consensus.

GENEVA, 13th November 1554.

I received your letter, my very worthy and highly esteemed brethren, on the 7th of the current month. I feel the highest satisfaction that my labour, as it was undertaken by me with the purest intentions, has met with your approbation, and I return you my thanks for your frankness and courtesy. And your sincerity is so far from displeasing me, that it rather adds to my joy, that without reserve or hesitation you deal with me as is fitting between brethren. I am confident, also, that in your turn you will shew me so much indulgence that, if in some things I dissent from you, you will not only pardon me, but not demur too much to admit with patience my reasons. Though I will presently shew you that there is but a very slight, or no difference between us, and that too on few and not very important points. Yet though I said that

¹ The Ministers of Zurich having examined the defence of the Consensus, did not hesitate to approve of it, proposing some corrections respecting particulars, which were accepted with docility by Calvin, or discussed with fraternal frankness. Charged with transmitting to his colleagues the answer of Calvin, Bullinger wrote to the latter:—"I have received, honoured sir and brother, your letters, both the one addressed privately to myself, and the other which you meant to be communicated; and at the same time your defence. To-morrow I am to lay them before them. I have no doubt but they will willingly read the whole, not without congratulating and publicly thanking you." *Calv. Opera*, tom. ix. p. 92.

your sentiments were so well known to me, that my writing contained nothing but what each of you would have dictated, I purposely determined to oppose this boast of our *consensus* to the calumny of Joachim about our mutual discordancies. But my intention was to profess this, not so much to you as publicly, when the writing itself should have been amended by your judgment.

I have corrected what seemed to have been said in the letter with too much asperity against Joachim. Nor do I think that any thing remains which could offend you, for though I called him a knave, I meant not by that term to call him, as you seem to think, a rogue, or a villain. I employed the word as the ancients often did, merely to designate a good-for-nothing, or paltry fellow. I have also expunged the expression, "stupid ass," and in two places what might seem said by me contemptuously of his country, and the whole of that sea coast. But respecting the man himself, I am surprised that you wish his name to appear in the title page. Our venerable brother, M. Bullinger, had written to me that his opinion was different. In this opinion I certainly concur, for there will be more dignity in the handling of the cause, if there should be no express mention made of a private individual, and less opportunity afforded to a garrulous man for replying. And it is better that certain persons who are engaged in the same cause, should be indirectly glanced at, than to select a single adversary. Nor do I think we should accord so much honour to a vain-glorious man, as to make him more spoken of. Very many persons too would say that we were thrown into agitation by a trifling cause, if they should see our defence opposed to the accusation of so very obscure a person. Moreover, it would be inconsistent that a pamphlet should be addressed, with his name inscribed on it, to a man, whose words I only allude to incidentally, for he would have ample scope for boasting that he had not been answered. It will be better then that he thus be pointed out, that should he think of advancing further, he may be deterred in the outset. And thus too I am in doubts what is to be said about the tables, for I am afraid that it would not be consistent with reason,

when I touch upon other subjects and even on the whole summary so slightly, to insist so largely on one point. But if a suitable occasion shall present itself, I leave the matter to your judgment. Only I wished to shew you, that unless a full refutation of the work should go forth, it seemed to me that I ought to speak sparingly of the man and his impertinences, and without mentioning his name. Perhaps also in this manner he will be less able to urge his neighbours to take a part in the war, whom, without any doubt, he would clamorously summon to his aid, if he were attacked by name.

Of Luther it would have been sufficient for me to be reminded in one word. For I am not ignorant with what phrensy he broke out on us, nor have the things which I read in your apology dropped from my¹ memory; I knew also his wild notion about consecrating the altar as an object of religious veneration. But when I see that often from the violence of his temper he hurled invectives on friend and foe, as if in these contests I deemed him less a free agent than the mouth-piece of ill humour, I seek to cast a veil over them, in my desire to promote what may best secure peace. You must see, indeed, beforehand, that it is prudent for you also to be on your guard, lest your adversaries fall upon you more insolently. For that reason you will find the passage corrected in such a manner, as cannot fail to be agreeable to you.

In a few words, my worthy brethren, here are my reasons for not being entirely of your opinion respecting the confession of Augsburg. Though it proceeded from Luther, which is nowise clear to me, yet the continual importunity of certain persons obtained of Philip the erasure of a word from this chapter. When then the new edition came out, the Papists raised an outcry that we were both disciples of Zuingli and forgers. There was a great apprehension of disturbances, which God contrary to our expectations quieted. For the Marquis of Brandenburg, who was then intriguing to obtain the command in the war against the Turks, sent clandestinely to Luther, one of the princes of Anhalt, with a mission not only to detach him from us, but to excite his violence against

¹ Vol. i. p. 432.

us. But Luther in this conjuncture gave one example at least of moderation in his life, for, sending that traitor about his business, he revealed to us his fraud and villany. Of the men of our order who were present, Brentz was one who was rather unfavourable, but who had already been made a little more tractable. I had brought over Cruciger entirely to our side. The landgrave, who, secretly tormented by the thoughts of his double marriage, had abandoned himself servilely to Charles, for fear this double marriage, or rather this unlawful marriage, should be called in question, suddenly plucked up courage. Thus the votes of nearly all being secured for it, the new edition was adopted. For the clamour which Ampsdorf raised against Bucer, was treated not only with contempt but derision. Now, though no danger was to be apprehended from thence, yet, that I might relieve your fears, I have changed the passage. I have not thought proper to omit all mention of the confession, not to excite unnecessary scruples in the minds of those who will accede to our party. In the mean time, I have closed the door on all private writings, among which, there is an apology which displeases its own author so much on this point, that he by no means desires us to subscribe to his opinion, or give him our adherence.

In that passage where I affirm that the Sacraments are not beneficial to all without distinction, but only to those in whom God operates according to his good pleasure, forgive me if I have not expunged what I considered as soundly and reasonably written by me, nor introduced word for word what you wished me to insert. For that description of St. Augustin's in which he says that the body of Christ is the society of the faithful, besides that it is mutilated and obscure, would lead many not ill-disposed persons to suspect, that what was to be said of Christ its head is covertly and craftily transferred to the Church. Moreover, on examining more closely all the passages which did not satisfy you, you will find them so corrected or modified, that it will be quite evident that I have not been opinionated nor indocile to your counsels. In the four or five passages immediately following, I trust I have given you satisfaction, at least the definition which we have

given, does not contradict the *incomprehensible* nor the *inexpressible*, for we should always remember that God may have revealed things that neither our intelligence can adequately comprehend, nor our language express. It is quite sufficient for us that He contains in himself the height and depth and length and breadth of spiritual goods, of which Paul makes mention in his epistle to the Ephesians; the full knowledge whereof must be reserved for the last day, when we shall see him face to face. I should lie, then, if I dared to profess that I fully possessed the measure of that knowledge. And what means that great mystery of Paul's, except to raise us, overwhelmed by the grandeur of the thing, to admiration? Wherefore there is no reason why we should shrink from expressions, the use of which the simple nature of the thing in question requires. If it is your intention to repudiate the miracles which men of doubtful character trump up, I consent; but to recognize no mystery is too wide a dissent from that hidden virtue of the Spirit which we have so often celebrated.

To the word *really*, having read my correction, you will no longer, I trust, demur. Because silence would have been taken for a cloak, in my judgment I was not at liberty to omit it entirely. But in denying too obstinately what no reason forbids us to grant, we should have fallen into the fault of captiousness, a fault we so justly object to in our adversaries. And when in certain things ye are more timid than is proper, I wonder how it has never occurred to your minds what offences good and learned men often conceive from a frivolous opposition. For conversations which I have had with several persons, have wrung from me my consent not to contend about *that little word*. In the mean time I have been expressly on my guard, that neither ambiguity should furnish any grounds for cavilling, nor that any one should pretend that up to this moment we have been contending to no purpose, or about nothing. In fine, I trust, that the passage has been restored in full accordance with your views.

It now remains, estimable brethren, that in your equity you should take in good part this middle course, though it deviates

a little from what you proposed. Assuredly no overweening presumption on my own judgment has prevented me from following without one exception your advice. And as I was confident that, on your part, you would allow me to decide, as if I were one of yourselves, according to my abilities, what should be for the good of the Church, relying on this permission, I have not hesitated to write what you see. But if the result should disappoint my expectations, it will be better to suppress this work than that I should trouble you any further.

Farewell, estimable brethren, may the Lord continue to govern you by his Spirit, and bless your labours. My colleagues respectfully salute you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich.* Gest. vi. 109, p. 624.]

CCCLXXI.—TO LORD JOHN GREY.¹

Proofs of sympathy and affection for the family of that nobleman so painfully tried
—recommendation of Emanuel Tremelli of Ferrara.

GENEVA, 13th November 1554.

Though the calamity that has befallen your house, and which good men of all countries have deplored, cannot but have inflicted a very deep wound on you, and even now must afflict you with the bitterest sorrow; yet under this heavy load of trials, I am confident, that as becomes a christian, you have stood and still stand firm and unswerving. For though we see pious minds, in consequence of the weakness of the flesh, sometimes grievously shaken by much lighter blows, never, however, is the faith which leans upon Christ utterly overthrown. And thus tossed by that violent tempest, with your anchor fixed in heaven, you have courageously encountered

¹ Lord John Grey, brother of the Duke of Suffolk, and uncle of the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey, saw his family cut off by the cruel severities which signalized the accession of queen Mary. Imprisoned himself in the tower, during Wyatt's rebellion (6th February 1554,) and condemned for high treason, he obtained his pardon, and was restored to liberty a short time after. See *Strype, Mem.* tom. iii. pp. 1, 136, 145.

and perseveringly weathered those buffetings of the billows, which otherwise might have a hundred times overwhelmed you. There remains something yet greater to be done; viz., that you pursue the warfare of the cross even to the end. For the Lord has not tried you only for a short time with such cruel conflicts, merely that you should put forth an example of lofty courage, but also, that after this overthrow in which the grandeur and lustre of your family have fallen into decay, you should with placid and equable moderation of mind, continue to pursue what yet remains of the course of your calling. Moreover it has pleased him to accustom you also to that rule which Paul by his own example prescribes to us, viz., that you should learn to endure not less a humble than an elevated station. But inasmuch as this virtue is rarer and much more difficult to practise, so if you have made progress in the acquisition of it, that loss you have sustained in the shipwreck of your fortune, will be in no small degree compensated. And though I congratulate the illustrious duke your brother, and your niece, that singular lady whose example deserves to be held in everlasting remembrance, to whom it was granted in death itself, to commit their victorious souls into the hands and faithful keeping of God; nevertheless to me, amid so many distressing tidings, it was matter of no ordinary consolation to learn that, snatched from the jaws of death, you were still preserved to us. The grief which the false rumour, spread about of your death, had caused me, was but recently alleviated by the report of Emmanuel Tremelli,¹ and his son-in-law Anthony,² who, after extolling your liberality and numerous kind offices to themselves, mentioned that in the disasters of your illustrious family, they also had had no small reason to deplore their own private misfortunes. Among other things they complained that their little family property had been taken from them in the first

¹ Emmanuel Tremelli, a learned Hebraist, of Ferrara, who had retired successively to England and to Strasbourg.

² Anthony Rodolphus Chevalier, professor of Hebrew of the faculty of Strasbourg, and afterwards at Cambridge, where he replaced his father-in-law, Tremelli, by the recommendation of Archbishop Parker.

outbreak of the storm. This was their only resource against the poverty they had to struggle with in their exile. Now that you are restored, they implore your humanity which they have experienced in so many ways, if they may venture to hope, or circumstances permit them, to obtain some relief of which they stand in great need. And though without any entreaties of mine, their own reputation for piety and learning is a sufficient recommendation, yet relying on your friendly disposition towards me, I have thought it my duty to write a few words in their behalf, and I have no doubt but you will excuse my boldness.

Farewell, most distinguished man, and most illustrious and by me respected seigneur. May God our Father, and the Father of Jesus Christ, surround you with his protection, govern you by his Spirit, support you by his strength, and enrich you with every kind of heavenly blessings.—Yours,
JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. Minute.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCLXXII.—TO BULLINGER.

New explanations on the subject of the Consensus.

GENEVA, 13th November 1554.

I have read, most worthy and estimable brother, your observations on my little work,¹ in which you point out the things which have met, not in every part of it, with your approbation, together with the reasons which you have adduced for it. But since you have taken the trouble to note not only the leaves and pages, but also the lines of it, I suppose it must have been from an oversight that the copy was not sent back to me. I have nevertheless compared each of your remarks with the passages to which they refer, and have endeavoured, not only to defer to your advice, but comply with your wishes. If you are not yet entirely satisfied, it will cost me nothing to have my labour entirely set aside.

¹ See the Letter to the Pastors of Zurich, p. 89.

But any better method you may have hit upon, I will most readily adopt. For the rest, in a common action I was unwilling not to contribute my share, and it seems to me that I have performed my part so as to shew that I thought it my duty to attempt nothing beyond what belongs to my private capacity. For, I repeat, if any better method can be devised I will readily fall in with it. Nevertheless, if this form, as it is now corrected by your suggestions, shall give satisfaction, there should be no delay in having it published. For, now and then, reports are brought to me from all quarters that the worshippers of the bread set no bounds to their fury, and from a letter of Philip's, which I lately received, you will learn how formidable their madness is to well-meaning, but not very stout-hearted men. Those, however, who are so very timid, if we prick them on, will perhaps, being compelled by necessity, pluck up a little courage. Certainly we should immediately set about pressing Philip. In the mean time, I have to beg to be excused for my own tardiness, the whole blame of which, however, falls on my temporary amanuensis. But he is a very worthy man, lately secretary to the king, who, after having offered me his services, was too much taken up with a young bride who had come from France, to give his undivided attention to my business. And yet, my copy, the only one I had preserved, blotted all over too with corrections, he never suffered me to get out of his hands; but—as the saying is—soon enough, if well enough. Of the men of Basle I have always had the same apprehensions as you. Perhaps some extracts, bearing on the present cause, from Philip's letter, will put a spark of courage into that man whose general character you know is so soft and caressing. I beg you, however, to return me immediately the original. I have no doubt but the Bernese will speedily give their assent. They must be pressed, however, lest their fears get the better of them. I know not with what moderation Belius conducts himself. No doubt he will at last spit out the venom which he has been hitherto collecting, as he did among us. I have always pretty shrewdly guessed at his extravagant character, but he has nevertheless fairly surpassed the idea I

had of him. But, as such pests cannot be tamed by any human applications, may the Lord quell them with his own strength. Farewell, my very excellent sir, and ever to be respected brother. May the Lord shield you with his protection, and govern you by his Spirit. Salute your sons-in-law, and daughters in my name.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich. Gest. vi. 105, p. 626.*]

CCCLXXIII.—TO PETER MARTYR.¹

He sends him a copy of the defence of the Consensus.

GENEVA, 27th November 1554.

The defence of our *consensus* which I had lately sent to you has satisfied our brethren, but not without some exceptions. As they had marked passages in which they wished some changes to be made, I studied not only to defer to their advice, but to comply with their wishes. Now I again send you a copy corrected at their request. And though I have not altogether followed what they dictated to me, I trust nevertheless that they have been appeased. Further details you will learn from M. Sturm, for my time does not permit me just now to write to you at greater length. Farewell, most accomplished sir, and distinguished servant of Christ. May the Lord always protect and govern you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich. Gest. vi. 117, p. 225.*]

¹ To the distinguished Theologian, Peter Martyr, faithful Doctor of the Church of Strasbourg.

CCCLXXIV.—TO THE KING OF POLAND.¹

The Reform of the Church the first duty of the sovereign—refutation of the double doctrine of the supremacy of the Roman Pontiffs and of Episcopal succession—necessity of putting an end to abuses by bringing back the church to purity of doctrine, and the priesthood to its legitimate functions.

GENEVA, 5th December 1554.

SIRE,—Although I had publicly dedicated, five years ago, some part of my writings to your majesty, with the intention of accelerating the growth of those seeds of piety which even then, I had heard, were divinely implanted in your mind, so humble an individual as myself should nevertheless hesitate to present a private letter to so illustrious a king, did not our venerable brother, to whom I am indebted for this boldness, encourage me by his advice and exhortation. His devoted loyalty moreover to your person, as it is well known to me, makes me feel assured that he is perfectly acquainted with your majesty's sentiments. Since then he has pledged himself that this duty of mine will not be disagreeable to your majesty, I no longer fear to be taxed with the charge of officiousness. But as it would be unseemly that from a minister of the gospel a letter of mere compliment should be addressed to so great a sovereign, I have thought proper, on the present occasion, to handle the same subject which has been already

¹ Poland, at this period, seemed to be entering upon the path of the Reformation. King Sigismund Augustus, the last of the Jagellons, a tolerant and enlightened prince, openly manifested his inclination for the Evangelical doctrines. He had accepted in 1549, the dedication of Calvin's commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, took pleasure in reading the *Institution Chretienne*, and the letters which were addressed to him by the Reformer of Geneva. He was surrounded by personages favourable to a reform in the church, and his reforming tendencies were checked only by scruples arising out of the unhappy divisions which disturbed the Protestant Churches of Germany, and the remains of an attachment which he still felt for the dogma of the Unity of the Church. Informed of the dispositions of the monarch, and of the approaching convocation of a national synod which was to undertake the reform of the Polish Church, in taking for the basis of its labours the holy scriptures, Calvin addressed to Sigismund Augustus a letter containing at the same time counsels and wishes for the happy issue of the work to be accomplished. Krasinski, *Hist. Relig. des Peuples Slaves*, pp. 129, 130.

touched upon in my preface to the epistle to the Hebrews, because I know of none better, more worthy of the kingly person, or more suitable to the present times. For I am persuaded that, for the reverence you bear to the Son of God, our common Master, you will deem it neither burdensome nor offensive to be admonished by his servant. And assuredly this modesty becomes all the disciples of Christ, from the highest to the lowest, from kings themselves to the meanest subject, to submit willingly, and with gentle tractableness of mind, to his heavenly doctrine. For in this manner earthly kings, according to the precept of David, kiss the Prince and chief of all kingdoms, while they listen to him speaking by the mouth of those whom he has appointed to teach. But in my turn, as I conceive it to be my duty, I will strive not to offend you by my prolixity. And first of all, I will not touch upon the clouds of ignorance which everywhere thicken around us, the foul mass of errors in which nearly the whole world is immersed, the abuses and corruptions by which religion has been contaminated, lest I should occupy your majesty with the superfluous discussion of a matter but too well known. For I am not to discourse on the present occasion with an unlettered person, or one unacquainted with genuine piety, but with a king who has been favoured with the knowledge of a purer doctrine, so as not only to be himself exempt from the gross superstitions of the common people, but who judges rightly, at the same time, how fatal that labyrinth is, in which the greater part of the human race is held fast entangled. For when Christ wishes even his humblest disciples to be like lamps suspended in a lofty place, that send out their light to a distance, what does he require of a king, whom he has placed at the summit of human dignity, that he might shine before all others? For the more honourable the grandeur of the throne you occupy, the greater is the difficulty to possess a like greatness of mind, that the virtue of the man may lend lustre to the rank, and produce more anxious reflections about the account that is to be rendered to God. But if men of humble condition have to fear lest this vivifying seed choked by their torpor, should degenerate or entirely

perish, what should be the activity of your majesty, to whom it is not enough to produce abundant fruits of yourself, unless you study to propagate the same seed to thousands of men? Remember, then, most excellent king, a light has been divinely kindled up for the whole of Poland, which cannot be kept hidden any longer, without your incurring serious blame. Let this therefore be your first care, your principal study, to assemble the powers subject to you, called from the shameful dispersion of Popery to the obedience of Christ. Let that heroic virtue at length break forth which has lain too long benumbed in you, and on so noble a subject give memorable proofs of itself. Nor am I ignorant either of the immense grandeur of the undertaking, or of what manifold and great difficulties threaten it, which Satan will as usual go on augmenting. But when the battle that is to be fought here is for the glory of God in the kingdom of Christ, for the purity of religious worship, for the salvation of the human race, such is the excellence of the cause, that it should absorb all vexations in its glory and easily surmount all obstacles. Nay, the enemies of the truth themselves prescribe, by their example, the line of conduct which is to be followed. For the more keenly they contend to crush that cause, so much the more shameful it were not to equal at least in prudent activity their insane ardour. Let them rush on then with all the impetuosity in their power, let them bring up all their machines of attack, let them hurl the fiery and empoisoned darts with which Satan supplies them, let them assault us in fine either by secret cunning or by open war. All these things, so far from having any power to shake a stout heart fortified by the virtue of the Spirit of God, ought, on the contrary, to be but so many incentives to raise in us a holy emulation in favour of a pursuit and object of desire opposed to theirs. Add to this that when God asserts that it is his own work to restore his ruined church of which he is the only founder, we may conclude with certainty, that he will by no means desert us in the moment of need.

But because you are engaged in a contest not only with domestic foes, but also with those who boast that they are the

high priests of religion, the keepers of holy things, the fathers and guardians of the church, your majesty will perhaps hesitate, embarrassed by the fear of undertaking any thing which may be contrary to the nature of your duty. And no doubt the sons of God, in all their actions, should keep constantly in mind and firmly resolve, as their rule of conduct, not to overleap the bounds of their vocation. Therefore, lest any unnecessary apprehension should impede or delay your action, I will discuss, in a few words, up to what point this apprehension is legitimate. As the Papists are always obtruding their hierarchy on us, so I doubt not they are fortifying themselves with the same buckler among you. For as they see that we have greatly the advantage over them in all the different articles of doctrine, when defeated they have recourse to this miserable shift—that though the state of the church is exceedingly corrupt, yet it is not lawful for laymen to meddle with its defects. And not contenting themselves with this as a subterfuge, on the strength of it they raise their crests; because the supremacy in the church was given to Peter, and the whole Papal priesthood descends even to the present times in uninterrupted succession from the Apostles themselves, they conclude that therefore the right and authority of spiritual government belongs to them exclusively. Wherefore it will be worth while, briefly, to examine these two pretensions. Not however that I mean in this place to treat professedly of the supremacy of the Roman see, because it seems to me that I have disposed of that subject in such a manner, that the Pope can no longer pretend, as he was wont to do, that he is the head of the whole church. For when Paul, wishing to exhort us to unity, (Eph. iv. 5,) teaches, that there is one God, one faith, one spirit, one Lord, and one body of the church, he should least of all have omitted what was of the greatest weight for proving their point: viz., that there is one sovereign pontiff whose authority keeps the whole church in a closely united order. It would then have been an unseemly forgetfulness, not to remind the faithful, that they are to remain under one head set over them by God, if this had been true that a supremacy over all the churches had been

bestowed on one man. But in another place, (Gal. ii. 7,) the same apostle sufficiently explains himself when he asserts that he himself had the same apostleship among the Gentiles, which had been given to Peter among the Jews. Here certainly not only an equality is established between two, but the division is such, that, properly speaking, the apostleship of Peter has nothing at all to do with us. Finally in that passage which I just now quoted, defining the manner which had been sanctioned by Christ for the government of the church, he does not say that one vicar had been created by our Lord to supply his absence from the earth, but that he had appointed apostles, pastors, and teachers, (Eph. iv. 11,) who should labour in common according to the measure of grace granted to each. Certainly if God had wished one person to have rule over all, he would not have simply granted him a portion, but would have bestowed on him the plenitude of the Spirit. But I do not refute at the present moment the silly sophism, that the keys have been given to Peter, because I have elsewhere more than sufficiently shewn, that this expression is of no more advantage to the Pope than if it had been said of any other apostle. For what consanguinity or affinity with Peter can he boast of to give himself out as his heir? And as to his pretence that the supremacy was accorded to the dignity of the place, it is still more silly. For should the seat of the supremacy not rather have been at Jerusalem where beyond all controversy the Son of God, as high priest, discharged his sacerdotal functions? But of these things, as I have said, it is better to seek a solution in other writings in which they are more fully discussed, as well as the proposition that nothing was less in Christ's views than to raise one apostle to a supremacy over the others. For the dignity belonging to the high priest which prevailed under the law, was abrogated for no other reason but that now the Son of God should alone stand out as head, all others being brought into the rank of members. And with sacrilegious audacity the Papists wrest this saying of the apostle, as a proof in favour of the tyranny of their idol: "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also

of the law." (Heb. vii. 12.) For in that passage the apostle does not assert that the dignity of high priest was transferred from a man to any other man, but he contends that it resides in the Son of God alone, in such a manner that we are to seek for no successor to him; "because he has been ordained a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. vii. 15-17.) And indeed the single will of God ought amply to suffice us, as it is the true rule and inviolable law of legitimate government. But we may add also, that it is neither possible nor expedient, that there should be but one head of the whole church spread all over the earth, because this headship would far surpass the measure of human infirmity, and could not be made to adapt itself to general use. In fine, ambition and pride alone, have invented this supremacy which the Romanists oppose to us. The ancient church indeed instituted patriarchates, and to different provinces assigned certain primacies, that by this bond of concord, the bishops might remain more closely united among themselves. Exactly as if, at the present day, one archbishop should have a certain pre-eminence in the illustrious kingdom of Poland, not to lord it over the others, nor arrogate to himself a right of which they were forcibly deprived, but for the sake of order to occupy the first place in synods, and cherish a holy unity between his colleagues and brethren. Then there might be either provincial or urban bishops, whose functions should be particularly directed to the preservation of order. As nature dictates, one of these should be chosen from each college to whom this care should be specially confided. But it is one thing to hold a moderate dignity such as is not incompatible with the abilities of a man, and another to comprise the whole world under one overgrown government. What the Romanists keep prating about one single head is then altogether nugatory, because neither the sacred commandment of God, nor the established usage of the church sanctions a second head to be joined with Christ, whom alone the heavenly Father has set over all.

Now though the chief rank might rightly seem due to the Roman Pontiff, he has himself foreclosed his claim to it, since

he has fallen away from the apostolic faith, and deserted the station divinely entrusted to him. For to be the first among bishops, it behoves him to be himself a bishop. Now when it is evident that the person is unworthy of the title of bishop, who does not discharge the office of teaching, what must we think of him, who, having resigned the task of teaching, not only exults in vain pomps, but endeavours not less cruelly than impiously to extinguish the doctrine of Christ? If the Pope wishes to borrow anything of Paul, let him be a minister of Christ, and a dispenser of the mysteries of God. If he wishes to deck himself with the honours of Peter, let him be the faithful shepherd of a flock, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ. But since he is avowedly alien from these things, and does not even pretend that he is one of the ministers of God, let him voluntarily abdicate his supremacy, if indeed from other motives he had ever been invested with any. Besides how shall Rome be the mother of Churches, who no more deserves to be esteemed a church than Babylon? The soul of a church is purity of doctrine. Since it is surer than certainty itself, that this purity has been altogether banished from Rome, it follows that in that city there remains nothing but a dead body. Finally nothing is more absurd than that he should be venerated in the flock of Christ as the high priest of religion who is the manifest enemy of true and genuine Christianity. Moreover your majesty is greatly deceived if, for settling duly the state of the Polish kingdom, you wait till the authority of that sect intervene, which takes pleasure in vast and horrible confusion. The Pope with his band can reign at Rome, only by oppressing the church, polluting the worship of God, rending all order, nay annihilating all piety. Can it be hoped then that he, who lives by the destruction of the church will either himself apply, or consent that others should apply a remedy to heal its evils? Nor in truth, if a pious and Christian prince has at heart to restore to a better state the present confusion, ought the slothfulness of pastors, if they loiter in their duty, to cause the delay of a single moment; much less should the insolent pride of those who are falsely called pastors, with any show of justice, prevent his

holy attempts. It is then an empty bugbear that, in the reformation of the church, nothing is to be set on foot, or attempted, but at the nod of the Pope. On the contrary we cannot but perceive that the same thing is being accomplished in our days, which the apostles witnessed on the first appearance of the gospel—Christ is rejected by the builders—that is, those who pride themselves on the title of prelates; but as he has been appointed for the chief corner stone, it would be the height of iniquity that he should submit to their impious impediments. There remains now another question, namely, that there should be a legitimate succession of persons to give a due sanction to the ordination of pastors. Because I perceive it to be of high importance, that nothing should be done irregularly in the church, lest thus a loose should be given to the capricious humour of each; and because it has been distinctly enjoined us by the Spirit of God, speaking through the mouth of St. Paul, that all things should be done decently, and in order, I am therefore of opinion that we should reverently study to have a regularly appointed ministry. Thus then right reason as well as the command of God shews that no one should rashly intrude into, nor any private person usurp the office of a pastor, but that the man selected by the judgment of the pastors, and presented to the flock with their own consent, should be approved of. Add to these conditions the solemn imposition of hands, which is called ordination. Respecting this one point alone the Papists, in wrangling so warmly with us, clearly demonstrate that they neglect the chief thing of all, which is the right of election. For with them there is so much indifference in testing the qualifications of the candidate that ordination is a mere show; add that it is at the same time a mockery of God—so much stress do they lay on the pomp of the ceremony—and not content with the ancient rite of the imposition of hands, they consecrate their priests by anointing them; a usage neither mentioned in the Scriptures, nor practised traditionally in the apostolic church; but which, as they have derived it from the scum of Judaism, should be abolished, together with the other corrupt practices of Popery, wherever a purer form of religion shall prevail!

But there is another superstition still more pernicious, which is that they ordain their priests not to the office of feeding and teaching the flock, but that with sacrilegious audacity they may arrogate to themselves, and usurp the privilege and office of Christ, while they institute them to celebrate the sacrifice of the mass by which they feign that God is propitiated. For which reason the whole Popish priesthood is not only an impious profanation of the true ministry, but an execrable contumely upon Christ; so that whosoever is a Popish priest cannot, till he abjure that title, be a servant of Christ. Thus, though according to their pretensions the character of the priestly office is indelible, yet nevertheless it behoves it to be eradicated and obliterated before the church of God can possess undefiled priests. The Popish priesthood is deservedly held in abhorrence of all pious men for another mark of infamy. For when according to the old canons, whosoever demands ordination of heretics or schismatics, is implicated in a charge of the same crime, your majesty is not ignorant what has been the character for many centuries of these mitred anointers.¹ Now does not every one who desires to be admitted into their order indirectly consent to that disorder with which they are chargeable before God and angels? The question, however, is not yet resolved, because if it is not right that any persons whatever should without distinction aspire to the pastoral office, it follows as a necessary consequence that those should be duly called to it and instituted who wish to prove themselves legitimate pastors, and worthy of such an honour. And here I confess it were to be wished, that an uninterrupted succession lent us its sanction that the function itself were transmitted as it were from hand to hand. But let us keep in mind what I have already cursorily mentioned, that since purity of doctrine is the soul of a church, it is vain to look for the peculiar qualities of a church and whatever depends on the state of its purity, among those men who are beyond all question the avowed enemies of the gospel. But because by the tyranny of the Pope, the continuous line of ordination has been broken, a new expedient is requisite for the restoration of the Church.

¹ In the text—*horned*.

Vainly indeed do the Papists pride themselves on that chain, which, as I have said, they themselves have broken. For is the Papacy anything but a revolt from Christ? With what front, then, can apostates boast themselves successors? But God himself brings the remedy in raising up fitting and upright teachers to build up the church, now lying deformed among the ruins of Popery. And this office, which the Lord laid upon us when he made use of our services in collecting churches, is one that is altogether anomalous. Those then who in an unwonted manner, and so contrary to the expectations of men, appeared as the defenders of pure religion, ought not to have their vocation judged of by the common rule. They were divinely called for this special purpose, that churches being duly constituted, they might substitute other pastors in their own room. Wherefore, most excellent king, however much the papistical clergy prate about the divine right of the priesthood, let not their futile babbling prevent your majesty from attempting, under heavenly auspices, the noblest of all works and the most praise-worthy in the sight of God and angels, to give to Jesus Christ alone pre-eminence in his own kingdom together with the establishment of the pure doctrine of the gospel. But this seems to be the proper and advantageous manner of proceeding. Because wolves now occupy the shepherds' place, and it might be thought too violent a remedy if pastors appointed by royal authority alone could furnish no other authority for their vocation, the method, then, I would propose is that your majesty should for the time being only institute teachers to spread abroad everywhere the seeds of the gospel, whose charge should be provisional and last only as long as things should remain in their present unsettled and precarious state. For it is not possible that the public government of the church can be all at once changed. But with this beginning which I have mentioned, or prelude, there would be a convenient transition to the renovation of the church. In fine this would not be a reformation of the church, but only a preliminary step. Things being once fairly ripe, by royal authority and the suffrages of the Diet, a more definite manner of ordaining pastors might be established for

the future. Moreover, because the enemies of sound doctrine will strive with all their might to shut the door against pious and sincere teachers, it would be necessary that a helping hand should be held out to them by your majesty, in order that without any restraint they might turn the people away from the errors of superstition to the straight path of piety. But because I perceive that I have already gone beyond the limits which I had prescribed to myself in the commencement of this letter, to avoid wearying your majesty I shall here bring it to a conclusion. May the Lord, our heavenly Father, most excellent king, by the hand of his only begotten Son, direct your majesty, guard you by his protection, support you by his power, and govern you by his Spirit.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 85.]

CCCLXXV.—TO WOLF.¹

Approbation of the projects of Lismannini—struggles at Geneva.

GENEVA, 26th December 1554.

As your letter breathes throughout a rare affection towards me, which I explain as flowing from no other source than a true sentiment of piety, it is not surprising that it gave me a very lively feeling of satisfaction. And though that most excellent man, M. Lismannini, stood in need of no recommendation to me, and the business of which he was to treat with me was of itself a sufficient one, nevertheless for the sake of a man who is my friend, and especially for the sake of the common utility of the church, your sedulity was particularly grateful to me; and I took care according to your desire that he should be fully convinced, that your affection for him equalled his own towards you. I trust that the mission which he is undertaking will turn out as prosperous and fruit-

¹ John Wolf, a learned minister and divine of the Church of Zurich. Animated with a spirit of moderation, which equalled his erudition, he deplored the excesses of the Sacramentarian quarrel, and compared the intolerant disciples of Luther to Eros-tratus who, to acquire a vain renown, set fire to the temple of Ephesus. *Wolfius Calvinus*, 1 May 1560. *Library of Geneva*, vol. 113.

ful as I rejoice that it is undertaken with alacrity by him. He himself will better explain to you orally our state, than I could conveniently do in a letter. You truly conjecture that I am familiarized with daily bickerings, lest I should fall into a state of torpor. But believe me, neither from Servetus nor from Westphal and his associates, have I had so much torment as I receive from domestic enemies, whose forces are innumerable and fury implacable. If I had the option, it would be better to be burnt at once by the Papists, than to be torn to pieces by neighbours devoid of good faith and moderation. No doubt they envy me the luxuries of my position, and are unwilling that the man should live in tranquillity, whom they see almost buried under an immense mass of business, distracted by the saddest cares, and harassed by the most importunate demands. One consolation I have is, that from this cruel warfare death will soon procure me my discharge. I am therefore exceedingly glad that all things are prosperous, and especially, that that destructive brand of discord kindled among our neighbours has been extinguished. May the Lord accompany you with his perpetual favour, preserve you in safety, and govern you by his Spirit. Farewell, distinguished and renowned brother, together with your wife and family.—
Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Gotha. Vol. 404.*]

CCCLXXVI.—TO BULLINGER.

Wishes for the successful accomplishment of Lismannini's mission to Poland—printing of the book against Westphal and apologies on that subject.

GENEVA, 26th December 1554.

As the mission to which that excellent man M. Lismannini¹ is called is of high importance, and his faith and probity are

¹ Francis Lismannini, a native of Corfu, after having embraced the Reformed doctrine in Italy, went into Poland, where he acquired over king Sigismund an influence which he strove to turn to the advantage of the gospel. Charged by that prince to visit Germany and Switzerland, and to make enquiries respecting the state of religion

known to us, I wrote that of your piety, venerable brother, and your zeal for the church of Christ, you should exhort him not to delay his departure. But when he came among us his inclinations were already too much engaged, to require any lengthened discourse of ours to stimulate them. Nevertheless, I have essayed to give the spur to the galloping steed, as the saying is, that he might proceed more rapidly and with greater alacrity. But in the mean time while he was still here, a letter from M. John Laski informed me that a man was on the eve of his departure, by whom he writes to the king and the nobles. May the Lord bless the pious endeavours of his servants, so that they may not fail to be crowned with the wished for success. The refutation of Westphal is now printed, and will speedily make its appearance. Our friend Lismannini will shew you the preface to it. Because I saw that his great object was to gain over to his side a vast number of persons, and engage them in his controversy with us, I thought it right to anticipate and defeat this malice. It is for that reason that I have been careful to offend as few persons as possible. From a perusal of my book it will clearly appear, how much pains I have bestowed in turning away the ill will, and even in softening the indignation of those that are not yet to be despaired of. I find now that I had handled the fellow a little more roughly than I imagined, but as certain of my brethren declare, that they do not think my treatment of him unduly severe, I have had no great difficulty in letting them persuade me. If time had permitted, I could have wished you had read over the little book before it came out, for by your suggestions I should perhaps have made some changes; but so great was the haste, that I merely dictated what another read over and then hurried it off to the press. I hope, nevertheless, it will contain nothing that will greatly displease you. We are anxiously expecting the result of the embassy which has been sent to Berne. But though twelve days have elapsed since proceedings were instituted,

in these countries, he had formed an intimacy with Bullinger and Calvin, who founded on his return to Poland sanguine expectations for the progress of the Reformation in that country.

nothing that can be depended upon has yet reached us respecting the progress of the affair. Farewell, distinguished sir, and brother, whom I revere with my whole heart. Salute in my name, M. Pellican, M. Gualter, M. Theodore, your sons-in-law, and also your own family. May the Lord continue to protect and govern you all. My colleagues all send you their best wishes.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

When I had finished this letter the deputies came back from Berne, without having accomplished any thing. Some new method must then be adopted; I shall strive to the best of my abilities, that it shall be characterized by its moderation, and I trust I shall be able to gain over our citizens to yield to the very unreasonable demands of the Bernese. But as these continue to busy themselves in favour of felons, I am afraid they will at last divert themselves at our expense. Notwithstanding I am resolved to try all expedients.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich. Gest. vi, 166, p. 21.*]

CCCLXXVII.—TO MADAME AGNES DE MICROW.¹

He congratulates her on having sent her children to Zurich where they will receive a christian education.

GENEVA, 29th December 1554.

Although your piety, noble lady, is much better known by certain proofs in the country which you inhabit, yet you have made it known to us also, by the pledges you have confided to us. For in not hesitating to send your children far from you and into an almost unknown country, that they might better imbibe the pure doctrine of Christ, you have clearly shewn how precious a virtuous and pious education is in your eyes. Lively indeed must that zeal be, which forces you to forget and divest yourself for a season, of that softness of tender

¹ To the honourable lady, Madame Agnes de Microw, a matron distinguished for the most excellent virtues.

affection which is naturally implanted in the heart of mothers, till you see your sons imbued with the uncorrupted faith of Christ, when you shall welcome their return with a more joyful mind, than if they had never been separated from your embraces and your sight. Our brethren of Zurich under whose care they are placed will, I doubt not, do their duty towards them so faithfully, that the success will correspond to your hope and desires. I myself also, should I ever pass that way, will make a point of exhorting them not to disappoint your expectations. For this holy desire is evangelical, and such as all good men should study to favour; and the pious discipline which flourishes in your house is no less worthy of praise; and would that all had at heart to make it a rule for their families, to cherish as it were a domestic church in their houses. It were also to be desired, especially while among you the state of affairs is so unsettled, that there were found not only more ladies, but men who should spread the light of a similar example. But because this ceaseless struggle has been appointed you—you must hold on till you reach the mark. The eyes of many, I hear, have been fixed on you, not only because they see a woman of high rank excelling in virtue, but because God hath proposed in you, an example which should deservedly draw on even men to imitate it. But because, in the course of our lives, many obstacles occur which it would not be easy for us to surmount, I will pray the Lord that he may strengthen you to persevere, enrich you from day to day with the gifts of his Spirit, and in the mean time keep you in safety under his hand and protection. Farewell, most noble lady.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCLXXVIII.—TO BULLINGER.

Dispatch to the Swiss Churches of a circular letter concerning the controversy with Westphal—defence of the Protestants of Locarno.

GENEVA, 13th January 1555.

Your advice has my approbation, for a great deal of time would have been consumed in continually sending letters backwards and forwards; and in a matter in which nothing was concluded, many would have been more refractory who I hope will be favourable and compliant. I have therefore given the book to be put to press immediately. But unless you be answerable for the fault, this haste will not escape censure. But where your authority shall intervene, nobody will molest me. Especially you must be urgent among the brethren of Berne, unless you wish me to be exposed to the unfavourable remarks, and finally to the clamours and turbulence of all. Among those of the Grisons, St. Gall, and Schaffhausen, I do not anticipate that you will have any difficulty. I have written to all in the same form lest any jealousy should arise if by chance they should communicate with one another. It is superfluous to beg you to see that the packets be delivered to each of them; for I am imposing no other task on you than what you voluntarily solicited. But though the natives of Mulhouse were nearer neighbours to those of Basle, yet as the pastors of that city are unknown to me, and as I had no doubt that a word of recommendation added by you would produce an excellent effect, I have thought proper to abandon this office also entirely to your discretion.

The cause of the brethren of Locarno has deservedly afflicted you and all of us with the most bitter grief.¹ First that they

¹ Locarno, on the shores of the Lago Maggiore, one of the most ancient of the Swiss Bailliages in Italy, early received the preachers of the gospel. Instructed for the greater part by Beccaria in the Reformed faith, the inhabitants of this city could not obtain from the majority of the Swiss Cantons, liberty of conscience, and voluntarily abandoning their native country, in order to remain faithful to their religious convictions, they passed the Alps in the depth of winter (1554-1555,) and obtained an asylum

should be deserted by their natural protectors was shameful. But it is a deeper disgrace that professors of the gospel should in their own name suffer the adherents of the same faith to be drawn away to a perfidious recantation. Far better would it have been to expose ten times over pious brethren to the executioner. For it is a preposterous clemency to expose God's sacred truth to derision, in order to spare the life of men. And so little are they ashamed of their own dishonour that, in their common council, they endeavour almost to discourage the virtue of others. I wish I may hear ere long that they have been repelled by your townsmen, with that severity which they deserve, that at last they may begin to feel something. For they must needs be beyond measure stupid, not to be yet affected by their immense turpitude. I should have wished exceedingly to encourage the unfortunate brethren of Locarno by some consolation at least, that they might understand that we feel sympathy for them; but that owing to the distance of the places, their state is unknown to me, and because I doubt not but you have carefully discharged these duties towards them. Farewell, most excellent sir, and ever honoured brother, may the Lord continue to direct you and your colleagues. May he bless your holy zeal, that through you he may triumph over these perfidious Pilates, who while they scourge Christ, that they may exempt him from crucifixion, do yet unjustly stigmatize by the name of contumacy your gravity. I salute your wife, sons-in-law, and daughters.
—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Arch. of Zurich. Colloq. 1. Gest. vi. 107, p. 628.*]

at Zurich. The Bernese, who, on the banks of the Leman, shewed themselves the constant protectors of the gospel, betrayed it on this occasion, and abandoned the Protestants of Locarno to their unfortunate fate. Zurich shewed itself more faithful, and received within her walls numerous emigrants, among whom might be remarked the representatives of the noblest families, the Muralt and the Orelli, who were destined to illustrate the country of their adoption. See the excellent work of M. Ferdinand Mayer, *Die Gemeinde di Locarno*, 2 vols. 8vo, and the *Histoire de la Confederation Suisse*, tom. xi. p. 402. 435.

CCCLXXIX.—TO THE MINISTERS OF STRASBOURG.¹

Marks of fraternal affection—explanation respecting the Sacrament.

GENEVA, 13th January 1555.

Though I have been recently deceived in you, I cease not, for all that, to love you and desire to have a holy and truly fraternal union with you, and to the last I shall study to cherish that union as much as it shall be in my power. When I say that I complain of having been deceived in you, understand that as said without any resentment on my part. For when I lately addressed a letter to M. Marbach,² of which the contents were intended to be communicated to you all, it appeared to me that I was not unworthy of receiving some answer, but no one deigned to honour me with a single word in reply. Certainly my manner of living among you was not such as to entitle me to be so slighted, much less to be contumeliously thrown off. Nevertheless this little affront, though it did slightly gall me, shall not be the cause of an alienation in my affections to you which I shall continue to cherish with the most perfect sincerity. What is more, relying confidently on your friendly feelings towards me, as certain turbulent men are stigmatizing our doctrine respecting the sacraments, I offer you a short explanation of it now published by me, that if it meet with your approbation it may contribute to cement more closely our friendship. Truly I consider it an unhallowed act to sever myself from that church of which I was formerly a minister; therefore in this writing I have sincerely expounded what I always frankly professed among you, and what was approved of by the holy servants of Christ, Capiton and Bucer, and I have preserved that moderation which unless I am mistaken will satisfy your impartiality. If I shall

¹ Under the influence of Marbach the pastors of the Church of Strasbourg, unfaithful to the traditions of toleration so nobly represented by Bucer, Capiton, and Hedion, shewed themselves every day less favourable to the ideas of religious concord which had formed the principal glory of the conductors of their church in other times.

² To Dr. Marbach, 25th August 1554, p. 54.

learn, moreover, that this well meant compliment of mine has been agreeable to you, I shall have reason to congratulate myself. Farewell, distinguished men, and brethren whom from my heart I honour. May the Lord always stand by you, govern you with his Spirit, and bless your pious efforts and the gravity which on a late occasion, with so much credit to yourselves, you displayed.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCLXXX.—TO THE ENGLISH AT FRANKFORT.¹

He exhorts them to make in their liturgy all the changes compatible with the maintenance of union and the peace of their Church.

GENEVA, 13th January 1555.

This indeed grievously afflicts me and is highly absurd, that discord is springing up among brethren who are for the same faith exiles and fugitives from their country; and for a cause indeed which in your dispersion should like a sacred bond have held you closely united. For in this sad and wretched calamity, what could you do better, torn as you were from the bosom of your country, than adopt a church which received into its maternal bosom, those who were connected with you in minds and language? Now, on the contrary, that some of you should be stirring up contentions about forms of prayer and ceremonies, as if you were at ease and in a season of tranquillity, and thus throwing an obstacle in the way of

¹ Numerous English refugees had spread themselves over the continent in order to profess freely there their faith persecuted with extreme rigour by the catholic Mary. Some of them arrived at Frankfort, and having found in this city a French Church regularly established, they obtained from the magistrates the same privilege, and were permitted to celebrate their worship in the temple granted to the French, on condition, however, that they should not innovate too much in the ceremonies. United by a common aversion for the doctrines of the Romish Church, they unfortunately differed on some particular points concerning public worship and ceremonies. Thence sprung discussions more or less sharp, related at great length in a curious work published for the first time in 1575, and entitled, "*A brief discourse of the troubles begun at Frankfort in the year 1554,*" 1 vol. 12mo. The author of this work was William Whittingham, one of the pastors of the English Church of Frankfort, and a rigid Presbyterian, as well as his colleague the celebrated John Knox, the Scotch Reformer.

your coalescing in one body of worshippers, this is really too unreasonable. Nor do I blame the firmness of those who, even to fight in a just cause, are unwillingly dragged into the contest, but I condemn, and with justice, that stubbornness which clogs and retards holy efforts to form a church. Though in indifferent matters, such as are external rites, I shew myself indulgent and pliable, at the same time, I do not deem it expedient always to comply with the foolish captiousness of those who will not give up a single point of their usual routine. In the Anglican liturgy, such as you describe it to me, I see that there were many silly things that might be tolerated. By this phrase I mean that it did not possess that purity which was to be desired. The faults, however, which could not straightway be corrected on the first day, if there lurked under them no manifest impiety, were to be endured for a time. Thus then it was lawful to begin from such rudiments, but still so that it might be proper for learned, grave, and virtuous ministers of Christ to proceed farther, and prune away unsightly excrescences, and aim at something purer. If undefiled religion had flourished up to this moment in England, there would have been a necessity for having many things corrected for the better, and many others lopped off. Now that, these first beginnings having been destroyed, a church is to be built up by you elsewhere, and you are at liberty to compose anew the form which will seem best adapted for the use and edification of that church, I really know not what those persons would be at, who take such delight in the scum and dregs of Papistry. But they are attached to those things to which they had been accustomed. This in the first place, is both nugatory and childish; next, this new institution differs greatly from a total change. For my part, if I would not have you to be unduly rigorous towards those whose weakness cannot scale the highest steps of the ladder, so again I would have the others admonished not to have too much complacency in their own ignorance; next, not to retard by their stubbornness the progress of this holy edifice; thirdly, not to be led astray by foolish jealousy. For what motive have they for wrangling, unless it be that they are ashamed

of giving way to their betters? But it is idle to address my discourse to persons who, perhaps, do not think me of sufficient importance to deign to listen to advice coming from such a quarter. If they dread unfavourable rumours in England, as if they had fallen away from the religion which was the cause of their exile, they are greatly mistaken. For this more candid and sincere confession will compel the faithful that are still remaining in that country, to ponder deeply on the depth of the abyss into which they have fallen. For their own headlong fall will wound them more deeply when they shall see you advancing far beyond the middle of the course from which they themselves have been violently dragged back. Farewell, most excellent brethren, and faithful servants of Christ. May the Lord continue to protect and govern you.¹

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 98.]

CCCLXXXI.—TO CHARLES DUMOULIN.²

He encourages him to prolong his stay in Germany, and expresses his desire that he may there be speedily joined by his wife.

GENEVA, 13th January 1555.

It happened that my letter, either from the carelessness or the malice of the physician to whom it was entrusted, came

¹ The answer of the English exiles of Frankfort to Calvin has been preserved. The most conciliating spirit is remarked in it:—"For we are not so entirely wedded to our country, as not to be able to tolerate the usages of others, nor do we set so high a value on the fathers and martyrs of Christ, that it is a point of religion with us not to think or decide any thing contrary to them." They ask only to be permitted to retain their liturgy and some form in the administration of the sacraments. Library of Geneva, vol. 117, and *Zurich Letters* (1537, 1538,) tom. ii. p. 753. In the number of those who signed the letter is Edmond Grindal, who became, at a later period, Bishop of London, and remained attached by the ties of the most fraternal affection to Calvin.

² See page 47. Charles Dumoulin had already quitted the university of Tubingen to escape from the jealous attacks of his colleagues. He went successively to Montbeliard, to Dole, and in 1556 returned to Paris. The last years of his life were spent in the midst of the civil and religious troubles of France, to which he did not remain a stranger. Equally the object of attack of all parties, he died it is said in the communion of the Romish Church, leaving the reputation of having been one of the most

rather unseasonably to your hands. When I wrote it, I did not think of your so sudden departure. For though it is hateful to be involved in bickerings, yet as you came off conqueror in all their first attacks, and their rage had been mitigated, I was in hopes, if any vexations remained, that they would be supportable. I am glad, however, that your new habitation pleases you, and that the air of the place is salutary and agreeable to you. Certainly when I once passed through it, it seemed to me rather a pretty country. I am afraid you will find some difficulty in digesting the roughness of their manners. You will find, however, some men whose politeness will charm you, whose intercourse will even season other inconveniences. I scarcely dare venture to hope for the arrival of your wife and family. For though you may obtain a permission for her from the king, yet I was informed by a certain person, one of the chief men of the court, and indeed a friend of your own, that he was greatly deceived if your wife would comply with your wishes. But it belongs to the Lord to incline her heart. Of this I wished you to be made aware, partly that you may sift her mind, partly that you may know that you must persist and earnestly strive to snatch her from the nest to which she clings. Of Clement your judgment is just. Insipid are the ravings of the profane man, who, without having the slightest tincture of sound and pious doctrine, covets the reputation of a philosophaster. So much the more abominable is their wickedness who put forward such silly constructors of puerilities for holy fathers. I send for your perusal the defence of our doctrine, by which I have wished to quell the intemperance of the Saxons, who are again stirring up new quarrels about the sacraments. It was written at the request of the Zurichers, who having added a subscription exhorted me to publish it. Farewell, excellent sir, and honoured brother. May the Lord always stand by, govern, and protect you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

learned men of his age. The historian de Thou praises his solid judgment and his profound erudition, joined to the purity of his morals and his ardent zeal for the truth. It does not appear that Calvin's relations with him were extended beyond the year 1556, the period when the latter returned to France.

CCCLXXXII.—TO PETER MARTYR.¹

He returns to the question of the Sacraments—remarkable judgment respecting Bucer—complaints against John Laski and Melancthon—call addressed to Martyr by the Italian congregation of Geneva.

GENEVA, 18th January 1555.

Our friend Tremelli, that he might transmit to me your letter from hand to hand, as the saying is, kept it rather long by him. The delay however occasioned no inconvenience except that I answer you a little later. Another motive than the delay of your messenger prevented me from changing anything in the passages you have marked. You remind me prudently indeed of the danger arising from ambiguous expressions, and not unseasonably you cite the example of the very worthy Bucer; if indeed our purpose were the same. How very different it is, to you I need not explain. For he, wishing to calm the violence of Luther and his partisans, stooped so servilely that he was entangled in continual perplexity by single words. Another exigency forced him to shuffle; he wished to conceal not very candidly the disgrace of his former imprudence, as I often let him know; for no one, I think, urged him with greater freedom and even sharpness in this cause to have the courage to avow more sincerely and without equivocal phrases what he felt to be the truth. But he, bent on appeasing the Saxons, never spoke frankly out. Hence it happened that he blended together heaven and earth.

¹ Martyr had scarcely arrived at Strasbourg when he saw himself drawn into the Sacramentarian quarrel of which he blamed the excesses. Endowed with immense learning, of a conciliating disposition, he tried in vain to interpose between the parties in proclaiming the necessity of employing on these subjects, nothing but clear and precise language, a language equally exempt from the Lutheran exaggerations and the ambiguities into which the desire of pleasing all parties had formerly seduced Bucer. While he acknowledged the wisdom of his advice, Calvin nevertheless thought it his duty to maintain the terms which he had employed in the exposition of the controversy of the Sacraments, and Martyr wrote to him: "I take it not only in good, but in the best part that you have not changed any of the expressions which I had advised you to do, now that I have heard the reasons you have assigned in your letter." 8th March 1555. *Martyris Epistolæ*, p. 233.

But I entertain no conceits about heavens, that take up the place of the earth; I invent nothing about an infinitely extended body of Christ, nor do I twist into an intricate synecdoche the words of our Lord so as to make the bread contain the body, nor do I enter into crooked discussions about substantial manducation. But on obscure points I endeavour to throw a dubious light, certainly I explain by making distinctions, and I unequivocally repudiate all the absurd fictions about which they have hitherto contended with us. Nor did I propose to myself to warp my discourse to humour those whom I know to be implacable, and upon whom I make open war. Now I come to those passages about which you give me your advice. Though what you write about the first entering into communion with Christ, I confess to be true, in the same sense, however, in which Paul teaches that Christ is manifested to us in baptism, I have not hesitated to say that we are inserted into his body. If any one will wrest the expression into another sense, the solution of the question will be easy from other passages. Nay, as I had purposely published a tract on this matter, I am not afraid that my expressions will occasion any obscurity. Respecting the efficacy of the Spirit which I have said exists in the Sacraments, what you add I willingly adopt, as I have shewn with sufficient clearness in other passages. But in so brief a compendium, a more detailed development, in my opinion, would have been out of place. Nevertheless I should have had no objections to insert a few words, but before you wrote back to me the Zurichers had already returned the tract, stamped with their approbation and with a subscription, and insisted on its prompt publication. I scarcely thought myself at liberty, then, without some very urgent necessity to make any corrections. This delicacy or fear withheld me from adding anything, especially as no more cogent reason impelled me. That form of expression also, in which I grant that the body of Christ is given us in the bread, appeared to me supportable, applying to it the light of a sound intelligence, which excludes all idea of local presence and circumscription and miraculous ubiquity. Not that the moderation prescribed by you displeased me, but

I was afraid that ill-disposed interpreters might make this very circumstance a subject of accusation against me, viz., that by my excessive precautions, I shewed signs of distrust. Moreover I am not so hampered by the publication of this book as not hereafter to give freer scope to my faculties, as soon as anything hostile shall assail us. For the rest I am too greatly pleased with your candour, not to think that it was by no means worth while that you should so anxiously seek to excuse an act of courtesy undertaken by you at my request. It is I rather that ought to entreat your forgiveness for not having followed your advice, which, however, relying on your indulgence, I see I shall have no great difficulty in obtaining. Certainly neither self-conceit nor disdain stood in the way of my inserting without hesitation the things which you thought proper to suggest. But as the desire of the Zurichers had been signified to me, I also wished to guard against any change which might render the people of Basle less favourable to us, and indeed it had not escaped the Zurichers, that Sulzer and certain others like him, who for other reasons leaned too much to the Saxon side, were to be gently dealt with, without however carrying our complaisance to the ignorance or captiousness of any one, so far as not sincerely and undisguisedly to assert the true doctrine. I confess I see in truth no danger that any one will reproach me with having spoken ambiguously, or that our adversaries will raise their crests—under the pretext of my words. But as your vain peacock¹ has lately betrayed his disdain by keeping silence, I know not if there would be any good in stimulating him again. If in your opinion and that of M. Sturm, there will be no harm in sounding the minds of all, I have dictated a short letter which may elicit something on this subject. I leave to your own judgment, whether to deliver or suppress it, only I was unwilling that anything should be wanting on my part. For though we should gain nothing with him and Beatus Venter,² there are nevertheless at least four or five in your society who I fancy will not be too unfavourably disposed towards us.

¹ Marbach no doubt.

² The minister Beat Gerung, ironically nicknamed Beatus Venter (Lusty Paunch).

Just as I had written thus far, your last letter, and another from John Laski were put into my hands. I cannot imagine why they have been so long detained on the road. The worthy man complains that from following my authority he has been most despitefully handled by our adversaries. I know not what he pretends to by this complaint, unless it be to bring me over to his forms of expression, which is a thing impossible, nor has he a right to take it amiss that those things which he proves by no solid argument should not be admitted by us, when he takes the liberty of repudiating what we lay down from the Holy Scriptures respecting the gratuitous predestination of God. According to him the body of Christ is an operation, or the symbol of a body, not the bread. What then is to be said of the cup? Let him enjoy his own interpretation, provided he do not any more require of me what I cannot accord. Whatever disputes he pursues in his letter the whole question hinges on this point, whether the natural body of Christ be not given to us for nourishment, and as if life were to be sought for from anything else, than from a natural body. But there is a point on which it became him to insist much more, viz., that we should not imagine any fiction of a substance, or transfusion, or commingling of parts. No doubt he is aiming at this same mark as well as we, but yet I am rather afraid that, ensnared by his fondness for certain favourite terms, and insisting with too great rigour on his own forms of expression, he may exasperate captious men. These remarks are for your own private ear, for I should wish, if it were possible, that every ground of displaying their hatred should be taken away from our enemies. It is not without the most poignant sorrow, I am forced to call enemies those who ought to hold the place of brethren in our esteem, though nevertheless it is expedient that their perverseness should be judiciously confuted. At the same time I should wish that we put so much moderation into our manner of teaching, that among all fair and sound judging persons, it might beget an aversion for their frowardness. About Philip I am not over anxious. It is possible that he may have shewn my letters to some rather imprudent friend; if it has piqued him so much

the better. It contains nothing, certainly, which I repent of having written. But I agree with M. Sturm, who desires that by all means we may detach him from that party. And this he sees is a thing to be wished for by himself, but distracted by various considerations, he will never disengage himself unless he be torn from them by others. But now I must rather enter on what concerns yourself, because the subject is more seasonable.

When our friend Celso¹ understood that the Italians who are settled here, desired exceedingly to have you, a thing which your erudition and piety deserve, he not only acceded to their wishes, but warmly encouraged them. After a very brief interval of delay, they unanimously decided that you should be implored to consent, if unfettered by other engagements, to undertake this charge. I have been entreated by them indeed to interpose my offices to persuade you, though there is nothing which I would have undertaken more willingly; nor indeed if before this we had had any competent situation to offer you, should I have delayed till now to undertake this task. But the low state of our public treasury is the cause why I have hitherto been unable to offer you anything, since it is with much difficulty that the city itself furnishes a slender pittance to its ministers. And though what the brethren have determined to contribute will not form an ample salary, yet I know that from this circumstance will arise no obstacle to your complying with their desires. On this point all your deliberation turns, whether you are at liberty to abandon the post in which you have been placed. The vehement desire which I feel for your arrival makes me, in a certain degree, distrust my own impressions. And cer-

¹ Martyr had scarcely been settled at Strasbourg, when at the instigation of the minister, Celso Martinengho, a call was addressed to him by the Italian Church of Geneva. He did not think himself bound to accept this call, and in his answer to Calvin, he referred to the benefits which had been heaped on him by the Senate of Strasbourg, as well as the ties which connected him with the school and the church of that city. He terminated his letter in pronouncing the highest eulogium on Count Celso:—"What pretext can I shew? that the Church of Geneva is forsaken? but they have Celso, who is as dear to me as my own life, and whom I know well to be a virtuous, learned, and serious man, quite proper to govern a church." *Martyris Epistolæ*, p. 238. He quitted Strasbourg the following year, only to retire to Zurich.

tainly according to your own prudence, you are, in the present case, a far better judge of what is most expedient to be done, than to require any advice from others. But unless you feel yourself bound by too sacred a tie to find yourself at liberty to change, you are bound not to hesitate in obeying this call, which we are not less confident will be useful, than we are convinced that it is from the Lord. It is indeed a little flock, but truly chosen, and such that I think in it may be seen the flower of Italy. Nor have you to fear that you shall have any trouble from jealous rivalry. For I answer for our friend Celso; such is the meekness of his temper, that you will find in him a fellow workman not less tractable than faithful. For yourself indeed I know certainly that nothing will be more desirable to you, than in your turn to embrace as a brother, with all cordiality and modesty, the man in whom you will experience the filial affection of a son. It only remains for us to expect what decision your conscience will permit you to take; for unless you are disengaged we dare not summon you away, especially since the Lord employs you usefully in an honourable function where you now are. I am not surprised if their arms have hitherto procured the Germans but slight advantage, if they are so insensible to the loss occasioned by their own spoliation. Nay, when they have long ago voluntarily deprived themselves of heavenly protection, I have no doubt that now they are struck with the spirit of astonishment that they may conspire to their own destruction. Although perfect peace is not yet established in your little French church, I congratulate it on its more tranquil condition. Farewell, distinguished sir, and highly honoured brother. Very best respects to M. Sturm, and M. Sleidan. May the Lord continue to protect you, and bestow on you every kind of blessing.—Truly yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCLXXXIII.—TO THE CHURCH OF PARIS.¹

Christian exhortations—announces the sending of a pastor.

28th January 1555.

DEAR SEIGNEURS AND BRETHREN,—As I make no doubt but Satan is daily preparing for you new assaults, and along with his agents devising every means to make you lose heart; in like manner, if I were more able for the task, I should wish, on my part, to lay myself out to strengthen your courage. But on your own part, without waiting to be stirred up by others, you should be diligent to take up arms, and hold yourselves in readiness long beforehand, to the end that, whensoever it shall please God to make trial of your faith, you may have wherewithal to answer, and not be taken by surprise. For this purpose you know what need you have of continual exercise, for there is no one who, after self-examination, does not feel more and more convinced of his weakness; and such is the rage of the enemies, that well might the most valiant tremble, if they were not thoroughly fortified. But it is well for us that the remedy is certain, and, what is more, that we have not far to go to search for it. So then take refuge in Him who is our stronghold, and whatever fall out, beware of dispersion, which can only bring ruin upon you. If any

¹ Letter without an address, written, according to the most probable of our conjectures, to the Church of Paris. This church, the origin of which is contemporary with that of the Reformation in France, and whose history is one continued martyrology from the burning of James Pavannes, and Louis de Berquin, down to that of Anne Dubourg, owed its first increase to the learning of Le Ferre d'Etaples, the zeal of Farel, and the preaching of Gerard Roussel, Calvin, and Courault. Protected before the affair of the *Placards* by Margaret of Valois, persecuted afterwards with extreme rigour by Francis I., and Henry II., the partizans of the Reformed faith long assembled in secret, as we learn from a narrative in manuscript of that period: "We have long lain hid in our private dwellings, in woods, and caves, and night has often protected us in our hiding places." It was only in 1555, that the Church of Paris, encouraged by the increasing number of its members, elected a minister, and prepared itself by a solid organization for the glorious part it was destined to play. Beza, *Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. L. 1. passim. *Hist. des Martyrs*, L. ii., and MSS. of Paris and Geneva.

keep themselves apart from their fellows, if there be neither flock nor assembly, then, rely upon it, you are on the point of falling a prey to the wolf. Now there is no better remedy to help your frailty than mutual exhortation and encouragement. I am well aware that thus you may whet the rage of the enemies, because hearing already that you are spoken of, they are lying in wait, their attention fixed on you. But there is no better buckler, bulwark, or rampart against their cruelty, than to invoke, with one accord, Him who has promised to be in the midst of those who are met together in his name. Beware of depriving yourselves of such a privilege, to wit, that of trusting yourselves to the keeping of so good a Shepherd, who will never desert his sheep, if they will but hear his voice, and rally round his crook. Do not imagine, my brethren, that I speak as a man exempt from all anxiety on your account. I ponder the dangers to which you are exposed. But certes we should do God this honour, to make more account of his protection than of all the devices of Satan and his followers. Moreover we shall never be fit for the service of God, if we look not beyond this fleeting life. True it is, the time seems long, especially during these very grievous trials and persecutions of the children of God. But when we tend heavenwards, and have rightly tasted of celestial joys, we shall have a haven in view to draw us on, not only a few steps, but across an ocean, however vast and fathomless. Thus, my brethren, let us continually raise our thoughts to that everlasting inheritance, so as to despise this perishable life and all its vanities. But since on this subject you daily receive excellent and pious instructions,¹ and as each of you, I presume, by reading and other means provokes himself to his duty, I shall bring my letter to a close, the rather that it is enough for me to have reminded you that I hold you in remembrance as is my duty. Even if I had been more concise, the bearer will be able to give you ampler details

¹ The Reformed brethren of Paris had elected, for their pastor, John Le Maçon, says La Rivière, to whom was adjoined a gentleman of Forez, Anthony de' la Roche Chandieu, scarcely twenty years old. This minister La Roche is mentioned by Beza, *Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 32.

than the longest letter could contain. Whereupon, my dear and honoured brethren, having commended myself to your prayers, I entreat our heavenly Father to have you in his keeping, to give you increase in all good, to strengthen you with a constancy not to be overcome, and direct you unto the end according to his will. My brethren likewise salute you.

[*Fr. copy.—Eccl. Arch. of Berne, vol. vi. p. 383.*]

CCCLXXXIV.—TO THE DUCHESS OF FERRARA.¹

He exhorts her to make a courageous display of her faith in persecution.

2nd February 1555.

MADAM,—As I have had no news of you except by flying rumours, since it has pleased God to make trial of your faith, I am quite at a loss what to write to you. I would not, however, let slip the excellent opportunity offered me by the bearer. I was even extremely sorry to learn that a short time ago a person passed by here without letting me know, who most assuredly would have taken charge of my letters for you. For since the afflictions with which you have been visited, I know not whom to trust to, and however much in doubt I was concerning the issue of your distress, having no such certain information as I could have desired, I was indeed deeply grieved to have no means of writing to you. And as even up to this moment, I am far from having satisfactory

¹ See p. 50, and 88. Persecution was raging at Ferrara. Neither age, sex, nor rank, escaped its fury. On the 7th of September, 1554, at the instigation of the king of France, Henry II., and Pope Julius III., the Duchess of Ferrara, declared guilty of the crime of heresy, was carried off from her palace, separated from her children, and subjected to a rigorous confinement in the old castle of Este. She owed the recovery of her liberty to an act of weakness, which Calvin deplored, and which was speedily followed by one of repentance. Under the impression of this melancholy event, the Reformer wrote to Farel:—"Of the Duchess of Ferrara a sad report, but better confirmed than I could wish, says that, overcome by threats and reproaches, she has fallen off from her profession. What can I say but that an example of constancy is a rare thing among princes?" Nov. 1, 1554.—See Le Laboureur, *Addition aux mémoires de Michel de Castelnau*, tom. i. p. 717; and Muratori, *Antichità Estensi*, tom. ii. p. 391.

accounts of your state, I only send you word for the present, that I shrewdly suspect you have been obliged to swerve from the strait path, in order to comply with the world; for it is an evil sign when those, who have waged with you so relentless a war to turn you aside from God's service, now leave you at peace. And indeed the devil has so triumphed over us, that we have been constrained to groan over it, hold down our heads, and make no further enquiries. For the rest, Madam, as our heavenly Father is ever ready to admit us to his mercy, and when we have fallen holds out a hand to us that our falls prove not mortal, I entreat you to take courage, and if the enemy on one occasion has had some advantage over you, because of your infirmities, let him not boast as of a victory completely won, but feel that those whom God has raised up, have a two-fold strength to stand against all assaults. When you reflect, Madam, that God, in humbling his children, has no wish to cover them with shame for ever, that consideration will make you hope in him, to the end that you may quit yourself more courageously in time to come. Certes, I am convinced that the same attacks which caused you to backslide, will be again ere long renewed, but I pray you to think how much you owe to Him, who has ransomed you at such cost, and daily invites you to his heavenly inheritance. He is not a master in whose service we should be niggardly, and especially when we consider the issue of all the opprobrium or affliction we have to suffer for his name. Call upon him, trusting that he is sufficient to help our infirmities, and meditate on those noble promises which are to exalt us by the hope of glory in the heavens. For the foretaste alone should make us forget the world, and trample it under our feet. And to prove that the desire of glorifying God is increased in you, or at least is no wise deadened, bethink yourself, Madam, in God's name, not only how to bear testimony to him in your person, but also so to order your household, that the mouths of evil speakers be closed. I trust you have not forgotten what I wrote to you some time ago, to my great regret, but from the respect I bear you, and the zeal I have for your salvation; though at the same time I must put you in mind, that

I never enjoined any one to breathe a syllable about it to you. What is more, I took special care not to give any tokens of having lent the least credit to so many reports that I was obliged to listen to. And that the person who has so impertinently vexed you, might have no longer an opportunity of scattering his firebrands, I inform you I have taken great pains to moderate his folly, without however having been able to succeed. What is more, he broke out into invectives against me for wishing to restrain him. The individual is an Italian, named Mark. For the rest, Madam, I entreat you to be on the watch not to give a handle to such calumnies. Madam, having commended myself to your gracious favour I implore our merciful Father to have you in his keeping, to strengthen your hands, to increase in you the gifts of his Spirit, and cause them to redound to his honour.

Your most humble servant,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[Fr. copy.—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

CCCLXXXV.—TO BULLINGER.¹

Congratulations and thanks on the subject of the Christian hospitality offered to the refugees of Locarno.

GENEVA, 3d February 1555.

Because in this remarkable office of humanity, which your most illustrious senate has discharged towards exiled and afflicted brethren, there is displayed a bright and singular example of piety; though it may be forgotten by the base ingratitude of the world, yet in the sight of God it will never cease to be remembered. To me it is not doubtful that some rare blessing of God awaits your city. Because to those who

¹ See p. 114. The Protestants of Locarno received at Zurich the kindest welcome, as the following fragment of a letter from Bullinger to Calvin testifies: "The Church of Locarno has been assembled by the illustrious magistracy of our city. The Church of St. Peter has been granted to them. M. Bernardino Ochino has been called to be pastor of the exiled church. The men who have come among us are honourable. Our townsmen love and cherish them." 14th June 1555. The number of the refugees, of which the list is preserved in the Archives of Zurich, amounted to no less than 225.

are in distress and perplexity, neither your counsels nor your earnest assiduity to encourage and console have ever failed, because you have fulfilled the duties of us all, I for my own part offer you my most heartfelt thanks. Farewell, most accomplished sir, and ever honoured brother. The warmest salutations to your fellow pastors, and your family. May the Lord continue to govern and protect you all.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 107.]

CCCLXXXVI.—To BULLINGER.¹

Recommendation of Francis Lismannini, who was on his way to Poland.

GENEVA, 9th February 1555.

If M. Francis Lismannini came among you from any other part of the world, without my recommendation, you would welcome him in your usual manner, courteously and kindly as his virtues deserve. But when he has long lived among us, and even married a woman of the country, it would be absurd if he should visit you without a letter from me. What manner of man he is, and what kind of life he has hitherto led, you will learn much better from himself. For he is both upright and altogether exempt from false pretensions, and will bring with him testimonies which will lend credit to his words. But as the man, not otherwise very robust, has found the climate in these parts unfavourable to him, that he may not have to struggle continually with bad health, he has determined to try a change of situation. But nowhere, as he thinks, could he take up his abode more conveniently than among you. As among us he has always conducted himself peaceably and honourably, so we hope he will prove a tranquil guest among you. If he could get rid of that complaint which a new and unaccustomed manner of living has occasioned, his

¹ See the letter, p. 110. It appears that the departure of Lismannini for Poland had been put off. He left Geneva in the month of February 1555, furnished with letters of recommendation for the principal ministers of Zurich, where he prolonged his stay till the year 1556.

labours would be of no small service in promoting the kingdom of Christ; in which matter I doubt not but you will lend him faithful aid. With regard to my answer to the king of Poland, of which his servant had spoken to you, it is not such as to excite so greatly your desire to see it. For I, who know the disdain of princes, touched very briefly only on those points about which I had been consulted. If, however, you desire to waste half an hour in a perusal of it, Lis-mannini himself, I believe, has carried a copy along with him, which he will place at your service. It is the only copy that has slipped from me. The excellent man, when he arrived among you, was very anxious how he should excuse himself to you, because having been received by you with so many marks of respect, when he passed through your country he had been deficient in due courtesy. Now, because he kept repeating the same thing, I have told him to make his mind easy on that account. Farewell, most accomplished sir, and ever honoured brother. May the Lord always stand by you, govern and protect you, along with your family. You will salute your fellow pastors in our name.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich. Gest. vi. 166, p. 22.*]

CCCLXXXVII.—TO NICHOLAS RADZIWILL.¹

He exhorts him to make the most strenuous efforts for the complete reformation of Poland.

GENEVA, 13th February 1555.

I am not ignorant, most illustrious prince, that it is a very bold step for me, a man of mean birth and of almost no repu-

¹ To that right honourable nobleman, the most illustrious prince, Nicholas Radziwill, Duke of Olika and Niessin, Palatine of Wilna, high Marshal and Archchancellor of the grand duchy of Lithuania.

Nicholas Radziwill, one of the most distinguished nobles of Poland, the friend and confidant of king Sigismund Augustus, publicly adopted, in 1553, the Reformed doctrines which he disseminated in Poland. Desirous of contributing more efficaciously to the progress of pure religion, he caused to be translated and printed at his own expense, the first Protestant Bible in Poland. This Bible in folio beautifully printed is

tation in the world, to address, by letter, a personage placed as you are in the very highest rank. Yet trusting not only to your urbanity, but also and principally to your piety, that permission to do so will not be refused me, I shall not employ any long preamble in soliciting it. For though my condition is obscure, yet as you recognize in me one of the ministers of Christ, from your veneration for the Master himself, I shall be allowed to have access to your highness. My zeal besides, which corresponds so well with your holy desires, will, I am confident, be so approved of, that without any other recommendation it will procure me sufficient favour with you. When it is my wish that the kingdom of Christ should flourish every where, yet, at the present moment, Poland deservedly occupies my thoughts with a very special anxiety. For from the time that the light of a purer doctrine began to dawn upon it, this happy beginning has at the same time inflamed my desire with the hopes of a better progress. Besides, were you merely possessed of that authority, which you derive from your high rank, for promoting the state of true piety, that circumstance alone would afford me a just motive for exhorting and stimulating you, not to be wanting to your high calling, by withdrawing from your duties towards the Lord. But when you are perfectly inclined to protect true piety, nay, when with heroic greatness of mind you shew that the protection of it has been undertaken by you seriously and faithfully, this courage of yours justly encourages me to render you thanks, and furnishes me matter for greater confidence. Wherefore I do not simply entreat you to continue to be like yourself, but even that vying with yourself you should strive for the noblest victory of all. By many proofs you daily ex-

well known to the lovers of rare books, by the name of the Radziwillian Bible. The son of Nicholas Radziwill, having returned to the Catholic faith, bought up for 5000 ducats, all the copies which he could procure, and had them burned on the market-place of Wilna, in order to repair, he said, as much as it was in his power, the evil which his father had done to the Catholic Church by this publication. This Bible was dedicated to king Sigismund Augustus, whom Radziwill adjoined in the most energetic language to abjure the errors of Rome. He died too soon (1565) to exercise over his sovereign, and in his country, the Evangelic influence to which he seemed called. Krasinski, *Hist. des Peuples Slaves*, p. 145, 146.

perience, I am not afraid that this advice will be superfluous. Unquestionably you see that it is a work of immense difficulty to establish the heavenly reign of God upon earth. You also see by how many obstacles Satan endeavours to impede or retard it, nay, by how many devices he from time to time labours secretly to sap, or openly to overthrow whatever has been commenced in this holy edifice. You see, in fine, with what indifference that cause is treated, which ought not only to occupy the chief place among our cares, but even absorb all our thoughts. This last fault arises from the sentiment, which almost all men entertain, that the pains which they bestow on Christ's service are purely gratuitous, and hence they turn their attention to other occupations, from which honours and emolument are held out as the reward of their labours. But it belongs to your wisdom, most illustrious prince, to reflect first that you pay nothing to God, which he may not claim as justly due to him, and that not only because you stand indebted to him for every thing, but because he has bound you to himself, so much the more as he has raised you to higher dignity; next that no vulgar prize is proposed to you by him, when he says: Those who do honour to me, them in my turn I will load with honours. Therefore that he may continue to maintain the state of your house secure and lasting, strive as much as is in your power to spread the glory of his reign. And though I understand that his most serene majesty is rather favourably disposed to the good cause, yet as in the embarrassed state of affairs you see that he proceeds too slowly, remember that this task is divinely imposed on you, viz., not only to be the companion and fellow workman of his majesty, but also to stimulate, and where necessity will require it, to outstrip him. For he will not be offended, I imagine, to be urged on by the fervour of others to that mark towards which he is aspiring. Farewell, most illustrious prince, whom I honour with the most perfect devotedness. May the Lord govern you by his Spirit, sustain you by his strength, and long maintain intact your dignity.

Ever most devoted to your highness,

JOHN CALVIN.

CCCLXXXVIII.—TO THE LORDS OF BERNE.

New complaints against some Bernese ministers.

GENEVA, 15th February, 1555.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL, PUISSANT, AND HONOURABLE LORDS,—
After presenting to you our humble commendations and services, we pray you to excuse us, if we are forced to have recourse to you a second time. We trust you will deign to remedy in such sort the scandals of which we complained heretofore, that we may be able to serve God in good intelligence with the preachers of your country, and that your own subjects be not scandalized by the slanderous reports that are circulated without a shadow of reason. It is true for a short time we had hopes that the evil would be gradually hushed up, but lately we find that we have been deceived in our expectations, for it breaks out again worse than ever, and to such a degree, indeed that among the Papists we are not so much defamed as in some parts of your country. As far as we are personally concerned we should feel inclined to endure these outrages, were it not that by them the name of God is blasphemed, the gospel disgraced, the weaker brethren troubled, and the malignant, under cloak of evil speaking against individuals, have license to pervert all religion. Thus we cannot wink at the evil, without a base dereliction of our duty. Now we doubt not, but that the malevolent persons who thus trouble the church by detracting from our reputation, carry their insolence so far as to din your ears with their slanders, which are so frivolous indeed, that when you shall be pleased to take cognizance of them, you will have an ocular demonstration of the wrong which they do us, and will be astonished at their effrontery. What is more, they are so devoid of shame as to trump up stories that have no foundation whatever, and thus lay themselves open to detection. We desire not, however, to be protected by having a veil thrown over our faults; but rather we demand, if we shall be found guilty,

that neither our honour, nor even our lives, should be spared. To convince you, honourable Lords, that we seek for no subterfuge, though we have to answer for our lives and our doctrine, before our Lords and superiors, nevertheless, according to what we have always protested, even by the first leave of absence that was granted us at our instant request, we are prepared to give an account before you, of every thing we can be reproached with, as if we were your own subjects. Summon us to your presence when you please, you will see that the goodness of our cause gives us confidence, that we fear not to have you for judges, aware as we are that ye are Christian Princes who will not suffer the truth to be oppressed. Let us be heard only, it will suffice us. And since the question is about the doctrine we maintain,¹ we implore you in God's name to be pleased to prescribe some suitable ecclesiastical means, either by synod or otherwise, to have the whole investigated, and a right adjustment determined. We are confident that you will find our demand so equitable, that you will not refuse to be informed on what side is the wrong or the right. For even if we did not require it, the honour of God, the peace of the churches, the salvation of your subjects, and the prosperity of your state, should make you anxious to adhere to it.

Wherefore, taking it for granted that we shall be admitted to prove our integrity, for the present we will not trouble you with a longer detail of what will then be sufficiently evident. Only we beg of you to condescend to let us know your good pleasure. And hereupon, right worshipful, puissant, and honourable Lords, after again most humbly commending us to your gracious favour, we will pray our heavenly Father to have you in his protection, to govern you by his Holy Spirit, and increase you in all good.

Your humble servants, the ministers of the word of God in the Church of Geneva.

[*Fr. Copy.—Arch. of M. Tronchin at Geneva.*]

¹ The doctrine of predestination preached at Geneva, and violently attacked by several members of the Bernese clergy in the Pays de Vaud.

CCCLXXXIX.—TO THE CHURCH OF POITIERS.¹

Answer to the accusations brought forward by M. de la Vau, a disciple of Castalion, against the Church of Geneva—mention of the book de Hæreticis—eulogy of the exiles of England and Locarno—divers particulars.

GENEVA, 20th February 1555.

MY DEAR SEIGNEURS AND BRETHERN,—Knowing, as I do, that you stand in need of exhortations and consolations in your troubles and distresses, I had rather, if the choice were in my power, make these the subject of my letter, than frame excuses to justify myself individually, as well as the whole body of the church, from the calumnies which one M. de la Vau, in your country, lays so unjustly and slanderously to our charge. For it may seem that we are too anxious to keep up our good name, and that it would be better, forgetting our persons, to labour for your instruction, without paying attention to what people say or think of us. Now, I confess that we should patiently endure many false accusations, and hold our peace when we are ill-spoken of, and it is well known

¹ Letter without an address. At the top of it in an unknown hand, “To a calumniated church.” But this title is incorrect, the letter of Calvin, on the contrary, being an answer to calumnies directed against the Church of Geneva, and the Reformer.

To what church is this letter addressed? Three principal motives dispose us to believe that it is to that of Poitiers :

1st. We know by the testimony of Theodore Beza, (*Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 101,) that in the year 1555, the newly formed community of Poitiers was disturbed by the preaching of a disciple of Sebastian Castalion, “renowned for his heresies.” It is the same personage M. de la Vau, of whom Calvin bitterly complains, and whom he designates several times as having for master and accomplice a fantastical man named Sebastian Castalion.

2nd. The minister John Vernou, mentioned by Calvin as having reprov'd M. de la Vau at Geneva, was himself a native of Poitiers, and one of the first disciples of the Reformer in that city.

3d. The Reformed Church of Poitiers owed its origin to the preaching of Calvin himself. See note I, p. 68. It is what the Reformer seems to recall to mind in the following passage :—“I shall point out only two evils which might happen, if we dissemble on this subject; one is that you would be disgusted, and at last altogether alienated from the doctrine, that you have in part received from us, since it has pleased God to make use of our labours for your salvation. The second is, that we who ought to be conjoined, should be separated, and, as it were, a body rent in pieces.”

also that we put this doctrine in practice; otherwise indeed we should be forced to have the pen always in hand, considering the numbers of those who cease not to asperse us. And without going further, in this very town, abuse and murmurs against us are abundantly rife, which we take, however, very quietly, knowing that we must submit to them, as those persons have done, who without comparison were more worthy than we, and that it is on these terms that God has called us to his service. But, because the poor man who strives to give himself importance by accusing us, may to a certain extent obtain credit among some of you, so as to trouble them, and by these means sow the evil seeds of discord, if I did not endeavour to remedy such an evil, I should not watch over the interests of your salvation. Indeed, it is not so much the man who is carried away by a foolish ambition, as the craft of Satan who is devising mischief, that I now consider.

I shall only point out two evils which would result from our silence, did we not speak out on the present occasion. The first is, that you should be disgusted and in the end quite alienated from the doctrine which ye have in part received from us; since it has pleased God to make use of our labours for your salvation. The second is, that we who ought to be joined together in order to pray God for one another should be separated, and as it were, a body rent in pieces. Though that poor man la Vau is only blinded by his vain-glory, so as not to see the evil and detriment which he occasions, nevertheless in examining attentively a letter which he has written among you, you will clearly perceive that he is goaded and led on by Satan, both to seduce you, in destroying the fruits of our labour which aimed at the advancement of your salvation, and to dissolve the simple union which we should strive to maintain. Now, since it is my task to reply to a man who has lived among you, I cannot obviate the scandals it has been his purpose to stir up, without briefly adverting to some points in his character.

He has always passed among judicious persons for a man of such extravagant self-conceit as to be quite ridiculous.

And would to God he had measured himself according to his capacity, for he would not find much to plume himself on. But the proverb must needs hold good in him, "No folks so overweening as they who know nothing." Thus that most mortal bane of the church of God, a vainglorious presumption, has but too much sway over him. And in sooth he must have a double band over his eyes, thus to go on warring with his nature in his wish to play the doctor. However excellent a servant of God may be, so much the more should he walk in fear, knowing that he has nothing of himself, and consequently is so much the more beholden to God from whom he has received all; reflecting too, on the other hand, how much he falls short. But if one who has nothing to justify his pretensions, is mad enough to wish to be thought a great man—this looks like a desire to do it in despite of God and the world. For the rest, I am persuaded this poor vain creature, to keep up his reputation, has on purpose singled out for his attacks those who have acquired a certain renown and esteem among the children of God, as if by that he counted upon passing for a very clever man. But what disgusts me is, that, with this accursed lust for fame, he is become so impudent a liar, that modest people cannot but blush for him. It is rather my wish to be sober in speaking of him, that what I say may fall short of what you will yourselves learn by experience. Thus I will come to the simple fact, remarking only by the way, how foolish he shews himself while seeking to establish his renown. He boasts of having separated himself from us. He! and who is he pray—by himself, and with his well known character—compared, I do not say with such a society as God has here, but also with so many churches to whom he makes opposition? For the question is not about Geneva alone, but, in fine, he condemns all the cities where God is invoked, in order to draw to himself greater importance by declaring himself the enemy of all. But the point to be ascertained is, whether he is in the wrong or not.

He complains that after his arrival in this city, in consequence of some reports that he had circulated and which were not to our liking, he was looked upon unfavourably, and

finally summoned to appear at my house before a goodly number of people. But he takes care not to mention that these reports were so offensive, as to give great scandal to many worthy members of the church, both men and women. Nor does he mention, how he had consorted with all the mangy sheep, had gone gadding up and down and thrusting his nose into every dirty puddle where he thought to ferret out a piece of scandal or indecency—that he had haunted the company of all those who were ill-famed, so as to cross the lake in quest of a heretic that had been banished from our territory.¹ He does not mention that people had already begun to murmur at our too great forbearance, which left him at liberty to spread his absurd reports. For in what he alleges of Madame la Conseillere de Chinon, that she was stirred up to turn him suddenly out of her house, no other testimony than that of the lady herself is required to confound him. And what wrong did we do him in calling him before us? We have here the consistory, before which we summon those who will not submit to the established order. We might have brought him before it from the first. To shew him some indulgence, we condescended to reason with him in a private house. He complains that it was in the presence of many persons, but all of them, as we pointed out to him, were his friends, his countrymen, and who felt themselves offended with him; and the whole proceedings were intended to reconcile him with those whom he had offended by his scandalous reports, and who had already tried, though they only lost their time, to bring him to reason.

With respect to his complaint, that our manner of proceeding was not according to legal forms, I confess we did not send him a regular summons, but we did him but too much honour in dispatching one of our brethren to fetch him. And in that only remark the malice as well as the ingratitude of the man, and above all and always his pride; inasmuch as he is not satisfied that we begged him to come to us to hear what we had to communicate to him. But that is what one gains by

¹ No doubt Jerome Bolsec, who had, at that time, withdrawn to Thonon, on the territory of the Seigneury of Berne.

shewing courtesy to a boor. In reply to his assertion that I reviled him, I have more than twenty-five respectable witnesses to prove that not one angry word against him escaped my lips. On the contrary, his arrogance placed in so favourable a light the mildness and modesty which I then displayed, that there was not one present who did not feel nettled. Meanwhile you would have said he was a king of trumps, to see how he looked down upon and rebuffed everybody. I will cite but one example of his insolence. Our brother, John Vernou,¹ quietly and mildly remonstrated with him on the folly in which he persisted, alleging such reasons as, if the poor creature had possessed one grain of sense, would have convinced him. For his pains, la Vau told him that he was too young; whereupon some of my brethren felt themselves called upon to say, that the more shame it was to him that a youth had been for him so good a master, while he was so pitiful a scholar. And yet this hair-brained creature has the impudence to brag that he beat us so completely, that we had not a word to answer. Now, on the contrary, as one of the articles of our complaint was, that he blamed me for having written that fathers polluted their children, in presenting them to the superstitions which are prevalent in Popery, we alleged proofs of our opinion that ought to have more than satisfied him; viz., that the name of God, his temple, and the sacraments are certainly polluted by those who make a bad use of them; and just as the father sanctifies his child, in dedicating it to God, so he defiles it, in prostituting it to superstitions that ought to be condemned. He, like a doctor of the highest grade, replies: "These then are your reasons; I think differently." Here I could not avoid saying to him: "I believe, M. de la Vau, I might be thought to have almost as much

¹ John Vernou, a student at the university of Poitiers, converted to the Reformed doctrines by the preaching of Calvin, during the stay of the Reformer in that town. He afterwards withdrew to Geneva, was admitted to the functions of the ministry, and became, in 1554, pastor of the Church of Augrogne in the valleys of Piedmont. Surprised, the following year, at the defile of Tamis, in Fauaigny, on his return from a journey which he had made to Geneva, he suffered martyrdom at Turin. There exists (Library of Geneva, vol. 197 a.) a letter of John Vernou and John Lauversat, ministers of Augrogne, addressed to Calvin, of the date 22nd April, 1554.

authority as you to allege what I think, or my private opinion, but God forbid that I should give such loose to my fantasies; and moreover the question here is not about what one weens or overweens, but simply to stand by what God points out to us. But after all he preferred being impudent to acquiescing in the truth. Indeed, to the same purpose, I remember how about four years ago I was present at a supper, where he foolishly asserted, that in the resurrection the children of God would be equal in glory. I quoted a passage from St. Paul, flatly contradicting that opinion. Seeing himself confuted, he was not ashamed to say: Well, what then? It is a passage of St. Paul. What is to be done with so frantic a fool, who would sooner lift up his horn against God, than humble himself in confessing his error?

Already, my brethren, you partly know the causes of this wild beast's separation from us. I call him a wild beast, in order that we may pray God to be pleased to tame him, and bring him into his flock, by causing him to feel his insignificance. Now mark whither he boasts of having repaired. He gives out as his accomplices, a fantastical man named Sebastian Castalion, joined with two others, who are public lecturers at Bâle. If it is his intention to lend credit to his customers from the lustre of the town, what derision it is to make no account of all the ministers, pastors, and likewise doctors of divinity that he knows to be joined along with us! But in the mean time he forgets to mention that in the city of Bâle, papers and books of his Castalion, in which an attempt was made to impugn our doctrine touching predestination, have been condemned with a prohibition to publish them on pain of death.¹ But not to be too prolix, I will tell you in one word that the three personages whom he mentions² agree like

¹ It is in answer to these attacks that Calvin published the following writing: A short reply in order to refute the calumnies of a certain scoundrel, by which he has attempted to throw contempt on the doctrine of God's eternal predestination. 1554. Translated into French, and inserted into the *Recueil des Opuscules*, p. 1776.

² The three personages here designed are, Sebastian Castalion, Martin Borrhée, and Curione.

“ At Bâle there are three professors, whom the partisans of Calvin openly consider as favourers of Servetus, viz., Martin Cellarius, or Borrhée, principal professor of

dogs and cats, as their own books testify. On one point alone they are of the same mind, that heretics ought not to be punished. And to the end, no doubt, that they may have license to disgorge all their crude opinions. For such people would be delighted, that there were neither law nor curb in the world. That is the reason why they have got up that fine book, *De non comburendis hæreticis*, in which they have forged the names both of towns and persons, evidently because the book is stuffed full of atrocious blasphemies. Among others they do not hesitate to say, that if Jesus Christ will have us punish those who blaspheme him, he would be a second idol Moloch.¹ I say nothing of their fine maxim: that all contradictory discussions should be allowed, for this reason, that there is nothing certain nor determined, and that the Scripture is but a nose of wax, so that by their accounts, the faith held by all Christians respecting the Trinity, predestination, free grace, is quite indifferent, and about which people may dispute as much as they like. Nevertheless his assertion about the pursuit we have instituted to bring such blasphemers to the gibbet, is I assure you a pure falsehood. But I should like to know since what time he has thought fit to adhere to Castalion on this article, for when he lived here, without being required to do so, he stood up most zealously against him. And he must not say that at our instance he was solicited by a friend of his, to pump out the secrets of those with whom he has so suddenly struck up an acquaintance. For though our brother, Master John Vernou, begged him in a familiar way to let him

Theology, Celio Secundo Curione, and Sebastian Castalion, professors of Humanity."
(*Arch. Eccl. of Bâle.*)

¹ Here is the incriminated passage of Castalion's book: "For who would wish to become a Christian, when he sees that those who confess the name of Christ, are murdered by Christians, by fire, by water, by the sword, without any pity, and treated more cruelly than robbers or murderers? Who would not think that Christ was a Moloch, or some such divinity, if he wishes men to be sacrificed to him and burnt alive? Who would wish to serve Christ, on such conditions that if now, amid so many controversies, he is found at variance on some point, with those who have power and dominion over others, he should be burnt alive by the command of Christ, still more cruelly than in the bull of Phalaris, though even from the middle of the flames he should invoke Christ with a loud voice, and cry out in thundering accents that he believes in him?"
Traicté des Hæretiques, p. 20, edit. of 1554.

know the truth, he did so, only because he believed that there was no foundation for the common rumour; or indeed, because he thought that when la Vau should have discovered them to be the authors of so wicked a book, without more ado, he would have them in abhorrence. Yet as all this was done without our being privy to it, he is far from having any pretext for accusing us of subornation. You can judge consequently by his letter, what fine lessons he has learned in this new school to defame me, and our whole church. He says that every body here must kiss my slipper. I believe you have sufficient evidence of the kind of pomp with which I am surrounded, and in what manner I desire to be paid court to. I am quite convinced that were he able to hold my place, he would shew you a very different style of insolence. For since he is so puffed up now that he is nothing, raise him but one step higher and he must burst outright. But he only shews what a venomous animal he is, being so spiteful because he sees every body here living in good intelligence. For what he calls kissing my slipper is that people do not rise up against me and the doctrine which I teach, to grieve God in my person, and trample him so to speak under foot. Those who shew themselves so hostile to peace and concord, prove that they are actuated by the spirit of Satan. He reproaches me with procuring for my books such authority, that not even the most venturesome, nor the most courageous dare to speak ill of them. To that I reply, that indeed the least we can expect is that the Seigneurs, to whom have been entrusted the sword and authority, should not permit the faith in which they are instructed to be lightly spoken of in their own city. But luckily the dogs that bark so lustily after us, are unable to bite. And that the effrontery of this man may be laid open in every thing and every where, learn that what he has said of one Barbery is a tissue of falsehoods. It is true that this poor Barbery, not to mention that he is flighty, was carried away by vanity and ambition to spread some extravagant reports, but the greatest severity that was ever inflicted on him, was to remonstrate with him on his faults among ourselves. And though he has several times relapsed, one

thing is so certain that he will tell you so himself, we have always borne with him as with a little child. Besides, he has continued, as far as we are concerned, to live here unmolested, and yet la Vau would have you believe that we have banished him from the city. God forbid that I should seek to retaliate on him, for besides that I can afford according to the world to despise him, God has given me the grace to be callous to such detractions. But this I must and will say, that it is quite as lawful for me, and should be quite as much allowed me, to be zealous in maintaining the doctrine which I propose, since I know that it is of God, as it is for him to claim a license to plead the cause of his belly. For in point of fact, no other motive impels him to assume so many false disguises ingeniously trumped up, but the single one of finding the old cribs where he was wont to gorge himself. You know him, and have had but too much experience of him; so I add not a word. And would to God he had permitted his imperfections to remain hidden, for if they were not prejudicial to you, I should not be compelled to advert to them.

Here is the state of the case with respect to his calumnies against the Institution. A vain-glorious man like himself,¹ wishing to play the doctor, had condemned the doctrine contained in that book, and went about from tavern to tavern to decry it. I came forward to give an account of the work, and so closed his mouth, that people laughed at his stupidity, though he himself was unabashed. The affair having made some noise, he and all his fellows were forbidden to circulate any more defamatory reports against a doctrine sufficiently approved of. What is the object of this poor man, in vexing himself so much on that account? None, except the desire that every one might be allowed to blaspheme the truth. He even accuses, in general, all those who agree with me, without stopping to enquire whether it is in good or in evil. Now it would have been but fair to begin by ascertaining what my doctrine is, in order to blame with justice those who adhere to it, if it is found bad. But if on the contrary it is good, to

¹ Allusion to Troillet. See the letter to the Seigneurs of Geneva, of the 6th October 1552. Vol. II. p. 363.

shew that he belonged to the flock of Jesus Christ, he ought to have acquiesced in it peaceably, rather than exasperate himself, out of malignant envy, against those who shew themselves docile in obeying what they know to be good.

To vex you and draw you over to his party, he distinctly mentions that our sole consideration and study is to attract every body to Geneva, as if in that forsooth we had any great profit or advantage. He should first have shewn what impost or tribute I raise from them. For it will be difficult for him to say there ever was here any other receiver but himself. But it is too odious a falsehood to insinuate that we condemn all those who live elsewhere. As if I had not written that those who maintain elsewhere purity of doctrine, are much more to be esteemed than we who enjoy so much greater liberty, and as if daily I am not heard insisting on that very topic. I only wish that he felt as much compassion for your captivity as I do. Not that I boast of being touched by your sufferings as keenly as I ought, in order to groan over them and pray God to give you some alleviation; but well I know that I bestow on them more of my anxiety and sorrow than he. I may say as much of another calumny which he has propagated, that our christianity consists in keeping ourselves unpolluted from the stain of Popish superstitions. Were there nothing else than the four sermons which he labours to vilify, by the way he speaks of them, we see clearly that he is one of those whom God has given over to a reprobate mind, a race that call white black, that God detests and curses by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah. But besides that, what we preach and what we practise is well known, and our daily struggles bear ample testimony against the falsehood and malice of this poor fool. Nor is it enough for him to have thus slandered us, he must also strive to ruin in general every thing that has been accomplished by excellent servants of God with so much labour and difficulty. The whole manner of instruction adopted throughout Germany and in the kingdom of England, he disapproves of. It is not the less on that account a sweet smelling sacrifice to God. And though the greater part have made a bad use of it, still despite their in-

gratitude, the fruits of it have appeared, and are yet evident at the present moment. And how humane on his part, forsooth, to reproach the poor English chased up and down, or self-banished from their country,¹ with the calamity which has fallen out for the sins of the people! The preachers who had there begun to establish the reign of Jesus Christ, have lifted up their voice like true prophets, to announce that such an issue was to be expected, and yet, this coxcomb lays all the evil to their charge, as if they had never served God. Such hairbrained busy-bodies clearly shew that they are proper for destroying every thing that has been well done. I should like, however, such snappish curs as he, that bark in ease and idleness on their own dung hills, would only shew us what persons they have ever converted. As it would take us too long to exhaust this subject, a single example will be sufficient to convince you of the baseness of this man. Wishing to slander those who withdraw from the idolatries of Popery, he produces the example of those of Locarno,² whom he condemns as rash and inconsiderate. Now here is the case, eighty families making from five to six hundred persons, since somewhat less than a year, have declared in writing to the Canton of Schweitz, to which they were subject, that their conscience would no longer suffer them to have fellowship with the corruptions of Popery. Thus after having made a pure and simple confession of their faith, to which they attached the signature of their names, they required of their superiors to have liberty, by a formal act of permission, to serve God according to his word. Now because the greatest number of voices is on the side of the Papists, they were condemned as mutinous and rebellious subjects, for having asked such a permission, though none of them had raised so much as a finger. The cantons who make profession of the gospel,

¹ The premature death of young king Edward VI., 6th July, 1553, and the accession of Mary, brought on a momentary restoration of Catholicism in England. The continent was covered with religious exiles, who voluntarily sacrificed their country to their faith. Then arose the Reformed English Churches of Frankfort on the Maine, and Geneva, which both reckoned among their ministers the most illustrious of these exiles, John Knox the future Reformer of Scotland.

² See the notes, 1, p. 114, and 1, p. 131.

have submitted to have their case laid before arbiters. The poor people of Locarno, threatened with the stake, patiently waited for the issue which God should be pleased to give them, without tumult, without attempting any thing. In a word they put in practice, what is mentioned in the psalm, they have been like sheep led out to slaughter. Finally they were all banished, and chose rather to abandon their country, than swerve from the right path, having the option to do either. Consider now if the cruelty of this despiser of God should not seem odious in your eyes, when he disgorges his outrages against the poor brethren who have been thus persecuted. But it is the habitual practice of this fine school, in which he has become a disciple and doctor in three days, to turn into derision all those who permit themselves to be persecuted for conscience' sake. They hold it to be enough to live like a good pagan, without much troubling themselves about all that respects the faith and service of God. Fine phrases to extol the virtues; but if they leave in the background the faith together with the invocation of God's name, they pervert all order and place the plough before the oxen.

Above all, brethren, beware of the craft of Satan, when such folks speak to you of the excellence of their lives. Their intention is to annihilate the grace of our Lord Jesus, cheating men into the belief that they have no need of the remission of their sins; as if the great and sovereign virtue of all the saints, while they live in this world, were not to groan under the load of their vices, knowing how much they have fallen short of the mark. It is not without reason that I speak to you of that, for this model of virtue, Castalio, whom la Vau canonizes, has used all his efforts to sow this mortal poison. And it is for that reason that he reproaches us with not bringing men to holiness of life, because we affirm that in us there are always many infirmities as long as we have not laid aside the covering of this mortal body, so that we must continually take refuge in the mercy of God. Now accursed be that holiness which should so intoxicate us with pride as to make us keep out of sight the remission of our sins. But for the rest, if people will make a comparison, I leave you to

judge which party labours most to excite men to the fear of God, perfect integrity, patience, and in a word to newness of life; and which has hitherto set about such a work most efficaciously—we, or la Vau and his accomplices. For with regard to the reproach he brings against us that our sermons are but so many pleasantries in which we do nothing but fall foul of the Papists, never blaming the vices of our hearers, the best contradiction of it will be found in the copies of them which are every where disseminated. I did not compose in my room the two and twenty sermons on the octonary psalm, (cxix. psalm,) but they were printed without any corrections such as they were taken down from my lips in the temple.¹ In these you see our style and manner of teaching, in which if la Vau surpasses us, none of us will bear him any ill will. And yet with what effrontery he reproaches us with having forgotten the doctrine of St. Paul, which condemns evil speakers as well as robbers! Now you see him so madly carried away by his lust for slander, that he defames the good which is as well known as the light of the sun at midday. But I have said too much of these wearisome rumours, on which I should never have dwelt so long, if I had not been forced to it by necessity.

To conclude, it will be enough for me to have vindicated our church from the false reproaches which la Vau has laid to its charge, so that you be not scandalized in us. Should you be told that we are not so well reformed as was to be desired, we should not be disposed to deny it, provided always that you be not disgusted with the pure doctrine, nor alienated from us, since God has united us by an inseparable tie. You know that for this cause St. Paul was constrained to boast himself, though nothing was farther from his wishes. Excuse then what I have done, if you are convinced that it was for the honour of God and your own edification in well

¹ “*Vingt-deux Sermons auxquels est exposé le Ps. cxix., contenant pareil nombre de huitains.*” New edition, Geneva, 1562. The sermons of Calvin, as well as his commentaries, were collected by his principal editors, Denis Raguenaud, John de Budé, Charles de Jonvillers, Nicolas des Gallars, etc., to whom was afterwards joined James Spifame, formerly bishop of Nevers.

doing. Whereupon, dear lords and brethren, having most cordially commended myself to your fervent prayers, I supplicate our heavenly Father to have you in his holy keeping, to sustain you by his power, to increase you more and more in the grace of his Spirit. My brethren and companions greet you.

Your humble brother,

JOHN CALVIN.

[Fr. copy.—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

CCCXC.—TO BULLINGER.¹

New difficulties stirred up against the ministers of Geneva, by the attacks of the clergy of Berne.

GENEVA, 24th February 1555.

After long contests the right of excommunication had lately ✓ been at last confirmed to us, the syndics were afterwards elected ✓ in a quiet meeting and were such as we desired.² When delivered from intestine troubles we hoped to enjoy a little repose, lo, a more cruel war suddenly threatens us from the neighbourhood. The senate of Berne has not only absolved and dismissed in liberty, those who had called me a heretic, ✓ but has let them loose armed with greater ferocity against me and this church. We in the mean time, having suffered such grave injuries, are summoned to answer to criminal charges. The sum of the whole affair is, that there will be no end to discords, until discipline be wrested out of our hands, and our catechism abolished. Our council has been asked to curb us severely. I feel so much ashamed of their brutality that I can scarcely even slightly touch upon the things which are too scandalous to be mentioned. What would they do if they were in a state of peace and security, when now with the pro-

¹ To struggles at home succeeded for Calvin, others from abroad. While he had to support the weight of the Sacramentarian quarrel in Germany, he saw violently attacked at Berne the doctrines and religious institutions which he strove to make prevail at Geneva, and he opens his heart to Bullinger respecting his fears and anxieties for the future.

² The Syndics elected were John Lambert, Henry Aubert, Peter Bonna, John Jesse.

spect of an uncertain war before their eyes, they rage so bitterly against innocent men? We testified that we were ready at an hour's warning to give an account of our conduct. We even voluntarily offered to make themselves the judges in our case. Our proposal is refused. In the mean time their subjects are forbidden by public edicts to participate in the Lord's supper along with us. Cease now to wonder at the barbarity of the Saxons, when from hatred towards one man, who would have offered his neck to the axe a hundred times to restore peace, the churches are so violently torn to pieces. Nothing however distresses me so deeply as that by these omens God openly declares his vengeance. Well then, that they may satiate their thirst for revenge, I shall be driven into exile, if however a path through their dominions will be left unclosed to a fugitive. To me it will be better to be driven from their territory, that I may march straight to the place where I shall be butchered.

May the Lord from heaven repay, as I trust he will, to your state the humanity it has now shewn to the poor people of Locarno,¹ and stretch out his hand to us unjustly oppressed. I pour these complaints familiarly into your bosom that you may aid me with your fervent prayers, for my heart is oppressed with heavy sorrow. And yet I accuse not our brethren, who, I know for certain, abhor these counsels, nor would I even have those things which I have written be supposed to glance at the council, which only suffers itself to be carried away by excess of credulity, and a few wicked and perfidious enemies. In the mean time you see to what evils we are reduced. Farewell, most accomplished sir, and venerable brother. May the Lord continue to govern you by his Spirit, and enrich you by his gifts. Do not fail to salute your fellow pastors, and your family.

Most affectionate respects to M. Lismannini, whom I trust and desire to have arrived in safety among you.

¹ See the preceding letter p. 148.

CCCXCI.—TO FRANCIS UNHARD.¹

He apologizes for differing from Luther in claiming the rights of Christian liberty—dedication of one of his writings to the Princes of Saxony.

GENEVA, 27th February 1555.

Your letter, most renowned sir, though the subject did not permit it to be agreeable or delightful, was, for that very reason, so grateful to me, because in the present melancholy disunion, it shews that your ancient affection for me is not yet entirely obliterated from your mind. For thence I conceive a hope that you will make an effort, as far as it will be in your power, to calm this excessive ebullition of fervour with which your theologians are foaming. Their refusal to accept the dedication of my book, I confess, disappointed me, because I had expected that such a homage would not have been displeasing to the most illustrious princes.² The private affront, however, thus put upon me, caused me pain only inasmuch as it involved a far graver and public insult to the church. For it is both a very slight loss of honour to me, and I have long since become callous to the malignant and unjust judgment of the world. But it seems too remote from the usages of good breeding, not to say inconsistent with that meekness which Christ recommends to his disciples, to reject so disdainfully and ill-naturedly a work undertaken with pious zeal and useful to the church. If they had discovered in it any impious dogma, I am far from wishing, under the pretext of fair dealing, that I should be spared. Not even they will venture to reproach me with that.

¹ To the very renowned, and by me highly respected Francis Unhard, the most excellent chancellor of the most illustrious Dukes of Saxony.

² The second treatise of Calvin on the Sacraments was dedicated to the churches of Saxony and Germany. It appears that this homage had not met with a favourable reception from the Princes, for whom it was first intended. Such moreover was the unpopularity of the Calvinist doctrine in Saxony, that the Reformer wrote to Farel: "In a letter of our excellent friend Martyr, I have learned that the Saxons are canvassing measures for having me excommunicated. If they break out into this act of fury, nothing will be more ridiculous, and even without my breaking silence their purpose will defeat itself."

But we do not agree in our sentiments about the Sacraments, because, forsooth, I do not chime in with them to the letter in their coarse forms of expression, which they insist on, more from obstinacy than reason. For I will not grant that there is any of them who commends in higher terms, the efficacy, use, and intention of the Sacraments, who sets forth more copiously their dignity, who in a word conciliates for them more respect. But because a short explanation of this cause which the bearer will offer you, will clear up all your doubts, I will not take up the time of a man endowed with the greatest judgment, by superfluous discourse. Remains now another subject of complaint, that I do not every where subscribe to the interpretations of Luther. But if it shall no longer be permitted to each interpreter on the different passages of scripture to bring forward his opinion, into what a depth of servility have we fallen? Nay, if I was never to dissent from Luther, to undertake the task of interpretation was absurd and ridiculous. This was the point to be examined, whether I had eagerly sought after different meanings, whether I had wantonly attacked, or spitefully carped at, or insultingly inveighed against him. In truth, most accomplished sir, if your leisure permitted you to read over the whole book, you would find in it nothing of the kind. On the contrary, when you shall see that I allude slightly and reservedly to things over which any one else, fond of ostentation, would have noisily triumphed; that where some errors have been committed by others, I censure them with due respect to great names or without scurrility; and that I even bury in silence many mistakes unless when compelled by necessity to do otherwise, you will have reason to commend both my moderation and my courteousness. This indeed I may be allowed to affirm, that the only object I had proposed to myself was to consult the benefit of my readers, who are but too prone to fall into blundering mistakes, unless they are warned to be on their guard. Now in what concerns the most illustrious princes, if they take it for a disgrace that their name should be prefixed to my book, though it is rather late to repair the mischief, yet whatever you shall write to me I am prepared to do, rather

than they should take amiss, what by me was intended to be a mark of respect. Farewell, right honourable, and by me much respected sir. May the Lord always stand by you, sustain you by his power, govern you by his Spirit, and enrich you with every blessing.

Ever devoted to your excellency,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCXCII.—TO VALENTIN PACÆUS.¹

Description of the tribulations of all kinds by which he is beset at Geneva—wishes for the reconciliation of the churches.

GENEVA, 5th March 1555.

In most affectionately studying to mitigate, by some words of consolation, the very sad cares which not a little afflict me, in exhorting me to a course of patient endurance, and at the same time not to suffer myself to be mixed up with frivolous contests, you have discharged a duty which is very grateful to me, my most worthy and disinterested brother. And would that in the manifold variety of troubles, I had that aptness of talent, that promptness of purpose, that greatness of mind which were so much to be wished for. This however is something, that though severe fluctuations daily exercise me, nay, though serious tempests threaten my existence, in which it seems to me that I must be swallowed up, yet I still maintain my post within the limits of the stadium. For it is scarcely possible, that slipping from thoughtlessness, I should not, at some time or other, have swerved a little from

¹ To Valentin Pacæus, a man eminent for piety and learning, a faithful minister of the word of God, and professor of theology in the Church of Leipsic.

Pacæus, a learned and moderate divine, blamed the excesses of Westphal, Amdorph, and their disciples. He wrote to Calvin:—"You need not doubt that among the learned and most of the well disposed, you possess very high influence and authority." He at the same time expressed his desires for the assembling of a conference, in which the learned and pious men of Germany and Switzerland might converse with one another, and settle the basis of a reconciliation. (Lib. of Geneva, vol. 110.)

the straight line. In truth I every day feel more and more how difficult it is not to be dragged into many conflicts. I know indeed that most enemies cannot be better overcome than by despising them, and I have long become callous to noisy blustering. You can scarcely believe how many indignities, both at home here and in the neighbourhood, must be supported by me and dissembled in silence. And assuredly you can scarcely believe how many impediments thrown in my way by Satan, I break through by concealing much, dissembling much, otherwise I could never make head against the hundredth part. But it is not always in our own power to escape, and if the prophet Ezekiel had to contend with silly women, the same necessity must tranquilly be submitted to by us. If you knew the state of this place, you would think that to consult one's peace of mind, one ought to fly elsewhere far from it. In the meanwhile I know not if a short apology, which I have just published, will calm the minds of your countrymen. If by chance they should admit me to a conference with them, no inconveniences will prevent me from joining them with much satisfaction. For if an amicable arrangement had already been desired by them, I professed myself willing to accede to it. Farewell, distinguished sir, and honoured brother. Salute all friends, if there are among you any whom my salutation will not displease. May the Lord always defend you with his protection, govern you by his Spirit, and bless all your labours.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCXCIII.—TO MELANCTHON.¹

Thanks him for his approbation of the condemnation of Servetus—urgent entreaties to determine Melancthon to pronounce with more firmness in the question of the sacraments.

GENEVA, 5th March 1555.

Your letter, most renowned sir, was grateful to me, not only because whatever comes from you is dear to me, and because it let me know that the affection, which you entertained for me in the commencement of our intercourse, still remains unaltered; but above all because in it I find a magnificent eulogium, in which you commend my zeal in crushing the impiety of Servetus. Whence also I conjecture that you have not been offended with the honest freedom of my admonitions. In this they were defective, that I could have wished them to have been more ample. And yet I do not urge them too importunately; still as much as with your permission I may venture to do, I would again and again entreat you at least to weigh well silently in your own mind, the points on which I have written. For so I am confident, you will endeavour, that respecting the gratuitous election of the pious, a more orthodox manner of teaching may be mutually agreed upon between us. About the worship of the bread, (*περὶ τῆς ἀρτολατρείας*) your most intimate opinion has long been known to me, which you do not even dissemble in your letter. But your too great

¹ Without laying aside the reserve which he had till then maintained in the midst of the theological quarrels, Melancthon had just expressed to Calvin his entire approbation of the trial and condemnation of Servetus. "Reverend sir, and dearest brother, I have read your writing in which you have clearly refuted the horrid blasphemies of Servetus. . . . I maintain that your magistrates have acted with justice, in having put to death a blasphemer, after having regularly judged the affair." In another letter of the 12th May, 1555, he shewed himself disposed to refute the suggestions of Westphal, of which the parties made him bear a part of the responsibility: "I have determined to reply simply and without ambiguity, and I judge that I owe that work to God and the church, nor at the age to which I have arrived, do I fear either exile or any other dangers." This language was the best answer to the wishes that had so long been expressed by Calvin.

slowness displeases me, by which not only is kept up, but from day to day increased, the madness of those whom you see rushing on to the destruction of the church. And though it should not be easy for you to bridle such wild beasts, which however I think is a groundless fear, would you only set boldly about it, you know however that our duties by no means depend on our hopes of success, but that it behoves us to accomplish what God requires of us, even when we are in the greatest despair respecting the results. Nor indeed does that excuse satisfy me that malevolent men, who wish to crush you, may hence find a feasible pretext. For what are we to expect from the servants of Christ, unless, in despite of ill-will, and contemning malicious rumours, they overcome by their victorious constancy whatever obstacles Satan may raise up against them? Certainly, however madly they may rage against you, nothing more cruel threatens you on their part than to be forced to abandon that part of the world where you now are; which thing in my judgment is what for many reasons you should spontaneously desire. But should you have to fear the worst extremes, still it is necessary that you should determine once for all what you owe to Christ, lest, by suppressing a candid confession of the truth, you should lend to wicked men a kind of implied patronage to oppress the church. That I might restrain their tumults, I have again comprised the summary of our doctrine in a short compendium. All the Swiss churches have subscribed to it. Those of Zurich gave it their unqualified approbation. Now I long to have your opinion; what also the rest of your countrymen think and say I am very desirous to know. But if those cease not to breed disturbances, who defame us so hostily, we shall endeavour to make the whole world hear our complaints. Farewell, most renowned and my ever honoured sir. May the Lord govern you by his Spirit, defend you with his protection, sustain you by his power, and may he always keep us in holy union, till at length he gather us into his heavenly kingdom.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 97.]

CCCXCIV.—TO MARTIN SIDEMANN.¹

He congratulates him on his moderation in the midst of the theological fury of Germany—comparison of Luther with his disciples.

GENEVA, 14th March 1555.

I am delighted indeed that this messenger luckily presented himself to you, as by his favour you have become known to me. With your letter, as it was full of courtesy, I have been exceedingly gratified. But what afforded me particular satisfaction, was to learn that you are not at all one of those who are so hurried away by their own violence, or enchained as it were by their obstinacy and captiousness, that they cannot assent to any thing that comes from this quarter, because we do not chime in with all the opinions of the Saxons. The wider this contagion has spread, so much more praiseworthy is your moderation; since devoting yourself to truth alone, exempt from silly prejudices, honestly, and without antipathies, you esteem only what is true. Would that Luther were alive now. For though his vehemence in the conduct of the Sacramentarian cause, always exceeded the bounds of moderation, yet it was nothing to their violence and phrensy. If however they continue to the last to be implacable, the result will be that they will at length, by their intolerable contumacy, conciliate favour to us among all sane and moderate persons, who, intimidated for a time, did not dare to form an impartial judgment on the subject. But when forsooth they do not possess a single one of Luther's virtues, by their lusty bawling they give themselves out for his genuine disciples. As if indeed to *ape*, and to *imitate*, any person, were not

¹ To Martin Sidemann, a man of distinguished piety and learning, professor of humanity at Erfurt.

Sidemann belonged to that minority of sage characters who knew how to honour the faith and genius of the Reformer of Geneva. We may remark the following passage in a letter which he addressed to Calvin the 24th October, 1554: "Farewell, incomparable man, and ornament of the church, and inscribe Sidemann in the number of your friends." (Library of Geneva, vol. 113.)

very different things. But amid so much ignorance and barbarity, nothing is more disgusting than their arrogance, since they do not spare even Philip. The blame of this is partly to be attributed to himself, because hitherto he has not manfully repelled their attacks.¹ Now, though the remedy will come late, he will be compelled to assume a more courageous attitude, and this will be the most efficacious method of crushing their knavery. I have just tried in a short tract, whether it were possible to calm their fervour. If I do not succeed, we must, as I predict, come more vigorously to the combat. It is to be deplored, indeed, that in the very bosom of the church there should be such ebullitions of strife, but when people will raise disturbances without a motive, our contention for the defence of truth is excusable. Farewell, distinguished sir, and respected brother. May the Lord stand always by you, govern, and protect you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.*—*Library of Gotha.* Vol. 379, fol. 46.]

CCCXCV.—TO THE SEIGNEURS OF BERNE.²

Statement vindicating the reforms introduced into the Church of Geneva, and complaints against several of the ministers of Berne.

LAUSANNE, *March* 1555.³

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL, PUISSANT, AND HONOURABLE SEIGNEURS,
—I learned yesterday, through the advoyer, that you are dis-

¹ Sidemann wrote to Calvin the 4th May, 1553. "Our countryman Philip has preferred hitherto to maintain the greatest moderation in the Sacramentarian cause. But now he is challenged to enter the lists; I fear a sad tragedy." Vol. 113.

² Moved by the church of Geneva, the ministers of Lausanne had long claimed the establishment of an ecclesiastical discipline, and the right of excommunication against the most scandalous sinners. This demand renewed the 7th of March 1555, and rejected by the Seigneurs of Berne, increased the discontentment of these against Calvin, whom they considered as the instigator of these proceedings. They addressed the warmest complaints to the Seigneurs of Geneva, who complained in their turn of the disrespectful language held by some members of the Bernese clergy against their ministers. An embassy was sent to Berne to regulate this difference; Calvin was one of its members. Informed at Lausanne of the accusations of which he was the object, he replied to them by a letter and a memorial.

³ The date of this letter is furnished to us, by the following pieces preserved among

satisfied with me, as if I were the cause of many differences, and stirred up your preachers to do whatever I think right, rather than obey you; and especially with respect to diversity of ceremonies, in the celebration of baptism, marriage, the Lord's supper, and festivals. Though I was far from expecting such a complaint, my conscience not at all reproaching me, nevertheless, I thank you for having deigned to let me know the murmurs and reports that you have heard about me, that I may have the means and opportunity of presenting you with my defence, for I trust that when you shall have heard the truth, you will be perfectly satisfied with me.

First of all, I pray you, right worshipful Lords, to reflect that we who preach the word of God, are exposed to many calumnies and much blame, and that it is not without reason, that God reminds us, by the mouth of Saint Paul, that he who is invested with such an office for the good of the church, ought not to be accused on light grounds. For my own part, I am not ignorant that for some time back many slanderous insinuations have been circulated on my account, in order to make me an object of suspicion and hatred to you. These things have given me great pain, because I saw that they tended to retard the spread of the gospel, to sow scandals, and divide the churches which ought to be conjoined and united in every thing and every where. And as much as it grieved me to have no occasion of answering in order to clear up my character and satisfy you, so much do I now thank God for permitting you to furnish me with an opportunity of so doing. For I have never refused to give an account of my ministry to your excellencies, and with the same readiness as if I had been one of your own subjects, I am always prepared to do this. To come to the fact; if you will question your preachers, who are in this town, how I agree with them in doctrine, I

the MSS. of the Library of Geneva, vol. 145: *Instruction and charge given to our well beloved N. Henry Aulbert, syndic; Francis Chamoye, counsellor; Masters John Calvin and Raymond Chauvet, ministers, ambassadors, to go to Berne this 28th of March 1555.* These instructions were accompanied with a letter from the Seigneurs of Geneva to those of Berne, containing four points: 1st. Justification of the doctrine preached at Geneva. 2d. Complaints about the scurrilous language uttered against the ministers. 3d. Chastisement of calumnies. 4th. Regulation respecting the Lord's supper.

am so assured that they will give you a favourable account, that it will not be necessary for me to trouble you any further on that score.

Respecting ceremonies, because they are things indifferent, the churches have a certain latitude of diversity. And when one has well weighed the matter, it may be sometimes considered useful not to have too rigid a uniformity respecting them, in order to shew that faith and christianity do not consist in that. Nevertheless those who have informed you that, from curiosity or other motives, I have introduced a new mode, have not made a correct statement. My brother Master William Farel is present here, who can moreover bear witness, that before my arrival at Geneva, the manner of celebrating the Lord's supper, baptism, marriage, and the festivals, was such as it is at present, without my having changed any thing. So that it is impossible on these points to attribute to me any thing that has originated with me.

The form of marriage has always remained in its original state, and I follow the order which I found established like one who takes no pleasure in making innovations.¹ On our expulsion from Geneva, they changed the form of the bread,² and though that was done in a disorderly and tumultuous manner, notwithstanding, to keep up peace and harmony, we retain the unleavened bread according to the usage which you have established here.

In one thing we differ, but the difference is not an innovation. We celebrate the Lord's supper four times a year, and you thrice. Now would to God, messeigneurs, that both you and we had a more frequent use of it. For we see in the Acts of the Apostles by Saint Luke that in the primitive church

¹ Contrary to the usage that prevailed at Berne, it was forbidden to brides to present themselves at church with long hanging tresses in order to receive the nuptial benediction. Ruchat, *Hist. de la Reformation*, tom. v. p. 58. We read in the extracts of the *Registers of the Council*, 20th May 1537: "A bride having gone out last Sunday with her hair hanging down lower than is fitting, which is a bad example and contrary to what is preached, her mistress was put in prison, as well as the two who conducted the bride, and the woman who had arranged her hair."

² The communion formerly administered with common bread was from that time administered with unleavened bread, according to the custom of Berne. Spon, *Hist. de Genève*, tom. i. p. 25, Note L.

they communicated much oftener. And that custom continued in the ancient church during a long space of time, till the abomination of the mass was devised by Satan, and was the cause why people communicated but once or twice a year. Wherefore we must confess that it is a defect in us not to follow the example of the Apostles.

Touching baptism, we maintain the form such as it was before I came to Geneva.¹ After our expulsion from that city, baptismal fonts were erected. On my return, it would not have been difficult for me, I believe, to have had them pulled down. On the contrary, I have had to endure much reproach because I wished them to remain. And of that I ask no better witness than our brother, Master Peter Viret. But I must remind you that in the greater temple baptism was administered even during my absence from the pulpit. And in truth the baptismal fonts were placed in such a situation, as to occasion the sacrament of baptism to be despised and turned into derision; we baptize when the sermon is over, and the font stood in the way where the people pass out around it. There was thus a bustle and confusion. Nevertheless the form observed is the same which it has always been; there is thus no reason for taking offence, and least of all for throwing any blame on me.

As to festival days, they were abolished at Geneva before I left France;² and those who had procured their abolition, were actuated by no spirit of contention or spite, but solely by the desire of abolishing the superstition which had been so prevalent in Popery. For which reason, messeigneurs, you should not feel offended, as if that measure had tended to sow discord between your churches and that of Geneva, though for the innovation I am personally irresponsible. For the rest, my writings bear witness to my sentiments on these points, for in them I declare that a church is not to be despised or condemned, be-

¹ The baptismal fonts of stone employed at Berne had been abolished at Geneva. Ruchat, tom. v. p. 53.

² Whilst the Bernese celebrated four grand festivals during the year, Geneva Reformed allowed to subsist, from opposition to Catholic usages, but one festival day, Sunday. This change was accomplished in 1535, a year before Calvin's arrival at Geneva. Spon, *Hist. de Genève*, tom. ii. p. 20, note L; Ruchat, tom. v. p. 53.

cause it observes more festival days than the others. From this recent abolition of feast days, here is what has resulted. Not a year has passed without some quarrel and bickering, because the people were divided, and to such a degree as to draw their swords. Meanwhile we have done what we ought, to appease these troubles. The most feasible means that could be devised for that purpose, seemed to be to keep the holy day in the morning, and open the shops in the afternoon, though this plan did not much remedy the evil. For several thoughtless persons failed not to fall foul of one another. So that for the last time entreating and exhorting the Council of the two hundred to redress this abuse, I begged them, among other things, to be pleased to conform as much as possible to the order established among you for the purpose of keeping up a good understanding. Judge then of my astonishment when I learned what had been decided in the general Council, without my knowing that such a question had been entertained by it. Of that I can produce a goodly number of competent witnesses.

And notwithstanding all that, worshipful and most honourable Seigneurs, I pray you to consider two things. The first is that when we believe that we are serving God in observing certain days, we are chargeable with a superstition contrary to his word; and yet this belief has taken such root among the people, that they can scarcely be turned from it. The second is that what is commonly styled Annunciation day is held by the greater number to be a feast of our Lady, in which belief there is idolatry. And would to God that every thing were rightly considered for the edification of the Church. But at all events I do not deserve to be accused of all that, considering I have no hand in it.

I am reproached with having created a new feast on the Wednesday. In this I am sadly wronged. For the magistracy of Geneva have indeed, by my exhortation, set apart one day in the week to offer up extraordinary prayers, as necessity and the exigencies of the times should require it. And on that day we pray for you and the other churches who are in need of it. But we carry on our usual labours on that day; and besides we have not so constantly established a cer-

tain day as not to select now one, now another, just as the magistrates shall deem proper for their convenience. But a more serious charge is involved in the rumour that they have diligently spread about, of my intentions to transfer the Lord's day to the Friday.¹ The truth is, that, for my part, I have never shewn the least sign of lusting after such innovations, but very much the contrary.

It has also reached my ears that there are murmurings about the catechism. Now when I composed the catechism,² of which we make use, it was because no other undertook the task. I put it to your preachers whether the doctrine contained in it be pure and sound. I have no doubts but they will make a favourable report respecting it, and that you will find my labour has greatly profited, and continues to profit, the Church of God.

Wherefore, right worshipful, puissant, and honourable lords, I pray you not to give ear to the false or frivolous reports which are spread abroad about me. I have endeavoured, wherever my lot has cast me, faithfully to serve God and his church, and further the reign of Jesus Christ. You were ignorant, I believe, of that zeal which was in me. And if I have always walked in simplicity and straightforwardness, be persuaded that God has given me grace to persevere in the same train. And should you find any thing to be reprov'd in me, doubt not, as often as you shall be pleased to remind me, of my readiness to make answer to whatever points shall be required of me. The only favour I ask of you is never to refuse me an opportunity of clearing my character and making my apology before you. At the same time I beg you to consider that hitherto God has made use of my instrumentality, and in all likelihood will continue to do so, that according to my slender capacity, I labour continually to com-

¹ Bolsec could not omit this absurd accusation in the calumnious pamphlet to which he attached his name; *Vie de Calvin*, C. vi. : "Arrival of Calvin at Geneva, where he wished to abolish Sunday in order to observe Friday."

² Published in 1536, recomposed in 1541, reprinted more than a hundred times in French and in Latin, and translated into almost all the languages of Europe. The most remarkable edition of Calvin's Catechism, is that which Robert Etienne published in 1553.

bat the enemies of the faith, and lay myself out entirely to the best of my abilities to further the spread of the gospel. Thus may it please your excellencies like good christian princes, whom the prophet Isaiah styles nursing-fathers of the church, to hold out to me a helping hand and support me against malignants and detractors, rather than suffer me to be aggrieved by them. But I ask of you no favour save on this condition, that you find in me a good and loyal servant of God.

I pray you also, my lords, to mark well, who are the persons among your preachers that have intercourse with me. For they are well known to you, and have proved themselves so faithful, that you ought not to have any doubts on their account. I make this remark in order that their intimacy and friendship with us do not make them suspected. For we are not people to hatch plots or intrigues, or breed factious discontents. We aim at nothing but to lend one another mutual aid as in duty bound, and to see that many persons who desire only ruin, disturbance, or scandal, be not permitted to molest those who only seek to accomplish the functions of this office.

It would be impossible to allege a single point in which I have wished to usurp or draw importance to myself. But there are persons who are insatiable after my ruin, and who figure to themselves that I have absolute sway, if they cannot trample me under foot. Now I entreat you so much the more to maintain the fraternity and union which ought to exist between the ministers of the gospel, and to take away the scandal which is but too common of seeing the appearance of division and discord among us. For the better information you shall have on these subjects, the more you will find that I have just motives of complaint against those who have striven by every means, to prevent me from serving the glory of God and providing for the well being of the church.

And now, having presented your excellencies with the vindication of myself, I shall make bold to supplicate you in favour of a person whose banishment from your territory you

have lately ordained.¹ The person in question, my lords, is one who fears God and is the most peaceable of men. As to the sermon which he preached, when you shall have duly examined it, you will, I trust, lay aside any displeasure which you may have entertained against him. He has come from a distant country; he has a wife, modest, of exemplary conduct, and good reputation like himself. Wherefore, my lords, I humbly pray that you would be pleased to recall the act of his banishment, and you will be convinced at last that in thus raising my voice in his favour I have not made a rash report.

Complaints drawn up by Calvin, and presented to the Seigneur of Berne, against Master Andrew Zebedée, preacher of Nyon.

In a sermon which the said Zebedée preached at the marriage of the Seigneur de Cran's son, handling the subject of Christ's permitting the devils to take possession of the swine, he declared: that those who teach that, whatsoever things fall out by God's permission, are done according to his will, put forth an error more mischievous and damnable than the mass, and all the abominations of Popery; that it is most disgraceful for the magistrate to countenance so pestilential a doctrine, which exposes to damnation millions of souls; that its promulgators are not obscure people, on the contrary their books are spread abroad, and held in such repute, that every body is perverted by them. Now though the name of Calvin was not pronounced, the audience had no difficulty in perceiving that he was glanced at, and the preacher himself in private did not deny it.

Against Master John Lange, Preacher of Bursin.

In the congregation of Rolle, after having given an account of ancient heretics, he added that a certain person who has composed a commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, in asserting that Jesus Christ feared to be swallowed up in death,

¹ The minister John de St. André.

has shewn a desire to destroy the belief in his divinity. For if Jesus Christ had known fear, it follows that he is not God. And he insisted in such a manner on this head, that Calvin was clearly understood to be pointed at. Whereupon the ministers of the class felt themselves called upon publicly to resist the preacher, and declare, that Calvin, who had faithfully laboured for the church, deserved not to be stigmatized as a heretic, adding that the discourse which Lange had held, was a manifest error, and contrary to the principles of our faith. And that his intention might be more certainly appreciated, Lange boasted that if he had five or six champions like himself he would lead the said Calvin a dance—who is nothing but a heretic, as he calls him.

Against Zebedée and Lange conjointly.

Because the aforesaid persons have here presented articles full of falsehoods and calumnies; to wit, the articles of which their excellencies, the lords of Berne, have transmitted a copy to our lords and superiors, to obtain a confirmation of the said articles from the latter. For the ministers of the Church of Geneva have replied to them, as has been stated, and as a copy of their answer has been produced here. Moreover the aforesaid persons have circulated and published other articles quite different, in which they affirm, that Calvin makes God the author of sin, and lay to the charge of the ministers of Geneva horrible accusations.

Against Bastien Foncelet.

Having fled from the city of Geneva in consequence of his misdeeds, he has written most defamatory letters on the subject of a marriage which he pretends to have taken place with a woman whose husband was then alive. These and similar reports he has spread, both against the doctrine preached at Geneva which he calls heresy, and against the city and its government which he represents as a carnal and spiritual Sodom—affirming that it is a city noted for cruelty and the

persecution of the faith of Christ. With many other base outrages, he moreover gives out, every now and then, that Calvin is a heretic.

Against Jerome Bolsec, physician at Bolsec.

After his return from Berne, he boasted that he had there maintained Calvin to be a heretic. Previously he had declared that Servetus had been put to death most unjustly at Geneva, and not satisfied with calumniating him, keeps singing up and down a song full of infamous scurrilities against the said Calvin.

Against Peter Desplans and his wife, resident at Rolle.

In the presence of sixteen persons they have declared, that in the magistracy of Geneva they found neither law nor justice, that Calvin is a heretic, and caused himself to be adored. Some time after, before the Lord Bailiff, and in the presence of thirty persons, they declared their intention to prove the said Calvin to be a heretic.

[*Fr. Minute autogr.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 145.]

CCCXCVI.—TO BULLINGER.¹

Account of a journey of Calvin's to Berne, and of the false accusations directed against him.

GENEVA, 20th April 1555.

In what manner I was dismissed from Berne, I think I wrote to you from there, when by disgusting cavils the adversaries paltered both with me and the Senate. What was enough and more than enough for their own condemnation, they greedily laid hold of for their excuse; and that I might

¹ The disputes of Calvin with the Seigneury of Berne had made a noise at Zurich, and they seemed likely to be aggravated by a letter of the Reformer, containing a severe judgment on Zuingli. Calvin had recourse to the conciliating intervention of Bullinger to alleviate the danger.

be precluded from following up my rights, falsely and without any show of probability, the odium of a blunder, which even a child would discover to have been committed by the printer, was falsely put on my shoulders. But the senate decreed, if in any case printers make mistakes, the fault is to be attributed to the authors of the books. At length they thought proper to strike terror into me from other considerations. They reproached me with a letter formerly written by me, in which Zuingli is glanced at, or at least his doctrine disapproved of. But as this accusation was neither new nor unexpected, I was quite prepared to bring forward matters which served for my defence. Zebedée had perfidiously given publicity to a private letter which I had sent to him fifteen years before, at the time when I lived at Strasbourg.¹ I demanded that this letter should be publicly produced, that these dishonest men might not invent a subject of accusation for nothing or on frivolous pretences. The senate refused my request. Only a secretary handed me a brief, in which was written in French, that the true distinction of things is confounded when the word sacrament is taken simply in the acceptance of a military oath, whereas it rather signifies a mystery, and is employed for the spiritual compact between God and the church; and that this opinion of Zuingli was briefly refuted in my Institution. There was added in Latin that the opinion of Zuingli about the sacraments was called false by me; which I do not admit to have been said in a general sense by me. On the contrary, I solemnly affirm that such an expression never dropped from me. Nevertheless by this subterfuge impunity was secured to those wicked calumniators, who from the pulpit, in market places, in cross ways, and at dinner parties, revile me as a pestilent heretic. Our brethren of Berne most honestly did their duty, nor did it depend on them that we had not a better result. Moreover I

¹ See this letter in the Appendix. The passage incriminated was doubtless that in which Calvin, recalling to mind the efforts of Bucer to arrive at a purer notion of the sacraments, added: "and I wish that Zuingli would decide upon doing the same thing, whose opinion on this matter is false and pernicious." *Calvinus Zebedeo*, 19 Maii, 1539.

opposed this buckler to their attacks, that, if offence there was, it was you whom it principally concerned, from whom not one complaint had been heard, and that it was absurd that, you keeping silence, strangers should start up as the advocates of your cause. If they shall urge the question with greater obstinacy, consider, I implore you, whether it would not be equitable, as well as more desirable for me and creditable to yourselves, that you should interfere, in order that these dishonest men may not make a false handle of your name; as you have neither been injured nor shewn any disposition to seek a quarrel with me, on the subject of the pious and friendly admonition by which at that time I wished to benefit an inconsiderate man. In a short time I expect some news will be brought us from the fair. Whatever it may be, I shall take care to communicate it to you immediately. Farewell, most accomplished man, and honoured brother. Do not fail to salute in my name your fellow pastors, your wife, your sons-in-law, and your whole family. May the Lord always stand by you, protect, and govern you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

I beg of you to see that the letter be delivered as soon as possible to M. Lever, with kindest wishes on my part.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich. Gest. vi, 166, p. 24.*]

CCCXCVII.—TO THE PASTORS OF BERNE.

He urges them warmly to take part with him in the struggle which he is maintaining for the liberty of the ministry and the preaching of sound doctrine.

GENEVA, *May* 1555.

Though the letters of the senate, together with the answer of the lieutenant, were anything but satisfactory, my excellent and venerable brethren, nothing, however, occurred which we had not apprehended. I wished indeed, that the matter could have been better settled, and in such a manner as would have permitted myself and my colleagues to remain quiet; nor

would we have said a word, if the slightest remedy had been applied to the most serious evils. But when this last letter which ought to have calmed, has again opened the wound which had been inflicted by the former declarations, we are compelled to lift up our voice at least and testify how bitter this indignity is to us, which both impairs the faith of the gospel and threatens the ruin of the church. I wish we did so with any advantage; but though our labours be without success, it is necessary nevertheless to cry out even without any hope, for to sit idle spectators of this tragedy would be the basest perfidy. But since the issue is in the hand of the Lord, we will hope that he will himself take care that our endeavours be not in vain. As in a common cause we nevertheless desire to have you as our fellow workmen, you must make it your business to try and approve of our design. I know and remember when your senate, without pronouncing any thing for either of the parties, sent us home, though the absurdity of their decree did not a little offend you, that you were nevertheless of opinion that it should be obeyed, lest our persistence should inflame still more some ill disposed persons to do mischief. But I then adduced sufficient reasons for not complying with this order. For as we were there in a public capacity by the instructions of our council, we were not at liberty to depart, and it would have been a proof of slavish cowardice on our part, to pocket so gross an affront in silence. When your senate had promised, both in words and in writing, that having taken cognizance of the cause they would pronounce such a judgment, both about the thing and the persons, as that, all grounds of offence being removed, peace between the churches might be restored, at least it was our duty to ask that they should fulfil their engagement. And it was impossible to do any thing with greater moderation than we did that, nor with a more gentle and ready remission of our claims, for we passed over many things in which your senate itself saw that we had been aggrieved. We even began by declaring that unless the embassy imposed on us had left us no alternative, we should never have come; so that all might easily conclude, that we did not busy ourselves much

about the matter, nor urge it with great earnestness, but with great forbearance we only discharged the duties of our mission. And in my own name I assured them, apart and in private, that I abandoned the whole process, provided only they should consent to vindicate my doctrine and ministry from the mark of disgrace that had been set on it. The result was not in accordance with my wishes, but this shall never make me repent of having taken so moderate and so very unnecessary a step. I could not bring the deputies to betray the cause of Christ, to expose themselves to disgrace and danger; nor ought I, when they had a common task with myself, either to persuade them to do this, or draw them, by my example, along with myself into a manifest peril. But to dispense with enumerating these reasons, unless I had undisguisedly declared that satisfaction had not been afforded me, they would all have said, that because my conscience reproached me I had fled from fear. What you did not dare to write, unless with the permission of those who do not belong to your body, always displeased me, but because it is not in our power to rectify what is past, consider attentively what is now to be done. For my own part, I wish that the duty of my office and my conscience would permit me to keep silence in the same manner that I have steeled my heart to endure every thing. But when I see the heavenly doctrine of Christ, of which he has been pleased to make me a minister, every where contumeliously outraged, how disgraceful it would be for me to hold my peace, as if I were tongue-tied! Should I defraud that doctrine of the defence of my words, for which holy martyrs do not hesitate to pour out their blood? If any one maintains that there is no other method of making an honest and legitimate defence, except by securing the approbation of an earthly magistrate, I have a ready answer, which is, that I attach no importance to the suffrages of men, and willingly dispense with their interposing their authority, provided I be not in my turn sacrificed to their insidious prejudices. But when to crush me under a load of undeserved ill-will, the edicts, which you know, are every where disseminated, unless I make head against them, who would not condemn my faint-hearted-

ness? And should I pass over even this—will it be lawful for me to devour in silence the reproaches which the professors of the same gospel throw out against me? Not long ago Corbeil and Jerome, a minister of the class of Thouon, openly published that I had fled from Berne because I had been convicted of heresy. And upon the authority of these persons, not three or four, but more than a thousand men all over their territory keep up the cry that they had settled the heretic. Were it not better to have been put to death ten times over, than live to see one's self so contumeliously proscribed? To what purpose do I mount the pulpit every day, if I dissemble such impious outrages, with which the whole canton resounds? If I am ordered to abstain from the office of teaching, my silence will be at least a little more excusable. But what the Holy Spirit prescribes to us cannot certainly have escaped your memory; viz., that we should stop the mouth of gainsayers. Wherefore it will be absurd and perfectly shameful that I should be a minister of the gospel, unless I frankly defend it when it is openly and hostilely assailed by its pretended friends. Now when the senate denounces a severe penalty on those who shall dare to publish what they have learned from me, must I wait till persecution let loose its rage against my brethren, of which the blame will be imputed to me? But since they bear themselves weakly and with less prudence than is fitting, it is a superfluous task eagerly to make excuse to you, who see in your wisdom what necessity urges me on, whether I will or no. Certainly a gentler remedy does not occur to me than laying my complaints before the senate. In which matter if I implore your protection, it seems to me that I ask for nothing that is foreign to our common duty. But it becomes you, my most worthy brethren, to look a little deeper into the affair. With your knowledge one of the principal points of our faith is overthrown by your hearers and disciples. They forbid under penalties any one from saying a word on that point. After having excluded this article of doctrine from the churches, they also banish it from the whole of their territory, and arm their servants but too much disposed to create pro-

miscuous disturbances against the upright and simple, who shall have been found to have uttered a word respecting the sacred ministry of God. For they do not subject to punishment those who shall have babbled any thing impious, or false, or perverse, but every one without exception who shall have alluded to the predestination of God. Reflect whether this is to be endured. For my own part, I would rather have my tongue cut out, than endure with dissimulation such an example in the church committed to my care and fidelity. Nor have I the least doubt but that your dispositions are the same, yet I have thought proper to remind you familiarly, that nothing is less fit than that this cause should be conducted with timidity. Though in other matters I grant that offences are to be avoided, in this there is no room for circumspection. Nor should that other fear that all your pains will be unavailing prevent you from acting. For if very little liberty, and authority almost none, remains to you at present, you are by no means to wait till of their own accord those persons restore either to you; for the very name of pastors irritates and exasperates them; they cannot endure our presence, and in a word, they would willingly sweep all remembrance of us from the world. If you are destitute of authority, at least as the first step for the recovery of your rights, you should reclaim your liberty, that those who have hitherto with too much security hugged themselves in their sins, may at length begin to feel, that the servants of Christ are furnished with tongues to admonish them. But though it is I who am personally attacked, yet since they imagine that all of you are wounded through my sides, and the object of this accursed conspiracy is perfectly clear, I beg and entreat of you, worthy and venerable brethren, that you strive with no less zeal to vindicate our common ministry, than with rabid audacity you see those dogs rising up to overturn it. For even should we be disposed to remain passive, it will not be surprising if the perversity of these men rouse us from our lethargy. Nor am I altogether without hope either, that the attention of the senate may be awakened by serious admonitions so as to devise some feasible method of calming these disturbances.

Farewell, most excellent sirs and respectable brethren. May the Lord direct you by the spirit of zeal and constancy, and bless all your endeavours.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Zurich. Coll. Hottinguer, F. 46, p. 656.*]

CCCXCVIII.—TO THE SEIGNEURS OF BERNE.¹

Respectful protestations against the sentence pronounced by the Seigneurs of Berne—defence of the *Institution Chrétienne*—complaints against the ministers who pursue him with their calumnies.

GENEVA, 4th May 1555.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL AND HONOURABLE SEIGNEURS,—When not long ago I was in your city,² for the purpose of entreating you to put an end to the troubles and scandals which some emissaries of Satan had stirred up here, though I was deputed by my Seigneurs and superiors, nevertheless, seeing in your decree several articles that concerned me individually, I presented myself before you, as you know, in my own name, and as a private person, requiring you to examine more diligently the cause in order to give a good decision, not so much from respect to me, as for the honour of God and his gospel, the edification of the Christian church, the salvation of your subjects, and finally for the tranquillity even of your own state, which cannot, and should not, be separated from the consideration of these matters. Now in what concerns my own person it is possible that it might be sufficient to have once for all satisfied my own conscience, as I did at that time, were it not that I am forced when the evil increases to look for a remedy, as much as in me lies, or at least to protest that as far as the matters in question depended on the right accomplish-

¹ See the preceding letters, as well as the extracts from the Registers of the Council, of the month of April 1555. We read in them at the date of the 23d April: "Calvin declares to the council that he is not well satisfied with the answer of Berne respecting ecclesiastical affairs, whereupon he has the intention of replying to them. Decided that he should not do so without having shewn his answer to the Council."

² The month of April preceding.

ment of my duty, they should have been managed better. But besides that, a double necessity urges me to renew my importunities. For according to the last answer given me on my remonstrance which I made both in writing and by word of mouth, I expected that in writing to your ministers you would furnish them with an occasion of keeping up peace and fraternity with us, who are already united with them by the ties of a common doctrine. Now without much enquiry I perceive the common rumour to be, that the doctrine which we preach is held to be condemned. I am convinced that such was not your intention; but if you have declared, as in the last answer but one, which was given us in your city, that the books printed by us respecting the secret purposes of God tend rather to ruin than to edification, you must in your wisdom perceive that I am thereby indirectly condemned; and not only I, but the whole church of Geneva, since the book in question was the result of an agreement and resolution come to by all of us in common. And on this point we are not the only persons concerned, for, thank God! we are so fully agreed with the ministers both of your town and country, that our cause cannot be condemned without bringing prejudice to the faith that is preached to you and your subjects. Wherefore I have been astonished that in this matter you should have insisted on your *disputation*¹ and *reform*, as if we had been disposed to make any changes thereupon. And yet I protested the contrary, and the truth will be found to be that my doctrine so unjustly calumniated is conformable to your *disputation*. But, moreover, it is to be noted, that in your *disputation* all the articles of faith were not discussed. Wherefore, just as you will not reject the common doctrine of Christians respecting the Trinity or the resurrection of the dead, under the pretext that your *disputation* says not one word on these heads, so it is unreasonable that other articles should be set aside for the same reason, viz., that there has no notice been taken of them. For the intention of those who laboured in that work was to shew that the reform which they introduced in opposition to the Papists is just and holy. Thus from it

¹ See vol. i. p. 45. Note 3.

nothing can be concluded that militates against us. For the rest, when you affirm, that in your opinion it is not necessary to compose books enquiring into the secret things of God, I beg you to reflect to what this may lead; nor need I discourse long on this head. For in your country several persons blaspheme against the holy predestination and eternal counsels of God, in a manner that nobody would dare to do among the Papists. I am willing to admit that respecting this deep and incomprehensible mystery we should be sober and humble, and had you seen the work which has been unjustly censured in the presence of your excellencies, you would have found that the object of it is to tame down and mortify the audacity of men, and dispose them to adore with all fear the majesty of God without giving the reins to their curiosity. But if people will indiscreetly put down this doctrine, they attempt to correct the Spirit of God, and will consequently be under the necessity of erasing from the holy Scriptures what is there revealed to us. I am even astonished why I should be singled out to be made the object of attack, since upon comparison it will be found that I have held a mode of teaching much more moderate than the most learned doctors of Germany, who in our times have commented on the gospel. Wherefore I entreat you, according to the saying of the Lord Jesus, that in order to judge with truth, you have no respect of persons; for should my works be buried in oblivion along with my name, yet of the Prophets and Apostles, from whom I have derived and drawn this doctrine, most assuredly not one shall pass away.

I cannot conceal from you, right worshipful Seigneurs, a fear which is not moreover unfounded, that there is great danger of your falling into an extreme confusion, if in seeing the concord that by the grace and infinite goodness of God reigns among your ministers, you take not some good measures for appeasing the troubles that have been so violently excited. Not long ago I was compelled to tell you a truth, which is, that in keeping this matter in suspense, you were fomenting a fire, which it would be impossible for you or any human creature to quench. Wherefore I beseech you, worshipful

Seigneurs, not for my sake, but for your own good, and eternal welfare, to weigh well what comes from God and his word, that without gainsaying it may be received and approved with all reverence. What is more, not only your ministers, but several of your subjects are informed that John Lange did not calumniate my doctrine with respect to predestination, as was fully represented to you, but on an entirely different point. There is no man who preaches the gospel who does not condemn and disown what was said by him in the congregation as an error not to be tolerated, and which strikes at the very root of our salvation. Without adducing other examples, had he not the effrontery to say that *I laid too great stress* on the humanity of Jesus Christ? To which reproach I reply, that if Jesus Christ were not in all respects man, and in all respects God, he could not be our Redeemer. But such people care very little about that, provided they can detract from my reputation. In like manner you saw how Zebedée could not deny in your presence, that, in writing in favour of that execrable heretic Servetus, he had asserted that the fire of God would consume the fire of France, as the fire of France had consumed that of Spain; wherein he especially broke out against the right worshipful Seigneurs of Geneva, your fellow citizens, blaming an act of justice executed by them, and an act universally approved of. But that need not astonish us, since he had the effrontery thus to blame them in your presence, if we reflect that the disgrace and reproach redounded to you, who by your letters had exhorted our Seigneurs to purge the world of such a pest.¹ But I deem it unworthy of

¹ The following is the letter of the Seigneurs of Berne to those of Geneva respecting Servetus: "Noble, and right worshipful Seigneurs, cherished friends, well beloved and trusty fellow-burghers, we have received your letters, dated the 21st September, touching Michael Servetus, and having seen and duly heard the contents thereof, forthwith as you desire, we have ordered our ministers here to examine the book and the answers of the said Servetus, and afterwards to write to you their good advice and opinions; which they have done, as you shall learn by the letters which they write to you. We pray you, as we doubt not that you are so inclined, to keep a high hand that the errors and sects such as are the above said, or similar ones, be not propagated in the church of Jesus Christ our only Saviour, and thereby guard against trouble and adversity, and advance and increase his glory.

"Given the 6th October 1553.

"The Advoyer and Council of Berne."

myself to complain any further of persons who without reason have unjustly outraged me, and I patiently endure contumely from which I trust that God will deliver me. For while it is my wish by such a conduct to shun clamours and strife, I have determined to look to you for support, who ought, as Christian Princes, to uphold with your protection all those who faithfully serve God, and contend for his truth, and I pray you a second time, if you find that I teach nothing but sound and pure doctrine, not to suffer me to be cried down in a more odious manner, than I am among the Papists. I need not mention that the tailor of Rolle whom you condemned to make an apology, has since boasted of his having maintained in your presence, that I am a heretic. But what is worse, both Jerome your preacher at Servant with whom I never had any dispute, and Corbeil deacon of Morges, in whose favour I interested myself when he was in prison,¹ have openly proclaimed in the streets before sufficient witnesses, that you have condemned me as a heretic. This fiction is now so current in your country, that people speak of it as confidently as if it were the gospel. Now I think it is not just, when I labour day and night in the service of the church, and for the maintenance of the truth, that I should reap such sorry thanks for my pains. True it is, I shall never on account of the world's ingratitude cease to do what God commands me, nevertheless it is your duty to see that I be not wrongfully oppressed, since my labours, on the contrary, deserve that I should meet with encouragement.

For the rest, so long as such unbridled licence shall be current, I ought not to be so dastardly as not to stand up for the quarrel which I know to be that of God. As I have always desired, however, to be serviceable to your churches, and to see the doctrine of the gospel flourish in them, I entreat that you would be pleased to provide that the faith which is daily preached to you, be not lightly spoken of, nor derided in my

¹ Fellow prisoner of the five students of Lausanne, Louis Corbeil would have shared their fate but for the intervention of the Seigneurs of Berne, who claimed him as their subject and thus saved him from the stake. (Documents of the Library of Saint Gall.)

name. For were that permitted, it is not at all doubtful, that very shortly our Lord will send among us a horrible dispersion, the beginnings of which are already but too apparent.

With respect to the letters, which they object to me,¹ since you did not think proper to proceed further in that matter, when I offered to clear up my character, I do not see the necessity of making any other excuses than those which I made to you both orally and in writing.

Thus, right worshipful, puissant, and honourable Seigneurs, not to trouble you any further, I will supplicate our heavenly Father to govern you by his Spirit in all wisdom and uprightness, to have you in his holy keeping, and increase you in all good.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 108.]

CCCXCIX.—TO FAREL.

Increased hostility at Geneva and in the neighbouring countries against the writings and person of the Reformer.

GENEVA, 15th May 1555.

You will learn from our countryman, M. de Secheltes,² why I gave him no letters when he started for your city, unless perhaps he has already confessed that the neglect was owing to himself; for he did not inform me in time of his departure. When we supped together at Cornet's, I was surprised to hear that he intended to set off on the following day. But his fault may be the more readily excused that he should have taken along with him a letter containing nothing interesting. Even at present, though I have no want of materials of the most varied kind, yet I scarcely know what to write to you. It

¹ "And though we are informed by some letters which the often named John Calvin has written and sent to certain personages, by which he refutes and condemns the doctrine of Zuingli, respecting the Sacraments, calling it false and pernicious. . . . about which we should have good and just reasons to institute an enquiry, and make complaints of him and take advice thereupon, nevertheless we omit to do so for the present." The Seigneurs of Berne to those of Geneva, 3d April 1555; a letter already quoted.

² A French gentleman established at Frankfort.

serves no purpose to tell you what a cloud of ignorance Satan has spread every where around us. Things here are in the greatest confusion. All the neighbourhood is incensed against us, and fresh fuel is every day added to increase the flame. As if the wicked were not madly enough bent on outraging me, their animosity is whetted by the encouragement it receives from the countenance of the powerful. Moreover they now begin to put my books openly to the ban, for formerly they contented themselves with attacking them indirectly. I solemnly beseech you, dear Farel, now to remember me specially in your prayers. Not to afflict you to no purpose as well as myself, I dispense with adding any thing more. Our friends salute you most cordially. May God always govern, protect, and bless you. Amen.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

Of the intestine divisions of our city, I fear that ere long you will have sad news. For the fury of the wicked exults too licentiously. In the council there is but little gravity.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 207 a.*]

CCCC.—TO ADOLPH CLAUBURGER.¹

Testimonies of gratitude and respect for the Senate of Frankfort.

GENEVA, *May* 1555.

Some time ago, most renowned sir, I was reminded by Valeran Poulain, when he was describing to me the state of your city, of your affection towards me. Because he said it was chiefly owing to your assistance and that of your cousin that he had been enabled to assemble a church in your town for the persons speaking our language,² he begged me to express to you my

¹ A pious and learned doctor of Frankfort. He died at the end of this year, as we learn from a letter of John Clauburger to Calvin, 1st December, 1555 (*Library of Geneva*, vol. 109.)

² In a letter of the 8th February, this minister signalized in the following terms to Calvin the troubles which began to divide the foreign congregation of Frankfort: "It is a thing horrid to be said, what great power of Satan I have found within the last

thanks on that subject. Since that time, not only that I might comply with the wishes of my fellow pastors, but because I thought it my duty, I deemed that some token of gratitude was due to you. But because he begged of me also to shew a like mark of respect to your illustrious senate, I preferred to suspend the matter till a more fitting opportunity presented itself. In the mean time M. de Sechelles¹ came here, one of my principal friends, not only on account of our common country, but because he is endowed with such ability and candour of mind as gains the affections of all good men. After he too had spoken loudly in my presence of your virtues, and had as it were pledged himself, if I should publish any of my lucubrations dedicated to the Senate of Frankfort, that my courtesy would not be disagreeable, I was persuaded at length by his encouragement, and did not hesitate to inscribe to you my harmony of the three Evangelists which was then in the press. Not that it required much persuasion to decide me to do what of my own accord I was sufficiently inclined to, but his words increased my confidence and alacrity, especially as he promised that his influence and authority should not be a wanting to me when I should offer this mark of my respect. Now, though there is no reason why any one should envy you if I should pay to you as well as to your cousin the tribute of a handsome eulogium, merited by the nobility of your family, and to which your own erudition and other distinguished accomplishments so peculiarly entitle you; yet, lest any one should malignantly express astonishment why the work had been inscribed to one or two persons, rather than to your whole order, I have designedly abstained from all particular mention of you. It is well however that in the senate your dignity stands out so conspicuously, which you maintain besides by your wisdom, courtesy, and every species of virtue,

year among many people beyond the Rhine, who, when they can no longer excuse their impious dissimulation with the Papists, have recourse to abuse and slanders against some most pious ministers of God and the churches, in order that they may have a feasible pretext for apostatizing from them and making their peace with Babylon." (*Library of Geneva*, vol. 112.)

¹ A French refugee at Frankfort.

that of an honour that is offered to all you cannot imagine any part deducted from yourself. This however I should desire to obtain from you, that, as I am unknown to the greater part of you, you would honour the book with your approbation. But in this matter, I tax your politeness, however, only so far as to judge and appreciate the work by its merits and according to your own opinion. Farewell, most distinguished and highly respected sir. May the Lord continue to govern you by his Spirit, and support you by his power, and bestow on you and your family every blessing.

[*Lat. orig.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107, a.]

CCCCI.—TO JOHN CLAUBURGER.¹

Dedication of a writing to the Senate at Frankfort.

GENEVA, *May* 1555.

Since I have formed the resolution, and felt encouraged to write to you from no other motive than your kindly feelings towards me, which dispose me to believe that a letter from me will not be disagreeable to you, I shall then make no long apology for troubling you. For when some of my friends lately informed me by letter, that, principally by your influence and that of your most accomplished cousin, your most worshipful senate had kindly and hospitably received, and still continues courteously to protect our brethren, exiles and fugitives from their country, they added at the same time that you both felt and expressed good will for me and were gratified by my writings. These reports were lately confirmed by M. de Sechelles, a nobleman and one of my most intimate friends, so that I do not hesitate to commend to you a book publicly inscribed and dedicated to your order, lest it should be an object of suspicion to many persons who do not know the author, unless it be accredited by grave and proper pa-

¹ A member of the senate of Frankfort. We see by a letter of John Clauburger to Calvin, that he had known the Reformer at the Conferences of Ratisbon, and formed at that period friendly connections with him. (*Library of Geneva*, vol. 109.)

trous. And yet it is not my intention to task your politeness further than to beg you to honour my work with your countenance, as far as its own merits will permit. For I would not have it thought that I had wrung from you by my flatteries this act of courtesy, lest my zeal in marking my respect for you, which I wish to be approved of, should be taxed with rashness or folly. Farewell, most excellent and honourable sir. May the Lord always stand by you, govern, and bless you, and your family.

[*Lat. orig.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCCII.—TO BULLINGER.¹

Defeat of the party of the Libertins at Geneva—answer of the Swiss churches to the defence of the Consensus.

GENEVA, about 9 o'clock, 5th June 1555.

Of our disturbances many rumours have no doubt already reached you, nor are they without a foundation this time, for a single night had very nearly brought ruin on us all, and on the city along with us. But by the marvellous counsels of God it turned out that the remedy preceded the danger to which, without being aware of it, we had all been exposed. When the whole of that faction which has been continually hostile to us for the last three years, saw themselves defeated in every manner, they formed a resolution such as desperate men are wont to adopt. Slaves it is true were not let loose from their prison houses, as of old, when slaves existed, but worthless vagabonds were convoked in the taverns to sell their mercenary services. When in two places, as is established by unquestionable evidence, a supper had been given gratis to a band of scoundrels, all of a sudden a tumultuous

¹It was not long before the anticipations of Calvin were realized. In the night of the 18th May the Libertins by a riot, endeavoured to seize upon the power which escaped them in the counsels of the republic. See the different historians of Geneva, Spon, Picot, for an account of this riot, which turned out unfavourably to the party which had attempted it, and brought on the final victory of the French party and the triumph of the Calvinistic Institutions at Geneva.

attack was made on the city watch ; as there was not one honest man among them, they all began to bawl out frequently to arms. The French, whom they designated by name, were continually in their mouths, by whom they said, the city had been betrayed. Of the French, not an individual made his appearance. A few of the citizens followed the syndics who had been roused from their beds. The syndics were exposed to so much violence, that nothing like it had ever been witnessed within the memory of men. The result, however, was very different from what these rioters had anticipated. They had settled, if any one of the French people had stirred out, to dispatch him, sing out victory, and immediately after to butcher the four syndics and the leaders of the council. But the Lord exposed them, stripped of their false colours, to derision. As for the rest, proceedings against them were conducted with so much moderation, that their chief more than once took his seat among the judges, and heard even the evidence that was brought against himself, which he was at liberty to contradict. But when a tumult began to arise, ordered to quit the court, he took to flight with four of his accomplices. The others are kept in fetters and will probably be examined in a few days. A capital punishment was pronounced against the fugitives, after their culpability had been sufficiently demonstrated. Since that time there has been a certain degree of trepidation in the city, but public order has nevertheless been strictly preserved. If you desire to have a more ample account of the whole affair, I shall feel no reluctance to make it my business to give it you. Just now however I am afraid you would think me silly were I to go on collecting all the petty details of vulgar gossip. [We are still in ignorance of what has been decided at Berne respecting our cause. As I am so great an object of hatred among some, I perceive that they will scarcely make an end of raising disturbances, unless I shall have to give way perhaps to their profligate fury.]

For our defence the inhabitants of Coire have thanked us some time ago in the name of all the churches of the Grisons.

¹ These words were effaced, but whether by Calvin or some other is uncertain.

Of the people of Schaffhausen I say nothing, whose letter you yourself sent to me. The men of St. Gall have also let us know that they have most willingly subscribed. What our friend Sulzer replied, as I am ashamed to tell it in my own words, I prefer that you should learn from his own letter. I have always feared his lukewarmness, while he wishes to appear the healer of strife. I expected something better or at least less insipid. But since he does not dissent from us, we must welcome him. Since the time I refuted his objections, I know not whether he has yielded a little from his former opinions, at least he has kept silence. From Germany we have no news of a peaceable state of things. You know that between France and the emperor certain treaties were on foot, but nothing is more certain than war. The Turkish fleet moreover it is said is advancing, which would derange ten treaties of peace. I was informed too late of the departure of the messenger, when I had to study after supper the subject of to-morrow's sermon. Farewell, then, most accomplished sir, and most respected brother; salute in my name your fellow pastors and your family. I add also M. Lismannini. May God continually protect and govern you all. Amen.—
Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCCIII.—TO THE DUCHESS OF FERRARA.¹

New exhortations to encourage her to shew herself more and more firm in the profession of the truth.

10th June 1555.

MADAM,—Though I could have wished to have better news of you, to wit, that with tranquillity of mind you were serv-

¹ Letter without an address, having for date nothing but: this 10th June. Written to the Duchess of Ferrara in 1555, on the occasion of the persecutions which this princess had had to suffer for her attachment to the Reformed faith, and which did not entirely cease with her captivity. See the letter of the 2nd February, p. 155. It is to these domestic trials that the Reformer alludes in the following passage:

ing God in peace, nevertheless I rejoice to learn, that you are not weary of groaning and being in pain, in order to seek for the means of fulfilling your duty. Thus it becomes us to do battle, to follow the Son of God. So sure it is that Satan never suffers God to be fully honoured by us, without his laying obstacles in our way. For your share you have much more of them than others; but our heavenly Father knows well why he so proves you, for the anguish which you experience is a trial of your faith, to make you feel the value of that inestimable treasure, the gospel, which is so much despised by the world. It remains for you to take courage for the future, and however long you may have yet to languish, always to hope for a favourable issue to your perplexities, for it is certain that God will at last listen to your groans, if you continue to request him to hold out his hand to you. Only let it grieve you that you are prevented from laying yourself out to glorify his name. Such sorrow is a hundred times more to be desired than the rejoicing of those who flatter themselves in their lukewarmness. Nevertheless it behoves you to be on the watch for every opportunity which God shall afford you of making further progress.

It is truly the office of God to lead us on like poor blind persons, when we are brought to a stop with all our human means, and to devise expedients which we should never have thought of, enabling us to surmount every obstacle though all the while we see not a whit. It is at the same time our office to pray him to be pleased to open our eyes, that as soon as he gives us some sign we may immediately follow it. Spare not then to put in practice day by day all the means in your power to advance in the right path. So doing, though you may still be far from the mark, it will not be in vain that you stretch towards it, for our progress is certain, provided we

“You feel for your share more of them than many others; but our merciful Father knows well wherefore he proves you thus, for the anguish you experience is a trial of your faith, to make you feel the value of that inestimable treasure, the gospel, which is so much despised of the world.” This letter was carried to the Duchess of Ferrara by the Marquis of Vico, a Neapolitan nobleman, a refugee at Geneva. He left this city the 15th June 1555, charged by Calvin with a secret mission for Renée. See *La vie de Galéas Caraccioli, Marquis de Vico*. Amsterdam, 1684. 1 vol. 18mo.

keep following, however faintly; and such an assurance should fortify us to resist all temptations. For if worldlings labour at random with so much ardour for some hope of which they are often frustrated, how should we strive who have the promise of God to assure us of our salvation! Nevertheless, Madam, let not this consideration lull you into security, so as to make you cease to regret continually the miserable bondage in which you are held, as in truth we may expect deliverance from God when we feel keenly the wretchedness of our prison-house. On the contrary, he who takes delight in his unhappy state, shuts the door, as it were, on the compassion of God. Now I trust in God that just as he has imprinted on your heart a singular affection to do him honour, so will he at the same time increase and open up the means of putting in practice the good will with which he has endowed you, since it belongs to him both to begin and to perfect the good work. Thus I confidently hope that he is powerful to save, and that it is in that work that he will put forth his strength. On my part I will also pray him that he may always have you in his holy keeping, increase you in knowledge, zeal, and constancy, and in all good, that you may contribute more and more to his glory.

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 108.]

CCCCIV.—TO JOHN KNOX.¹

Criticism of the Anglican Liturgy—prudent counsels addressed to the parties which divide the foreign church of Frankfort.

GENEVA, 12th June 1555.

I answer your letter, most worthy sirs, and truly honoured brethren, a little later perhaps than your thoughts and hopes

¹ See the letter to the English at Frankfort, p. 117. Banished from Scotland, his native country, at the end of the year 1553, John Knox, after having for some time exercised the ministry of the gospel at Dieppe, in Normandy, had repaired to Geneva and afterwards to Frankfort, where he resided during the last months of the year 1554. A declared enemy of the practices and ceremonies which brought to mind the

led you to expect. But when you come to know that the roads for some time back have been so beset by robbers, that very few messengers could go from here to your city, I hope you will have no difficulty in excusing me. Respecting that contention which had unhappily sprung up among you, I expressed my opinion freely to our excellent brother, Thomas Sampson, as far as I had been made acquainted with the circumstances of the case by the letters of certain persons. For some friends had complained to me that you insisted so peremptorily on the Anglican ceremonies, that it was evident you were more wedded to the usages of your country than is fitting. I confess indeed that I heard you had publicly produced the reasons which did not permit you to deviate from a received form. The refutation of these reasons, however, was both obvious and easy. And as I exhorted those who differed from you to give way a little with what moderation they could, so I own it displeased me, that in your turn you neither gave up nor conceded anything of your opinions. But as the name of no one was specially mentioned to me, I did not venture to interfere, lest my confidence should incur the blame of rashness. At present I rejoice that, in the management of the dispute, you have been more courteous and tractable, and that the whole business has been amicably arranged. Certainly no one I think who is possessed of a sound judgment, will deny that lighted tapers, and crucifixes, and other trumpery of the same description, flow from superstition. Whence I lay it down for certain, that those who from free choice retain these things, are but too eager to drink from polluted dregs. Nor do I see for what reason a church should be burdened with these frivolous and useless, not to call them by

church of Rome, he soon became in the English congregation of Frankfort, the leader of that party which wished to bring back public worship to the strictest simplicity, in opposition to those who, like Richard Coxe, Baleus, and Sampson, wished to retain some of the forms in use in their country. The representatives of the two parties addressed themselves equally to Calvin, who, though he pronounced an opinion unfavourable to the latter, gave to both counsels dictated by a spirit of conciliation and meekness. These counsels unfortunately were not listened to, and Knox and Wittingham, denounced to the magistrates of Frankfort as dangerous innovators, thought of betaking themselves to Geneva. See McCrie, *Life of Knox*, p. 85, and the following; and Th. Heyer, *Notice sur la Colonie Anglaise de Genève*, 1855.

their real name, pernicious ceremonies, when a pure and simple order of worship is in our power. But I check myself, lest I should seem to stir up a new strife, respecting a matter which, as I hear from you, is happily set at rest. This indeed I do not dissemble, that in my opinion N. was neither piously nor fraternally dealt with, if it is true, that at the clandestine suggestions of certain persons, he had criminal charges brought against him. For it was better to remain in one's country than to carry into distant regions the brands of unjust cruelty, to inflame even those who were averse to discord. But as I am loth to allude even slightly to faults of which I would have the recollection buried in perpetual forgetfulness, I shall only exhort you, venerable brethren, if you shall find the minds of any still sore from rankling feelings, that you will do your best to appease their resentment. When I heard that a part of you intended to quit your present residence, I carefully admonished them, as was my duty, that if it was not convenient for all to inhabit the same place, yet that separation to a distance should not break up your fraternal union. For I was afraid that some lurking grudge arising from former contentions might still subsist, and nothing would be more grateful to me than to be relieved from this apprehension. For if by chance any of you should retire to this place, the very suspicion of secret discord among yourselves would be afflicting to me. Therefore I greatly desire that what I hear of your return to feelings of mutual good will is solid and stable, that if any of you chance to wander elsewhere, though separated by place you may cultivate a holy friendship. For though your discord should spread no farther, already more than sufficient mischief has been done. It will then belong to your wisdom and equity, in order that kindly affections be kept up, sedulously to disperse whatever remains there may be of estrangement. Farewell, respected brethren. May the Lord have you in his keeping, govern you by his Spirit, accompany you with his blessing, and mitigate the affliction of your exile. My colleagues affectionately salute you.

CCCCV.—TO BULLINGER.¹

Account of the nocturnal riot excited by the Libertins at Geneva—defeat and total dispersion of that party.

GENEVA, 15th June 1555.

With the request contained in your last letter that I should give you a more distinct and detailed account of our recent riot, I comply the more willingly, because it is very much our own interest that the affair should be put in a proper light among you and your neighbours. For it is perfectly well known that unfavourable reports are spread about concerning us, and that too by the artifices of those who for their own advantage wish to render us every where an object of detestation. You will therefore do us a very acceptable service, if you will take the trouble to have read over to your illustrious senate the substance of what I am about to write to you. Besides, if it is not tasking your patience too much, I should wish a part of my letter to be copied and sent to our brethren the ministers of Schaffhausen, that they too may acquit our city of the defamatory charges brought against it. Here is an exact statement of the whole affair. There were in the senate two unprincipled men and audacious to the highest pitch of impudence, both also in the most abject poverty. The one was named Perrin, the other Vandel. The former being Capitan of the city had attached to his person a rabble of profligate fellows, by holding out to them the prospect of impunity for

¹ Vanquished in a last struggle, the party of the Libertins sought to stir up against Geneva the enmity of the Cantons in spreading calumnies against the Reformed party, and misrepresenting the character of the events which had brought about the definitive triumph of Calvin. At Berne as at Zurich these false accounts threw men's minds into trouble. The Council of Geneva took the alarm: "It is related that there are people at Zurich and elsewhere who give an account of the things which took place during the tumult, quite different from the real state of the transactions and to the disadvantage of our city." Organ of the Seigneury in these grave circumstances, Calvin addressed to Bullinger, at the request of the latter, a circumstantial account of the whole affair, which was to be transmitted also to the ministers of Basle and Schaffhausen.

their crimes. For whatever knavish, riotous, or dissolute act was committed throughout the city, to screen the offender from the punishment of the laws, he was ever ready to undertake his defence. The other was his trusty abetter in all these enterprises. A part of the senate, whom they gained by their flatteries, was at their disposal. They forced, through their fears, certain mean creatures to obsequiousness—creatures who were unable to maintain their rank, if not countenanced by these men. Their kinsmen bound to them by the tie of relationship chimed in with them. By all these means their power had been so firmly established in the lesser council, that scarcely any one dared to resist their humour. Certainly all judicial proceedings had for several years been directed at their pleasure, and this sale of justice was a secret to nobody. Not only the city saw this, but even among our neighbours and foreigners, through their fault, we were very ill-spoken of. And loud were the complaints of a great many, because they were frequently molested and outraged by the most atrocious acts of villany. If any one of an inferior condition exposed their misdeeds, their vengeance was prompt. The reproaches of their equals they devoured in silence. In the mean time however many had become callous to servitude; all edicts were regarded as so much waste paper. Finally, provided only people were favoured by them, all fear of the laws, all respect for decency was set aside. For the judges, together with the prefect of the town, were annually appointed but as they signified their wishes; and to such a pitch did their insolence proceed, that the people themselves, after having elected by their votes I know not what ragamuffins, or rather the basest scum of the populace, were horrified at their own disgrace. This last year indeed all avowed, that if the elections had been entrusted to the enemies of the city, it was not possible for more worthless men, and with more contempt for decency, to be raised to honours. And when formerly if the lesser council had committed any fault, the two hundred were accustomed to afford some remedy for its errors and defects, now they have obtruded on the latter body many of the dregs of the population, partly noisy and turbulent young men, partly individuals

of flagitious and dissolute lives. And lest they should fail in having a majority, without paying any attention to the established number, they have thrust into the crowd whosoever they think will be most fit for their purposes. In a word their license was so disorderly, that certain broke forcibly into the council who were not even elected by themselves. That was the faction, which, seeing the judgment of the church alone opposed a barrier to them and checked the unlimited impunity granted to all kinds of vices, in order that every vestige of discipline should disappear, stirred up a contest with us about the right of excommunication, nor ceased to turn every thing upside down, till after much contention we obtained that they should at least consult the Churches of Switzerland. But as your answer defeated the hopes and wishes of those profligate men, we afterwards enjoyed a little more tranquillity; not however that from that time, ever on the watch for an opportunity, and shaking off all sense of shame, they did not attempt to break through every restraint. Moreover tired of being kept in continual agitation, at length we plucked up courage to attack them in our turn, and so force them to take some decisive step. And here in a wonderful manner God disappointed their expectations. For in that promiscuous rabble we gained the majority of votes. Soon after followed the elections for the syndics in which an unexpected revolution showed itself. Here indeed these depraved men began to vent their fury openly, because they saw themselves forcibly reduced to order. They began then insolently to attempt many things in order to undermine the existing order. Our party always held it sufficient to quash, without any disturbance, or at least to impair their attempts. But because it was perfectly evident that they were gaping after innovations, the council resolved to oppose an excellent remedy to their license. Of the French sojourners who have long lived here, and whose probity was well known, some were adopted into the rank of citizens, to the number of fifty perhaps. The worthless felt how much more secure the party of the good would be rendered by this succour. They therefore thought that they should leave no stone unturned in order to defeat this design. The affair was

discussed among them every where in the cross ways, about the taverns, and clandestinely in private houses. When they had drawn over certain persons to their project, they began to make head against us, not only with murmurings but open threats. The prefect of the city was suborned, who, accompanied by a numerous but vile and disreputable crew, going up to the town house, signified to the council the danger of its persisting in its scheme. This escort was principally composed of watermen, fishermen, cooks, and confectioners, and such like gentry. Mixed up with them were many foreigners. As if without the aid of such champions, the city could not protect its rights. The council replied with dignity that they were introducing no new precedents, but such as had been sanctioned by the immemorial practice of the city; that it was shameful indeed that now both an ancient usage of the city should be abrogated, and those expelled from the rank of citizens who had been so long and so honourably settled in the city; and finally, that from themselves should be wrested a privilege which had been transmitted from the remotest period. But because the council conceived that they should not proceed against them by any rigorous exercise of power, they for the present accorded a pardon to their open conspiracy. The prefect was sharply reprimanded for having lent his aid to insolent men, in so unjust a cause. At the same time, a decree was voted for convoking the two hundred, and when the affair was carried before them, the decision of the lesser council was ratified, and permission granted them, that henceforth at their good pleasure they might select from the French sojourners those on whom they wished to confer the rights of citizenship. ✓ But before the two hundred had passed this last decree, the fury of those suddenly broke out more violently, who, as is generally the case in desperate situations, had determined to hazard the most perilous extremities. For from a nocturnal riot the state was brought almost to the brink of ruin. The day preceding this event, a dinner scot-free had been given to a number of scoundrels. The ringleaders feasted elsewhere, of whom one whom I have named Vandel, took on himself the expenses of the dinner, Perrin those of the sup-

per. In the mean time rumours flew about, many suspicious symptoms were remarked, so that it was not without reason that honest men entertained fears for themselves. Now it is the custom, when the sentries for the night have been stationed at the gates, for the captain of the watch to go his rounds and inspect the posts. This duty each of the senators takes in his turn. When the sentries of that night were posted in the middle of the city, they hear a shout at no great distance. For in the quarter situated behind the booths of the market place, an individual hit by a stone cried out that he was killed. The guards in the discharge of their functions run up to him. Against them rush out two brothers, boon companions of Perrin and Vandel, men indeed of the lowest class, confectioners by trade, but who had supped gratis at the same table. It was then evident that the affair had been got up on purpose, since two men alone had ventured to attack several who were armed; and this both of them confessed to the judges and several others, and to myself in private. Nevertheless when they were led to trial, they denied that they had excited a tumult by any concerted signal, but they were convicted by so many proofs, that their impudence was of no service to them. This indeed they did not at all deny, that the same day between dinner and supper they had accompanied Perrin, who had gone for his recreation to a country house in the neighbourhood, and on the road there had been a talk of five hundred men to be called from some other place for the protection of the city. When during their afternoon's collation the conversation had been renewed on that subject, Perrin disconcerted by the arrival of some workmen had enjoined silence, repeating in German, Schwik, Schwik.¹ But as that country house was situated beyond the limits of the Genevese jurisdiction, he had said, that there a shelter and entertainment had been prepared for those who should perpetrate any capital crime in the city. The tumult still increasing, one of the syndics who chanced to be at no great distance, with the rod which is the badge of his office, and lighted torches, came among them. And so great is the respect which this people

¹ Schwik in the patois of Switzerland for Schweig.

has always entertained for this sacred rod, that at the sight of it, not only have the greatest disturbances been appeased, but even when they have come to bloodshed, their fury is checked. One of those brothers with drawn sword rushes against the syndic. The syndic, relying on the badge of his authority, lays hands upon him, that he may be led away to prison. Several of the faction fly to the aid of their confederate. The lights are put out in the scuffle, and they declare that they will not suffer an excellent comrade to be dragged to prison. Immediately Perrin presents himself, and at first, feigning a desire for pacification, wrenches away the syndic's rod, whispering in his ear, It is mine, not yours. The syndic, though a man of diminutive stature, was not however inclined to yield it, and struggled manfully and stoutly against this violence. In the mean time a cry was everywhere raised along the streets and spread about almost in a moment, that the Frenchmen were in arms, and the city betrayed by treachery; the house of the senator who was that night captain of the watch, was crowded with armed men. Emissaries shouted out tumultuously for those whom they knew to be favourable to their party. Perrin, when he was fully persuaded that his band was sufficiently strong, began to vociferate, We are in possession of the syndic's rod, for it is in my hands. To this cry no mark of approbation was returned, and nevertheless he was surrounded by conspirators, so that it was very evident that they were held back by some mysterious suggestion from God. Then troubled with shame and at the same time terrified, he gave ground a little. But falling in with the other syndic, a relation of his, he wrested from him by force and with great violence his rod of office. The latter called out for help—that his person was assaulted; that the rights of the city were violated. But as the profligate party was much superior in force of arms, on the complaint of the syndic, no one moved a foot to come to his aid. But again a kind of religious scruple held back some of the very worst from chiming in with Perrin. Thus compelled by fear, he privately gave back the rod of office. There was now in arms a numerous body of villains. One cry was every where heard—The Frenchmen must be

massacred—the city has been betrayed by them. But the Lord in a wonderful manner watching over his wretched exiles, partly threw them into so deep a sleep that, during these horrid outcries, they were tranquilly reposing in their beds; partly strengthened their hearts so that they were not dismayed by the threats nor fears of danger. What is certain none of them stirred out of the house. And by this single miraculous interference of God, the rage of the ungodly was defeated because no one presented himself to the conflict. For they had resolved, as was afterwards clearly discovered, if any should essay to defend themselves, after having dispatched a few, they should fall on the others, as if the sedition had originated with us. Nor were the sojourners alone threatened, but some cried out that their protectors should be put to death, and punishment inflicted on the senate. And here remark the clemency of our senate; for though the authors of so atrocious a cry were arrested and convicted, not only were their lives spared, but even a moderate chastisement was not inflicted upon them, so that they were not even beaten with rods. The syndics, while they give orders for the council to be assembled, hurry up and down the city. But these wicked men, relying on their numbers, not only elude and despise their commands, but pursue them with outrageous hootings, so that there was small hope of any remedy. Nevertheless, contrary to our expectations, through divine interposition this tempest gradually blew over. Two days after it was decreed, that an enquiry should be set on foot respecting this public outrage. The council having spent three days in summoning witnesses, that no one might say that he was crushed under false pretences, call together the two hundred. While the evidence is being taken, among the other judges were seated even those who had conspired. According as any of these appeared chargeable with guilt, or violently suspected of doubtful conduct, they were ordered to leave the court, as it was impossible they could be sufficiently impartial to pronounce a proper sentence. But Perrin, seeing his crime detected, made his escape with three others. The general council, of which the just indignation had been kindled by the

atrociousness of the thing, decreed that the crime of conspiracy should be severely punished, and exhorted the lesser council, whose prerogative it is to exercise judicial functions, to exact an exemplary penalty. The runaways are cited to appear by the first pursuivant, then by the public crier, according to the usual forms, that is by sound of trumpet during fifteen days. They having sent letters under their own hand declare that they will not present themselves unless the public faith be pledged for their safety. But it would have been the height of absurdity, that culprits who were held to plead their cause in bonds should, like privileged persons, be excused from complying with the formalities of the laws. On the day appointed then five were condemned. But before the judges gave their sentence, in the presence of the whole people the charges were read over, of which it was necessary that the persons should be fully convicted, who, being called to take their trial, did not establish their innocence. The confession of those on whom punishment was inflicted, followed soon after, and they are still in prison. Whence it is evident that they are too criminal and mischievous to find any loophole for escape. And yet as they are men of the most unabashed effrontery, they do not cease to spread odious reports: that they had been borne down by unmerited odium, because they had defended the cause of the citizens against the French and the council devoted to the French. As if, forsooth, the two hundred to whose prejudices they have fallen a sacrifice were not of the citizens. As if they had been expelled by a hostile army. As if the common people, if they saw the defenders of their liberties cruelly oppressed, would suffer so great an injustice. But on the contrary, all disturbances have been appeased since their departure. The mist which they had spread over affairs has been dissipated; the laws have recovered their vigour; tranquillity has been restored to the city. Those who at their request came here to intercede for them, saw that the city was not torn by opposite factions, was not inflamed by any contentions, but with the tranquil consent of all, the sentence passed on them was approved of. As they are gifted with the most consummate impudence, they

not only extenuate the crime they have committed, but by futile cavils they give out that a charge has been got up against them out of nothing. Their assertions however it is not difficult to refute. They assert, for example, that it is not probable that when they could dispose of a numerous band of men, they would by themselves without a strong guard have rushed to arms. As if indeed it were a rare thing, or of unfrequent occurrence, that wicked men blinded by fury, rush headlong to their own ruin. Certainly whatever they pretend, an evident madness urged on one of the band to knock down a man by throwing a stone, whence the outcry arose. The same blindness of mind impelled the two brothers, when with drawn swords they made an attack upon armed guards. And then insolently and with mockery to make light of the commands of the syndics, whom to disobey has always been judged a capital offence, is not only a sign by no means ambiguous of sudden fury, but of audacity meditated beforehand and long meditated between themselves. Moreover the cry so unanimously uttered by all of them respecting the city betrayed to the Frenchmen, could only have proceeded from a preconcerted plan. For unless by a mutual compact they had given each other this war cry, how was it possible that an expression produced by chance, should have been so uniform, and uttered almost instantaneously in places so distant from each other? For the wife of that Vandel whom I have spoken of, going from door to door, summoned those whom she believed would be for their faction, accusing the French of treason. But this indeed is what was avowed by a creature of Perrin's, one of those with whom he was on the most intimate footing. For he confessed that those two ringleaders of the sedition, four or five days before, had in an interview exchanged with one another words to this effect. Wherefore do we not shake off inertness, if in so short time we are sure to pay dearly for our cowardliness? It is now three years since our enemies have conspired to massacre us. (In the list of these enemies moreover he assigned to me the first place.) It is then absolutely necessary to anticipate their projects. And now we are furnished with an excellent pretext. We will

say that it is not the interest of the commonwealth, that so many persons should have the rights of citizenship conferred on them. We shall obtain nothing either in the lesser council or among the two hundred. We will appeal to the people. The multitude will flock to us even in despite of the opposition of the syndics. We will bribe some men of our own party to get up a tumult. It will be no very difficult thing to destroy our enemies. Let us only show boldness, we are certain of the victory. This is what that bosom friend, who followed Perrin like his shadow, four distinct times repeated. Let them deny that they have been justly condemned, they who in the midst of a popular assembly, in a sacred place, had formed the resolution of murdering two of the syndics, several senators, the most virtuous of the citizens, all innocent men. Of myself I say nothing, whom they have gratuitously assumed to be their personal enemy. For what their effrontery invented to colour their own proceedings, viz: that I was plotting assassination, is too foul a calumny to need to be refuted. And yet the council has not up to this moment brought Vandel to a trial. But he has quitted the city, self-banished by his own evil conscience. Thus it will be abundantly evident, that after so great a tumult the moderation which is wont to be observed in a tranquil state of things, has not been departed from, and that no measure was craftily or precipitately adopted against these profligate men. On the contrary, had you been here, you would have been apt to say that our council had proceeded slackly and with remissness. But it is preferable to have erred on this side, lest any one should preposterously complain, that they had been treated, as sometimes happens in the first burst of resentment, with vindictive severity. May the Lord grant that the remembrance of so great a deliverance may continually stir us up to gratitude and bind us to our duty. When I began to dictate this letter, I had no idea that it would be conveyed to you by our friend Othman. For though he had spoken to me of his journey, yet as he seemed uncertain whether he should go straight to your city, I had determined to employ another messenger. Now, as circumstances have turned out, I am not

a little pleased at being able to profit by this opportunity, because if any thing from the brevity of my account be rather obscure, he will be able in conversation to repeat and explain it more fully. As you have twice exhorted me to patience, I may remark, that it seems to me I have calmly endured, and as it were swallowed so many indignities, that in keeping down my resentment, my courage also has failed me. I wish that by my silence and dissimulation, I could at least appease those who, from hatred to me, cease not to rage against all good men. But though the madness which has already spread but too widely be still more inflamed by this reserve, still it is my firm resolution not to interfere. I am glad that N. has obtained an office in which he may usefully exercise himself. May the Lord enable him faithfully to discharge its duties. I wish him and N. all prosperity. You will present my most affectionate respects to all your fellow pastors, as well as to your wife and family. Farewell, most accomplished sir, and ever respected brother. May the Lord continue to direct you by his Spirit, and accompany you with his blessing.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 101.]

CCCCVI.—TO THE SEIGNEURS OF BERNE.¹

Communication relative to a spy arrested at Geneva.

10th July 1555.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL SEIGNEURS,—With respect to the enterprises of which we have informed you, two motives urged

¹ Exposed to the enmity of the Catholic powers, and the hatred of the Libertins which she had recently banished from her bosom, the Republic of Geneva was threatened by continual plots, which she denounced, by the hand of Calvin, to the Seigneurs of Berne.

27th July 1555: "An advertisement that Perrin had intrigued with the Duke of Savoy to have two thousand men with whom he made sure of retaking Geneva—decreed to give notice of it to the Seigneurs of Berne.

The Bernese reply that if we wish to ask them to do justice on Perrin respecting

us to make haste. First we were of opinion that the importance of the matter as it concerns you, deserved that you should be made acquainted with it as early as possible. Next, if you thought fit to have the man whom we detain,¹ confronted with the person whom we have reason to suspect, according to the marks and proofs which our prisoner affords us, to know the real state of the matter, it were desirable that this too should be speedily done. Now though we did not name the emissary whom we suspected, we now declare that our conjecture lights on Balthazar Sept,² because his stature, complexion, accoutrements, every thing in short, exactly tallies with the depositions of the man whom we have arrested. Add to that we have learned from other sources, that the said Balthazar was absent precisely at the period in question, of which circumstance, moreover, we have excellent reasons to hope that we shall be more fully informed; other news too which has come to our knowledge confirms us in this opinion. As to demanding justice, such is not our intention. But because the affair concerns you as well as us, we have thought it most expedient to communicate it to you, that each of us may contribute our part to throw light upon it. For this reason we have thought proper to dispatch to you the present bearer, to let you know that we still detain the man who made the report, in order to confront him, if need be, with him about whom we entertain doubts. Because the prisoner has given us plainly to understand that, if he is brought into the presence of the other, he will recognize him, we will have the former conducted before your Lordships, in such fitting place as you shall hereafter advise, by summons in the usual forms.³ We leave it to

the above mentioned fact, they will do it—decreed that it is not proper to ask them to do justice." (*Registers of the Council.*)

¹ An Italian spy, arrested at Geneva, had revealed the existence of a Catholic plot which threatened Berne herself. He affirmed that he had seen with the prince of Piedmont, a citizen of Geneva who promised to deliver up the city, provided he were furnished with a supply of money.

² One of the Libertins who had taken refuge on the Bernese territory.

³ Conducted to Berne by order of the magistrates of Geneva, and confronted with Balthazar Sept, and the principal Libertins, the spy could not recognize the person whom he had denounced as the agent of Perrin, in Piedmont. Chronicle of Roset, vi. 3, and Ruchat tom. vi. p. 141, 142.

your discretion, whether it is expedient by this means to ascertain the truth of the fact. For in case the person whom we have detained have made false declarations, it is possible that he may be found to deserve chastisement. Now we have no objection to inflict it. On our part we are so far from taking up the matter too keenly, that all we desire is simply that the whole of these allegations be verified as the case requires. And we doubt not, but on your side you will take up the affair, as if it were your own, which we affectionately entreat you to do; and thereupon we shall expect from you a short and favourable answer.

[*Fr. orig. in Calvin's hand.—Arch. of Geneva.*]

CCCCVII.—TO FAREL.

Trial and condemnation of the principal Libertins.

GENEVA, at night, 16th July 1555.

I know not what to write, dear Farel, except that my indolence is so disgraceful that I am almost ashamed to ask pardon for my fault. The messenger had put me in mind of his departure too late. I had still however a little time on my hands, had not some affairs occupied me after supper till night. Now I have to prepare my sermon for to morrow, and my bed calls for me, if I wished to consult my health. Wherefore in one word I shall write that the public state of the city is so tranquil that I have less leisure and repose than in the greatest disturbances. The two brothers who were executed gave, at their death, proofs of the most obstinate disposition. But it is well that their disgrace is every day made more and more manifest. Claude Noth, who you know was the bosom friend of Perrin, though he perfidiously attempts to conceal their crimes, has nevertheless disclosed the principal point, that the riot had been got up with premeditation. Now the younger Berthelier, who was arrested the day before yesterday, begins to speak out clearly. But as yet I write nothing certain to you, unless that you will learn, from a letter to M. Blaurer,

things which for the most part were already known to you. Farewell, most worthy brother. May the Lord always stand by you, preserve, and bless you. I particularly desire to salute M—— and other friends; along with Christopher and Maturin. Our friends, to whom I presented salutations in your name, salute you in their turn, the Budés, Normandie, de Trie, and my brother.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

One thing had escaped my memory, unless perhaps I had already mentioned it to you: Melanchthon in his last letter assures me that he will publish frankly and without ambiguity what his opinion is about the Sacraments.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 113.]

CCCCVIII.—TO FAREL.

New details respecting the trial of the Libertins—pious fidelity of the five ministers in prison at Chambéry.

GENEVA, 24th July 1555.

If I write to you so seldom respecting the state of our city, impute the cause to the slowness of those who ought to furnish me with matter for writing, rather than to my indolence. For while the time is spun out by their dilatory progress, I am ashamed to write to you that nothing has as yet been done. How wickedly at their death the two brothers attempted to throw obscurity on the affair, you have no doubt heard in your part of the world. It is well, however, that their malice was evident to every body, unless any one chose to be voluntarily blind. And assuredly I am convinced that not without the judgment of God they suffered, contrary to the sentence of the judges, a long torture under the hand of the executioner. Now, those who are kept in fetters have pretty clearly revealed their misdeeds, though these also grossly mislead their judges. Claude Noth, who you know was the bosom friend of Perrin, has laid bare the criminal

and atrocious conspiracy which had not yet been thoroughly known. The younger Berthelier does not deny that he threw the stone by which a man was knocked down. But then both of them attempt to varnish over every thing with the most puerile shuffling. Before two days we shall see, I hope, what the rack will wring from them. Moreover, lest the absence of so many citizens should depopulate the city, as the run-aways kept saying in derision, Vandel has been summoned back by the town crier, together with a numerous band.

Of our brethren who are detained prisoners at Chambéry,¹ I have nothing to write to you at present, except that their minds are made up with extraordinary alacrity to undergo death. The issue is in the hands of God; it is as yet hidden from our sight. We have received two letters from them, in the former of which they salute you in the words which I have written on the margin.² The other which is common to the three churches, I have sent to Lausanne on this condition, that the brethren shall take care that a copy be taken for you. Viret left this lately, but gave me hopes, unless any thing happens, of his speedy return. I asked him if he would come by the month of September and not without a companion. You will see then if that will suit your convenience. Farewell, my most worthy brother, and distinguished servant of Christ. May the Lord always govern, protect, and bless you. Salute your colleagues and the other brethren. My fellow pastors salute you, into the number of whom d'Anduse was lately elected, because Desgallars has been recalled into the city. For we have now more sermons delivered than formerly. The Budés, Normandie, de Trie, my brother, and other friends salute you.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

¹ See the letter of the 5th September, following.

² Here are those words: "Because we do not write to our good father, Monsieur Farel, we beg you to salute him for us and to recommend us to his fervent prayers."

CCCCIX.—TO BULLINGER.¹

Answer to different calumnies directed against Calvin on the occasion of the trial of the Libertins—difficulties raised by the Bernese on the subject of the renewing of their treaty of alliance with Geneva.

GENEVA, *July* 1555.

Though your letter brought me no pleasing intelligence respecting the fresh calumnies by which I am again assailed, it was nevertheless agreeable to learn from it, that I had an opportunity of defending my character from the aspersions which wicked men have brought against it. To expose all the falsehoods which are every day brought forward would be an immense task; most of them also are so futile, that I should think it ridiculous to bestow pains on the refutation of them. It will be sufficient then to give a true statement only respecting two points to which you allude. It is commonly rumoured, that unfortunate men compelled by the torture made false confessions in prison which they afterwards retracted. I confess indeed that four who have been capitally punished, made some changes in their confessions when they came to the place of execution. But you shall yourself judge from the circumstances of the case, of the probability of any thing having been wrung from them by violence. I was not present when they were put to the rack; and though I am represented as having presided at the question, if I was ever present, even to give advice, I consent to pass for the most in-

¹ On the back of the letter: "A letter to Bullinger in which disgraceful calumnies are refuted. Let it be carefully perused."

Satisfied with the new explanations of Calvin, Bullinger wrote to him: "I have seen in that description what partly annoys and afflicts, but also what partly consoles me. You have numerous enemies who I fear will strive, day and night, to arm and set off against you their malice and detestable cause, by inventing the most infamous calumnies, whence may arise the most intricate evils and perils. But I am consoled again in no ordinary degree by the divine goodness and wisdom, and the most present aid of God in so great a danger. I give him thanks for his great kindness, so marvellously bestowed on us in time, and I supplicate him to continue to you his protection." 24th September, 1555. (*Library of Geneva*, vol. 111 a.)

famous of men. I went to the prison, not that I might suggest anything to the judges, but at the request of the criminals themselves, and after I had obtained permission. Having made enquiries, however, of men worthy of credit, on their testimony I affirm to you for certain, that as they were already sufficiently convicted by evidence, no greater violence was offered them than that of having been raised from the ground a little with their arms fastened to a rope. This fact all without any discrepancy will affirm, that the terror alone of the question was presented to them. The two brothers were first condemned, after a lapse of a few days. The affair was well known and proved by many witnesses, that they without any provocation had with drawn swords made an attack upon the city watch, when at the same time they had raised outcries, that in the house of a certain senator was concealed a body of armed men, and that the city had been betrayed to the French. Other streets to a considerable distance, resounded with the same shout. These two had supped with Perrin and Vandel. During the supper many secret messages had been carried backwards and forwards. After the supper, conferences were also remarked which greatly increased suspicion. As soon as the riot had been stirred up, a great crowd flocked together to lend their aid. One of them had been rescued from the hands of the syndic. When it was almost palpable that there had been a conspiracy, was it not the business of the judges to have recourse to the torture? Especially when at their ease the culprits set their judges at defiance. For already messengers had been apprehended that encouraged them to deny every thing. Being questioned by what instigators they had been set to work, they denied that the affair had been the result of previous concert, that when they had heard the sound of arms they had merely rushed suddenly to the spot. But the fact is, there was not any tumultuous sound, but the deepest silence everywhere, till one of a party that had scarcely quitted the conference of their faction, almost in the same place had struck with a stone the servant of a senator, and these profligate men whispered to one another — “There is a fellow carrying a stone to strike without any pre-

vious quarrel the first man he meets." Immediately two others draw their swords, and contemptuously beat back the highest magistrate of the city. In a moment, people rush up from all quarters. Is it possible then not to suspect a conspiracy? Could the judges allow so open a crime to elude their enquiries? Add to that, they do not deny that on the same day when Perrin went on a pleasure party to his country house, they went in his company; that on their way, topics of a very suspicious kind were handled, and when they had come to the common landmark which separates the Bernese territory from ours, and which is about the distance of a stone cast from Perrin's country house, he remarked that in his villa his associates would be sure of a safe retreat, if they committed any offence in the city. Then that what they were discussing among themselves might remain secret, he gave a signal for them to hold their tongues lest some hired workmen who came in should overhear them. Already when they had only been once brought to the rack, they avowed three or four times that they had been purposely suborned. Afterwards, when at their request I had been sent for, both of them apart confessed to me whatever had been wrung from them by the torture, but of their own free will this time. For I was not the first to begin the conversation on that subject, for fear I should appear to wish to draw any thing out of them by indirect practices. Each of them then in his turn related to me all that the judges had forced from them, and in the presence of God, declared that they had spoken the truth. But when they saw that they were to be put to death, I know not what madness impelled them to deny some particulars, but their retraction on these minor points did not affect their declaration on the principal ones, to which they constantly adhered. Therefore when I saw the elder of the two brothers already on the point of death, maliciously distorting and giving a false colouring to certain facts, I asked him in presence of the whole people, whether he had not, when there were neither judges nor witnesses present, of his own free will, related to me the very same things which had been read over from the public acts of the court. He answered in the

affirmative. I again asked him whether I had compelled him by threats, or allured him by wheedling promises to this confession. He replied as unhesitatingly in the negative. What then, I said, does this mean, that when all the circumstances are of the same nature you retract some? See rather, my dear Francis, that with a pure conscience you present yourself before the tribunal of God. The second, who had in former times struck his own mother, and had all his life been a most abandoned scoffer, also retracted a few things, but more particularly employed himself in heaping insults on the witnesses. He certainly exclaimed before the whole people, that these were the fruits he had reaped from the accursed society of Perrin. The third, after his condemnation, declared to be false and forged what he had spontaneously asserted upon oath as the truth to myself and Viret. The charge, however, was by no means one which the judges had suggested, but one which he himself had brought forward from his own shop; and he too strove to have the things reputed futile which the two brothers had constantly upbraided him with to his face, and which till their death they persisted in asserting. Certainly if their retractation in which they mutually ruin each other is to be deemed of any value, necessarily their persistence in the same declaration must be allowed to have some weight. The fourth made no attempt to deny, that it was he who had thrown the stone and knocked down an unknown individual because he took him for a Frenchman. It was proved at the same time by several witnesses, that a short time before that, he had called out that they should take up arms and have recourse to slaughter, to prevent the senate from admitting any of the French to the rights of citizenship; and when the mint men of the city of whom he had the superintendence, gave evidence that under a false pretext they had been brought the year before into the council chamber, that a riot might be stirred up against Farel, and that he had never ceased from that time, to hatch every now and then matter for disturbances, he called out that there never had been an unjust conspiracy. To myself he had said a little before, that he deserved to be dragged to execution for having

led so nefarious a life. But for all that, there was no means of bringing him into a state of repentance with the Lord. And so moved by this new proof of his shamelessness, I gently admonished him to repeat from memory the things which he had lately of his own accord avowed. He then gave for answer, that many things had been impiously handled concerning God, nothing that concerned the public state of the city. All of them had at the same time one object in view, to ward off from themselves the charge of rebellion and treason against the state. But notwithstanding all their pretences, the very nature of the circumstances was too overwhelming for them. Moreover there was not one of them who did not acknowledge, by his silence, the truth of the greater part of the charges. On one or two points they demurred, but in such a manner, that the one completely invalidated what was said by the other.

I come now to the second calumny, which if it had been got up with as much show of probability, as it is odiously intended to crush me, would certainly torment me with no small degree of care and anxiety. But it is lucky that for my vindication, a simple narrative of the affair will be abundantly sufficient. The league between the two cities had been contracted for a time only, which time was to expire in the month of February next. But as our townsmen desired the renewal of it, they had some time ago sent their deputies to Berne for that purpose. They received for answer, that there was still sufficient time for deliberating. But lest the Bernese should suppose that we did not warmly desire their friendship, deputies were despatched by us a second and a third time. Nay, during a year and a half, our citizens ceased not to busy themselves about the affair, and by frequent embassies and letters, to supplicate them to give a definite answer. Whether the time was purposely protracted by the other party I know not. What is certain is, that the same excuse was always brought forward, that the senate was absorbed by other business. At last a letter was brought, announcing that the senate of Berne desired to know upon what conditions our citizens wished to treat. They reply, without delay, that they fear, if

any change is introduced, there may be danger that it will open a door for new disputes, and for that reason they willingly abide by the old regulation, which had been dictated by the Bernese themselves. But because those of Berne had written, that they neither would nor could retain it, our townsmen added a conciliating clause, by which they begged them to indicate, themselves, what corrections they wished to be introduced. A short time afterwards, deputies arrive bringing a copy of the amended form. The first article turned on law suits, between members of different states. Among the Swiss, you know that this law has been adopted; if any citizen of Zurich, for example, should have a process with one of Berne, in case he shall think himself aggrieved by the first sentence, he may appeal to judges, chosen by both states. The Bernese wish this right to be entirely expunged from the new treaty of alliance; our citizens object to that indeed, but permit the Bernese to limit the right where it may be abused. Because this may be a matter of dissatisfaction to the Bernese, I make no objection to these appeals being entirely suppressed, for I intended to propose the simple acceptance of the conditions, as they were offered to us. If respecting the public law of the cities, any controversy should arise, they permit the Bernese to avail themselves of the old usage. But since, hitherto, the principal umpire in such disputes has been taken from the Senate of Basle, the Bernese restrict the right of being selected to the two consuls, and wish at the same time the citizens of Schweitz to be united with them in the participation of this right. Though no sufficient reason was assigned for this change, our citizens nevertheless consented to it, objecting only to the selection of the Schweitzers, both because they are at such a distance, and because they are not much versed in our language. The inhabitants of Zurich are then substituted in place of them. By the Bernese is selected a more convenient place for the assembling of the judges. Our citizens are prepared, at their own expense, to repair to the place designed.

The second article is that no debtor, even if he should have engaged his person, shall in future be led to prison. This

indeed had been attempted fourteen years ago. The umpires of Basle, at the instigation of the Bernese senate, warmly pressed our citizens to yield their consent. They obtained nothing however. For our citizens were persuaded, that if this right were given up, it would be impossible for their city to maintain its position. Nay, because they remember that at that time I spoke in favour of their giving their consent, they still suspect my too great compliancy. They assign reasons, however, to appease the Bernese, which I doubt not you will find satisfactory.

In the third place, the Bernese wished that all the decisions which the umpires of Basle had pronounced, thirteen years before, respecting many litigated points, should now be held null and void. Our citizens demonstrate that this would be a fatal measure, of which there can be no doubt. They beg then that the authority of their decisions shall remain unquestioned. What object the Bernese senate had in view, in making this demand, is not known. The last article is, that our citizens unequivocally promise, that they shall never seek for an alliance with any other state; and this indeed they had promised twenty years before, that the Bernese might have sufficient and more than sufficient pledges of their fidelity. But the Bernese now wish this engagement to be formally set down in the treaty. Our citizens, on the contrary, who saw that in the midst of warlike tumults, they had been incautiously entrapped, frequently demanded that this condition should be dispensed with, in order that with the permission and good will of the Bernese senate, they might be at liberty to contract alliances with the rest of the Swiss states; and nine years before, the Bernese had promised that they would make it their business to make arrangements for having this city admitted to their alliance, on the same footing as St. Gall, Mulhause, and Roteville. Our citizens preserve this promise, drawn up and signed by a notary public. Hence it has happened that they now ask for the performance of what had been publicly pledged. For they have nothing to do with other nations, but they are too hardly fettered if they may not maintain friendly relations with the Swiss. This was the subject of a long con-

sultation. For the day after the arrival of the deputies this decision of the council was presented to them. Now you see that no innovation has been made by our citizens, moreover that, as far as the state of the city permitted, they humoured the Bernese. Wherefore you have no need to harangue me greatly on the utility of the Bernese league for our city. Our whole senate knows, the greater part of the people are not ignorant, how faithfully I have studied to defend it. But with what horror I shrink from all contact with the king of France, is sufficiently evident from this one phrase which has dropped from my lips more than once in the senate—if any flattering breeze blew from that quarter, it were better that a part of our houses were thrown down, and a high wall raised up to keep off from us that pestilential allurements. But however much many malignant and unjust men molest me, whom I have studied to benefit, of their ingratitude I make no account, nor (which they seem to aim at) shall I ever be induced by it, to swerve from the straight path. I would that our brethren of Berne would strive with the same sedulousness to keep their friends within the bounds of moderation. Send, if you think fit, a copy of this letter to Haller. If I shall be found in one syllable to have employed any false colouring, I refuse not to undergo any amount of ignominy. In truth, when you shall have discovered that my enemies have propagated such gross fables, in your wisdom and equity you will decide what more can be required of me than I have of my own accord performed. If on both sides the two cities break out into open discords, it is with reason you deplore the sad and fatal result. Of how much greater compassion are we worthy, if though innocent we be threatened with a terrible calamity? The whole of the Bernese territory resounds with the talk of war, of the siege and sacking of this city; in fine, not a day passes in which we are not menaced with new terrors, which, in truth, I consider to be vain. But many suppose, not without some foundation, that these are fostered by the silence of those whose nod alone would completely stifle them. Certainly in so troubled a state of affairs, it is surprising that peace is not for them a greater object of solici-

tude. But the Lord, I trust, will look upon us. Whence your old allies have derived this new rage of molesting you at the present moment about the form of taking an oath, it is not difficult to conjecture. For they see that we are as disunited as an ill-tied broom. Therefore they give loose to their audacity. Perhaps the alliance of the Pope with the king of France adds to their confidence. May the Lord strengthen your fellow citizens with a spirit of invincible courage, that they may a hundred times rather forego an empty title of honour, than suffer the sacred name of God to be impiously profaned in their city, which it is sure to be if they permit an oath in the name of the saints to be exacted from them in the senate house. To prevent others from swearing improperly, is not in their power; but that they should set the example and prescribe to themselves an unlawful form of oath, or suffer it to be imposed on them by others, this as you see is not to be endured. Nor do I doubt but that, according to your faith and your duty, you strenuously exhort them to firmness, and that you entertain good hopes of success, I am heartily glad. Therefore in this hope I rest. As however you mention the Bernese alone, you excite in my mind some doubts respecting the others. But what base cowardice if they keep aloof from you! Assuredly I wait for the issue with impatience. But let me pass to another subject.

I have no doubt but you have read Westphal's book. If I persist in my present intention, I shall briefly and historically expose the silly follies of the man, that he may not complain of having been too roughly handled. Nor is he an antagonist with whom we can seriously contend. I should like to know, however, what advice you will give me. From a letter of M. Peter Martyr, I have learned that another foolish volume has been published, which has not been brought here by our booksellers. What our pious and learned brother thinks of it, I had rather you should know from his own letter, than from aught I could write to you. That agreement which he demands ought to be eagerly and emulously offered by all, but I see how difficult it will be to obtain it. This would be the only means, that from each church should be

chosen persons who should together write out a confession, that this confession should afterwards be carried back to each church, that being approved of by the votes of all, it might be published with a legitimate subscription. Your most illustrious senate would without much difficulty comply with your wishes. Nor do I think that St. Gall and Schaffhausen would make any objections. The people of Coire and the Grisons would easily join the others. Of Basle I have some doubts, for Sulzer will scarcely be drawn to an open confession. Do you yourself consider well what opening we might have among the Bernese, to whom the handling of any religious question is so suspicious or hateful, that I despair of the possibility of obtaining any thing from them. If you are of opinion, however, that something should be attempted, you must strive vigorously. What if others shrink from the defence! to me it will not be burdensome to sustain the whole shock on my own head. Only I fear lest it should be disgraceful for others to desert a common cause, which is openly assailed in the person of one man. Nor must we wait till the enemies launch their thunder-bolts. Already as you see they are preparing to print their anathema. Unless our party bestir themselves actively, we shall never bring our remedy in time. About Philip, I agree in opinion with you; he is slow, and timid, and consults too much his own ease. Nevertheless this single phrase made me conceive good hopes, that he acknowledged he owed this service to God and the church. For it is not his custom to profess so freely, nor promise so liberally, except when he has made up his mind. I am waiting to see what answer he will write back to my last letter, in which I did all in my power to kindle into a flame that little spark of manliness. Certainly when M. Peter Martyr writes that he is every where summoned as their witness by the adversaries, if he hold his peace, it will be necessary not only to expostulate with him privately, but vigorously to produce him in open day.

[*Lat. orig.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCCX.—TO VIRET.

He sends the letter of the five ministers imprisoned at Chambery.

GENEVA, 4th August 1555.

I shall be very brief; for any one of the messengers will serve all the purposes of a letter. For know this: I can give you no information respecting the affairs of the city which you will not be able to glean from them by word of mouth. I send for your perusal a letter of our brethren who are in bonds at Chambery,¹ which you will see to have returned to me on the first opportunity. For I have thought proper not to give it publicity, because it could not yet be generally known without exposing many persons to danger. The jailer had given us some hopes of secret assistance, but at last we find that we are amused with empty and seductive expectations. We will wait then for what orders will come from the court. For Cagnet demanded that they should suspend the trial, at least till he had informed the king.

Farewell, my most excellent and worthy brother, along with our friend Beza, and the rest of the brethren. May the Lord always direct, protect, and bless you. Amen.—Yours,
JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCCXI.—TO PETER MARTYR.²

Fall of the French Church of Strasbourg—grief of Calvin.

GENEVA, 8th August 1555.

The misfortune of your poor French Church afflicts me not a little. We will look after Garnier's prospects indeed when

¹ See the letter of the 5th September, addressed by Calvin to these prisoners, who were courageously to seal the truth with their blood.

² The position of the French Church of Strasbourg became daily more and more

he comes, but the re-establishment of the ruined church is the first thing to be cared for; if you direct all your energies to that object, I have hopes you will do much good. From Bocquin,¹ I have always feared what has happened, and I wish Baudouin had stayed at Bourges, for then he would not have contaminated the flock of Christ, with the stench of this he-goat.² But strive assiduously, as you are now doing, to remedy this evil. You will have for faithful fellow workmen, I imagine, in this task, M. Sturm and Sleidan. Of the state of our affairs, this brother will be able to give you a better account than I can possibly do in a letter. Wherefore, that I may not tire you with a twice told tale, I abstain from all further narration. Farewell, most accomplished sir, whom I honour in the Lord. Carefully salute our friends, M. Sturm, Zanchi, and the rest. Unwillingly I pass over M. Peter Alexander, to whom I shall make no allusion till I learn something more certain. I have just this moment, before sealing up my letter, learned from one written by Garnier, that the disturbances have been in a great measure appeased by his arrival. I wish my services could be of any use in assisting him, but if he has been elected by the votes of the little church, he will immediately, unless I am very much deceived, restore it to tranquillity by his moderation. May the Lord always protect and govern you by his Spirit, and accompany you with his blessing.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

difficult. The minister Garnier, having wished to maintain the rights of ecclesiastical discipline, which had numerous adversaries among the Lutheran clergy, was dismissed by the authority of the magistrate. Calvin complained bitterly of that in a letter to Loquet: "And certainly I have received the deepest wound from the news that a magistrate, by his own good pleasure, not to say any thing more, has overturned the legitimate order of the church and oppressed its liberty." Letter of the 6th August, 1555. MSS of Geneva.

¹ Pastor of the French Church.

² This pun is in allusion to the name of Bocquin, (a he-goat.)

See the notes, tom. ii. p. 133. Baudouin had just quitted the chair of law at the university of Bourges to go to Strasbourg, where his extreme fickleness of character was destined to draw on him the warm animadversions of the Reformer.

CCCCXII.—TO MELANCHTHON.

He exhorts him to prefer the approbation of God to that of men, in pronouncing frankly against the adversaries of sound doctrine and the disturbers of the church.

GENEVA, *23d August 1555.*

You justly and wisely remark, most accomplished sir, that our antagonists have no other object in view, than to shew themselves off on a public stage. But though their expectations, as I trust and as is probable, will be frustrated, nevertheless, even if they should gain the plaudits of the whole world, it becomes us to direct all our attention with so much the more zeal to the heavenly prize-giver under whose eyes we combat. What! Shall the sacred assembly of the angels, who animate us by their favour, and strenuously point out to us by their example the manner of acting, permit us to grow sluggish or advance with hesitating steps? And the whole band of the holy fathers! Do they not also stimulate us to exertion? In fine, the church of God which is present to our view in the world! When we know that its prayers combat on our side, and that it is animated by our example, shall its suffrages in our favour be lost upon us? No, let this be my theatre, and satisfied with its approbation, though the whole world should hiss me, I shall never want courage. I am very far from envying these silly and noisy players. Let them enjoy for a brief space and in an obscure corner their barren little sprig of triumph. What the world deems worthy of its applause or hatred does not escape me. But far more important I hold it to follow the rule prescribed by our Master. Nor have I any doubt that this ingenuousness will in the end prove more agreeable to all pious and rational minds, than a complaisant and wavering manner of teaching, which is always swayed by some empty terror. I entreat you to discharge as soon as you can, the debt which you acknowledge you owe to God and the church. Nor do I insist on this subject, because I trust that by discharging on you a

part of the odium which attaches to me, I may be proportionably relieved. Much rather on the contrary, if the thing were possible, from the affection and respect I bear to you, would I shift from your shoulders to my own, whatever burden presses heavily upon you. But it is your duty attentively to consider that I should never have presented myself to you in the shape of an adviser, but that you might early deliver pious men, who look up to you, from a doubt which they entertain of your ever entirely fulfilling your promise. Reflect moreover that if this warning, like a cock crowing rather late and out of season, do not awaken you, all will cry out with justice, that you are a sluggard. Farewell, most distinguished sir, whom I venerate from the heart. May Christ, the faithful keeper of his followers, stand always by you, and govern and protect you. Amen. Salute in my name, M. Camerarius, and whatever other friends I have in your part of the world.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 100.]

CCCCXIII.—TO THE FIVE PRISONERS AT CHAMBERY.¹

An account of the steps taken in their favour—approbation of their confession of faith
—Christian salutations.

GENEVA, 5th September 1555.

MY BRETHREN,—Immediately when word was brought to us of your captivity, I dispatched a messenger across the mountains

¹“ Among all those who died with great constancy that year, for the name of Jesus Christ, are remarkable five excellent personages, servants of God, and powerful in the word, . . . viz., John Vernou, student, native of Poitiers; Anthony Laborie, of Caiar, in Querey, formerly royal judge of the said place; John Trigalet, licentiate of law, of Nismes, in Languedoe; and Bertrand Bataille, student, native of Gaseony; who having set out from Geneva with the intention of announcing the gospel wherever it should please God to call them, and being arrested at the defile of Tamis, in the country of Fossigny, in Savoy, . . . happily finished their course at Chambery, then subject to the King, dying with singular constancy.” Beza, *Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 96. At the first rumour of their arrest, Calvin took all possible steps for their deliverance, as is attested by the following extracts from the Registers of the Council, 8th September 1555: “ Calvin begs the council to intercede for the poor prisoners confined at Chambery for the cause of religion. John Louis Curtet was deputed for that purpose to

to procure more certain information about it, and also to learn if there should be any means of succouring you. He set out last Thursday at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and returned only yesterday late in the evening. He is about to undertake a second journey to convey to you our letters, and advise in what it shall be possible for us to solace you in your affliction. We have no need to express to you, at greater length, what care we have of you, and with what anguish our hearts are filled on account of your bonds. Since then so many of the brethren pray fervently for you, I doubt not but our heavenly Father will listen to their desires and groanings, and I see by your letters how he has already begun to work in you. For if the weakness of the flesh will sometimes shew itself in such a manner as that you shall have hard and difficult struggles to maintain, this is not to me matter of astonishment, but rather of magnifying God, because he has raised you above it. On your part, the brethren, Laborie and Trigalet, have grounds of consolation, in that those who are nearest and dearest to them quietly resign themselves to the will of God.¹ For the rest you have profited so well in the school of Jesus Christ, that you have no need of long letters of exhortation. Only practise what you have learned, and since it has pleased the Master to employ you in this service, continue to do what you have begun. Though the door is at present shut against your edifying by doctrine those to whom you had devoted your labour, the testimony which you are about to bear will not fail to confirm them from afar. For God will bestow on it a virtue to resound further than voice of man can reach. As to worldly means for your deliverance, I wish we had them such as, without being too sanguine, we might avail ourselves of them, nor will it be our fault if we do not strain every nerve for that purpose. But God urges us to look higher. So then the

Chambery."—"John-Amy Curtet, on his return from Chambery, reports that there is room to hope that the prisoners who are there for the sake of religion will be only condemned to the galleys." The instances of the Seigneurie of Geneva were without results. In the course of a long trial, which was to end in martyrdom, the five prisoners received at different times the counsels and exhortations of the Reformer.

¹ See the letters of Anthony Laborie to his wife, *Hist. des Martyrs*, p. 329, 330. The apostolic martyrology has no finer pages.

main point is to collect all your thoughts in order to repose in his paternal goodness, not doubting but he will take your bodies as well as your souls under his protection, and if the blood of his faithful followers is precious, will effectually shew it in you, since he has chosen you to be his witnesses. And should it be his will to demand the sacrifice of your lives to approve his truth, besides that this is as you know an oblation well pleasing in his sight, let it console you that in surrendering the whole into his hands you shall lose nothing; for if he kindly designs to take us under his protection during this perishable life, much more, having called us away from it, will he shew himself the faithful Guardian of our souls. Touching the advice which you ask of me, I am afraid it is no longer time, for as I learn you have made an ample declaration of your faith. Since God has brought you so far, it is too late to think of shrinking back. Cast all your cares on the providence of God. Nevertheless see that your prudence in answering be in truth of the Spirit of God and not of worldly cunning. Did I hope that your petition would reach the king, I should take care not to prevent it; but I believe that the person who promised you that, intended only to deceive you. Nevertheless, lest it should seem your fault, I by no means venture to dissuade you from persisting in the offer which you have made. Because, in point of form, I find nothing in the petition which you have transmitted, that requires correction, unless perhaps the comparison with Ahab and some things of a similar kind, which it would be expedient to soften down, I have kept by me this copy. It is true I might have given a different form to it; but, if a petition must be presented, I had rather that it should contain nothing but what God had put into your minds, hoping that he will thereby cause it to bring forth better fruits. If the world accept not so just and holy a protestation, at least it will be approved of by God and his angels, by his prophets, apostles, and the whole church. Nay, every true believer, on seeing it, will have cause to glorify him for having dictated it to you by his Holy Spirit.

I will not prolong my letter any further. Besides our ex

cellent brother, Master William,¹ has very seasonably found an opportunity to write to you. Wherefore to conclude, I will pray our heavenly Father to have you in his holy keeping, direct you by his Spirit, arm you with courage and constancy, so to do battle that he may triumph in you either by your life or your death, and that he would make you feel what it is to have our whole satisfaction in him alone.

Because this present is common, I have not sent you any special commendations in the name of my brethren, but I am sure that you are sufficiently convinced of the affection both of them and of a great number of the brethren, nay of the whole body of the church, who all entertain of you such sentiments as their duty commands.

Your humble brother, whom you know.

[*Fr. Letter.—History of the Martyrs.* Book vi. p. 333.]

CCCCXIV.—TO THE BRETHERN OF POITIERS.¹

He exhorts them to form secret assemblies under the yoke of a holy discipline.

9th September 1555.

The love of God our Father and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

BELOVED SEIGNEURS AND BRETHERN,—We glorify God, because of his infinite goodness he hath put a curb upon Satan and his agents, in such sort that you have had a respite earlier than you expected. But above all we give him thanks for having so supported you by the power of his Spirit, that in

¹ Farel.

² Threatened within by the contagion of false doctrines, (see the letter of the 20th February, p. 169,) assailed from without by a rigorous persecution, the church of Poitiers profited by a moment of relaxation to finish the work of its organization. "This same year, says Beza, the plague having driven from the town the greatest enemies of religion, the little assembly took courage, and the order of the church was drawn up by one named Chrestien to the great advantage of the whole country, and soon after this church furnished ministers to several places." *Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 101. Consulted incessantly at Geneva, Calvin kept up the most active correspondence with the Protestant communities of Poitou.

the midst of troubles you have not fainted. For the rest, the fear you have felt should serve you as a warning to call with so much greater zeal upon Him, who is able to strengthen the faint-hearted. It is also your duty both by prayer and continual exercise of the word of God, to arm and fortify yourselves, in the hope that the good Shepherd who has taken you under his charge, will not forsake you in time of need. Continue in the mean time to go along with his flock, not doubting but that, where you are gathered together in his name, he is in the midst of you.

I wrote to you some time ago pointing out the means which I approved of for defeating the malice of your enemies,¹ viz., that not to expose yourselves unnecessarily you might easily, without collecting the whole company, assemble by small parties, now in one place, now in another. Especially let every one make it his business to lend his dwelling as a temple in which to invoke the name of God, and esteem it a singular blessing, that your houses should be dedicated to such a service. Nevertheless when I beg you to be on your guard, as the care and compassion I have for you directs, let not that prevent you from courageously striving even to seek for opportunities of assembling yourselves when they shall not be otherwise offered you, so that you may go on advancing rather than declining, and be not frustrated of the good which God has offered you. Moreover since, in the course of our instruction, we ought to be kept under restraint, I pray you in the name of God, that vices be not encouraged, not even suffered among you. You cannot secure this end without superintendence, for which purpose it will be necessary to appoint persons to keep watch how each of the flock behaves, in order to lead back those who go astray, correct delinquents, admonish the ill-advised, and by these means prevent subjects of scandal.

Of the mode in which you should proceed in effecting this end, I do not write to you, because I am confident, that God has bestowed on you sufficient prudence to devise means; necessity itself will partly point them out to you. The chief

¹ See the letter to the Brethren of Poitou, of the 3d September, 1554, p. 68.

point is that all with a docile mind submit to the yoke, and suffer themselves to be guided in obedience to Him who seeks to reign over us but for our eternal welfare. On this matter I do not insist, esteeming you sufficiently disposed to adopt it, thinking it is enough to confirm you in your good intentions. May God by his grace so work in you to this end, that the fruits of it may be seen to his glory and the edification of all. I pray him also to have you in his holy keeping, to increase in you the gifts of his Spirit, and so turn them to his service, that we may have wherewithal to bless his holy name.

Whereupon, having commended myself to your earnest prayers, I will conclude. My brethren, in whose name I have written the present, greet you affectionately.

[Fr. copy.—*Library of Geneva*. Vol. 107.]

CCCCXV.—TO THE BRETHERN OF ANGERS.¹

Christian exhortations—he sends them a minister.

9th September 1555.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

¹ On the back of this letter in the handwriting of Charles de Jonvillers: "He wrote this letter to the brethren who were at Angers, by Monsieur d'Esprit, who was there as minister."

Angers, the seat of a Bishop and a university, peopled with monks and students, received the first preachers of the Reform in 1547. It had its martyrs, Francis Fardau, Simon Le Royer, John de la Vignole, Denis Saureau, and William de Reu, "whose ashes," says Beza, "so enriched this field of the Lord, that it has since been rendered very fertile." The Reformed Church of Angers had, for its founder, John le Maçon, says La Riviere, the son of the Sire de Lannay, the king's *procureur* in this town, and an ardent Catholic. Destined to the study of law, young Le Maçon secretly visited the churches of Lausanne and Geneva, and adopted their doctrines. Recalled to his native town, he there openly professed the Reformed faith, in spite of the instances of his father, "who, having suddenly perceived of what religion he was, tried first to turn him aside by flatteries and promises, proposing to him his property which . . . he was destined to inherit as the eldest, an honourable situation to which he should soon be raised . . . if he would quit the religion of those

BELOVED SEIGNEURS AND BRETHERN,—We have to render thanks to God, that having sown in your city the doctrine of salvation, he has united you in brotherly concord, ratifying in you the great object of the gospel; to wit, that all his children should be collected in one body under the chief whom he has ordained for us; what is more, that he has given you courage to fortify yourselves for this sacred union, by the comforts and means which he has established in his church; such as that of assembling yourselves, to invoke his name in common—to be taught and exhorted by his word—and, in separating yourselves from the superstitions and idolatries of Antichrist, to seek the true purity of religion. You need not to be reminded of the dangers which environ you; for that reason we have still more cause to glorify the bounty of God, that, through his power, you have overcome all fear of the flesh. It remains for you to persevere, and resolutely follow what God approves and what is founded on his word, that, whatever happen, nothing may ever seduce you from it. Only endeavour not to expose yourselves to the malice of your enemies; but let that be done not through worldly wisdom, which teaches us to forsake God to consult our own safety, and to separate ourselves from him to keep up our station, but by the prudence of the Holy Spirit, which our Lord Jesus Christ declares to be so conjoined with simplicity, that we should advance with straightforwardness in our vocation without ever declining to crooked ways. On our part, seeing your worthy desire, after having invoked the name of God, we have elected and set aside the brother whom we present to you for minister of the word of God.¹ We trust that on his side he will conscientiously acquit himself of his duty. For first of all we have known him to be a man fearing God,

whom he contemptuously called *Christaudins*, as on the contrary, should he persevere, he could expect nothing but a miserable end." The young proselyto remained unshaken in his faith, and the affection of his father, irritated by his refusals, being changed into fury, he fled to Paris. It was from that city by his letters and visits made in secret, "not without extreme danger to his person, that he prepared the definitive formation of the Church of Angers." *Beza, Hist. Eccl. tom. i. pp. 97 and 98.*

¹ The minister John de Pleurs, surnamed d'Esprit, or d'Espoir. *Hist. Eccles. tom. i. pp. 100 and 109.*

and walking in purity of conscience and uprightness among his fellows, of irreproachable life, and capable of edifying you by his zeal. We can give no better proof of what we advance than the simple fact, that he has left his wife on the point of her confinement in order to fly to your assistance. He is possessed of solid learning, but without any flightiness to lead him beyond his depth. His appearance and delivery have nothing that can captivate those who take pleasure in the pomp of rhetoric; but we are persuaded that you will deem it quite sufficient to be honestly instructed with simplicity and homeliness of speech, in which the quickening of God's Spirit will yet shew itself. In a word we doubt not but his labour will fructify among you, so that by it the name of God shall be glorified and each of us overjoyed. Only consult how to receive him in such a manner as that he, seeing your earnest desire and zeal to profit, may be the more stirred up to serve you. For the rest, be diligent in hearing the words of instruction, not however, as discharging a debt you owe to God, or as if christianity lay wholly in that; but in order to grow and be strengthened both in faith and holiness of life. Above all, inasmuch as your city abounds in corruptions, advise how to shake off the vanities, pleasures, and other delights with which you have been entangled, in order to dedicate yourselves to the service of God. We have rejoiced to hear that you have already established a certain order and plan of police to prevent scandals, and serve as a curb to yourselves. Beware of abolishing such a discipline; strive rather to enforce it, and let each of you submit to it, to shew that the spirit of meekness prevails among you.

Whereupon, beloved seigneurs and brethren, having commended ourselves to your fervent prayers, we supplicate the Father of all goodness and grace, to keep you under his protection, to preserve you from the rage of the wolves, to guide you in all good, and increase in you the gifts of his Spirit, to be subservient to his glory.

CCCCXVI.—TO THE BRETHERN OF LOUDUN.¹

He sends them a minister, and gives them counsels to guide them in the difficult circumstances in which they are placed.

9th September 1555.

The love of God the Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

BELOVED SEIGNEURS AND BRETHERN, — We glorify our heavenly Father for having multiplied his seed among you, and also for having made it bring forth fruits, by fortifying you in his service. For he must needs work in you by his heavenly power, to bring you to follow the right path in the midst of so many corruptions, that prevail around you. Nay, the courage which you have in assembling in his name as a flock is a work of his Spirit. Were it not so, being but a handful of people—two or three sheep amid an infinite number of ravening wolves, you could not help being overawed, and withdrawing each in his own direction. Thus knowing that God has bestowed on you zeal and courage to overcome all the terrors of the flesh, be confident that he will go on increasing it more and more, and as you are always invoking him with fear and anxiety, will never suffer what he has begun in you to perish, and disappear like a vapour. There is no doubt, however, but Satan will devise every means to have you dispersed, and it will be absolutely necessary for each of

¹ *On the back*, in the hand writing of Charles Jonvillers: "He wrote this letter to the brethren who were at Loudun, by Monsieur Puinisson, who was there as minister." The town of Loudun, situated a short distance from Poitiers, was destined to participate betimes in the religious awakening which followed Calvin's stay in Poitou. Called by Calvin himself to Geneva, John Vernou and Philip Vernou returned to Poitiers, furnished with secret instructions by the Reformer for the propagation of the gospel in their native country. The reform spread gradually from place to place in the neighbourhood of Poitiers, in spite of the violence of persecutions, and gained Saint Maixent, Niort, Chatellerault, Loudun. The church of Loudun, mentioned for the first time by Beza in 1564, (*Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 766,) existed then already in 1555, as is proved by the letter of Calvin to the brethren of this town.

you to be prepared for such combats, in order to maintain his ground. But whatever happens, He who gives you grace to rally round his standard, will cause the obedience which you pay him to prosper and bring forth good fruits to his glory and your own salvation. For in desiring to have a regular order established for invoking his name and hearing his word, you are prompted by no flighty impulse, but only seek what he commands.

If the force of your enemies is great, if you are comparatively weak, so far should that be from making you lose heart, that it should on the contrary urge and goad you on to take refuge under the protection of Him who has said: Fear not, little flock. Thus, my brethren, persist in what you know to be well pleasing to God, vexing Satan and all his agents, even the wise, that is, the proud and puffed up ones of this world, who will deride your simplicity. Nevertheless keep yourselves concealed in the most quiet manner possible, provoking not the rage of your enemies, but rather endeavouring by modesty, meekness, and uprightness of life, to win those who are not quite incorrigible.

But it would be an almost superfluous task for us to send you any more lengthened exhortations by our brother the bearer of this,¹ whom we present to you for pastor in the name of Jesus Christ, having selected him at your request, as a person whom we know to be perfectly fit to instruct you faithfully. As to his knowledge, he has long been versed in the scriptures, and always goes straight to the point—so that he is not to be held for a novice. In regard to his life, even at the period when he was a papist, he always gave evident marks of fearing God and living uprightly. So we doubt not but he will greatly edify you by his example. You have a tolerably good proof of his zeal, of the affection he entertains for you, of his desire to serve God by your salvation, from this single circumstance, that he spares neither his person nor his life to take upon him the business of your instruction. And because we hope that he will prove himself a faithful minister, as we send him to you in the name of God, we en-

¹ The minister Puinisson.

treat you to receive him, and by showing how you reverence the Master to whom we all belong, and yielding with docility to the doctrines of the gospel, you will give him courage to put forth all his strength among you. For according as the people are well disposed to hear and follow what they have heard, so does God open the heart and the mouth of him who instructs them. For the rest, see that complying with his counsels you institute some sort of police—to remove the cause of scandals, add vigour and authority to your admonitions, and keep up peace and concord. You will find in him, we believe, a man so tractable, that it will not be his fault if all things shall not be conducted in a spirit of mildness.

Whereupon, dear seigneurs and brethren, having affectionately commended ourselves to your prayers, we supplicate the Father of grace, to have his hand stretched over you, to preserve you, to sustain you by his power, to increase in you all spiritual gifts, and guide you continually according to the pure rule of his word.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

CCCCXVII.—TO VIRET.

News from Chambéry—enmities to which Calvin is exposed at Geneva.

GENEVA, 9th September 1555.

I send to you the letter of our friend Estienne. From it you will learn that however furiously Satan rages, Christ nevertheless reigns under the cross. What he demands respecting a school-master, it is our duty to attend to. If there is any fitting person among you who would cheerfully undertake the charge, send him. From Chambéry we have no news, since the letter written by the brethren, which I send for your perusal. When you have read it, take care to have it immediately sent back; because I have hitherto kept it by me, and that with the permission of my brethren. I am not ignorant how atrociously the whole faction outrage me; and daily from my own feelings I experience how alien to virtuous

natures is that tyrannical cruelty which the old poet has described in these words, "Oderint dum metuant," (let them hate, provided they fear.) On the contrary if a choice were offered me, I should sooner prefer to be the most despised of men. But since it has pleased God that it should be otherwise, let us endure. God will at last stand by his own. In the mean time the best stay is that of a good conscience. To-day Berthelier, in the manner of the others, attempted to exculpate his faction. Nevertheless he confessed that he deserved such a punishment. I shall make a report of all the circumstances in the presence of several. For except in this one point, he seemed to be touched with some repentance. Farewell, my very worthy brethren. May the Lord stand by you, govern and protect you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 103.]

CCCCXVIII.—TO THE PRISONERS OF CHAMBERY.¹

Last exhortations to them before their martyrdom.

5th October 1555.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

¹ The five prisoners prepared themselves for death by a pious correspondence with their family, and the ministers of the church of Geneva. *Hist. des Martyrs*, p. 320 to 333. They wrote to Calvin: "Sir, and most honoured father, we have received your letters of the 5th September, which have greatly consoled us. They testify your ardent charity, and that of all the brethren towards us. . . . On our part, though we are joyful that the Lord of his grace grants us wherewithal to rejoice with holy gladness, insignificant, poor, and miserable creatures as we are, nevertheless we are sorry to give you so much grief and anxiety, . . . and we pray our heavenly Father to deliver us from this distress which afflicts us by reason of our imprisonment in whatever manner it may please him. *If it be by death, so much the better for us.*" This prayer was heard, after a long captivity. On the day of martyrdom, John Vernou appeared for a moment troubled, but he soon shewed himself calm and composed. John Trigallet, looking upwards, cried out: "I see the heavens opened." Laborie presented himself to death, "with a joyful countenance, just as if he had been invited to a banquet." The executioner having asked his pardon, "My friend," said he to him, "you do not offend me, on the contrary by your ministry I am delivered from a wonderful prison." Having said that, he embraced him. Several of the people were touched with pity and wept, seeing this spectacle. *Hist. des Martyrs*, p. 333.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,—If I have allowed some time to elapse without writing to you, it is not that I have forgotten you or ceased to concern myself for your interests, but the compassion which I feel at seeing you languish so long, hath as it were paralyzed me with anguish. I doubt not, however, but our merciful Father comforteth you, to fortify you with patience, and that you yourselves strive to exhort one another, as indeed need is. For it is one of Satan's prime devices to sap and destroy, by long lapse of time, those that he cannot bring down at one blow. But I trust that he has not surprised you unawares, as God must have endowed you with constancy to endure even unto the end. But however that may be, you stand in need of continual exercise to maintain yourselves in obedience to God, waiting for the issue which he reserves; without fainting, though it be delayed. Speaking after the manner of men, I am at a loss what to say, seeing matters in such confusion every where. But I hope, however things turn out, that God will at last fill our hearts with joy, after having left you as it were to pine away; for he sees so many of his children in continual anxiety on your account, that he will not fail to lend an ear to their desires. Should we have the means of relieving you in any manner whatever, fail not to put us in mind of it, with full assurance that each of us will bestir himself according to his opportunity. For the rest, look steadfastly to the Father of mercies, practising what is said in the psalm: It is to him we must cast our eyes, when men assail us, and when we are destitute of all defence.

Whereupon, my brethren, I will supplicate our heavenly Father to have you always in his holy keeping, to fill you with the Holy Spirit, to the end that with invincible courage you pursue the combat to which he has ordained you, and keep up in your hearts such a hope of this succour that you may have wherewith to mitigate all your sorrows. I commend myself to your fervent prayers. The brethren greet you affectionately.

[Fr. copy.—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

CCCCXIX.—TO THE BRETHERN OF CHAMBERY.¹

Obligation to confess the gospel in spite of its adversaries.

8th October 1555.

DEARLY BELOVED SEIGNEURS AND BRETHERN,—I have heard that you are assailed in your city by the enemies of the faith with more violence than usual. It is thus that Satan, when he sees the reign of the Son of God advancing and the number of the faithful increasing, makes still greater efforts to overturn every thing. Be not astonished, however, if God gives free reins to the wicked to afflict you, for it is fitting that our faith should be tried, and when we shall be persecuted for the doctrine of salvation, that we should shew how dear and precious it is in our eyes, by continually persisting in the same, whatever attempts should be made to turn us aside from it. If you feel in yourselves too much infirmity, have recourse to Him who has every virtue in his hand. But if you have need to be armed and fortified in order to sustain the violence of the enemies of God, bethink yourselves that their cunning and devices are still more to be dreaded. No doubt many are astonished to find themselves persecuted in their lives and properties; but if by crooked and false practices, the enemies endeavour to alienate them from God, it is yet worse. As when that sorry² bishop of yours gave a three months' respite to those who should be disposed to apostatize from Jesus Christ, and renounce the truth of the gospel, he spread nets to catch poor souls and lead them to perdition. Watch then over yourselves and beware of entering on a deliberation, whether you ought to fall off from Him who has purchased you at so high a price. For better it were that fires were lighted up to

¹ To the Brethren of . . . without any other designation. This letter written the same day as the preceding one, and confided to the Italian minister, Celso Martinengo, appears to us to be addressed to the brethren who assembled in secret in the town of Chambery. This town, at that time subject to the French dominion, could reckon already several martyrs of the Reformed faith. (Beza, *Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 84.)

² In the text it is horned, (cornutus,) alluding to the form of the mitre.

consume your body, than that you should be wheedled by honeyed phrases to the poisoning of your souls and their eternal ruin. On the contrary, when the enemies of your salvation invent such means to seduce you, reflect that God on his part warns you, to keep you on his side as if he spoke to you by a trumpet. Whatever betide, shew yourselves on the occasion good and faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ, frustrating all the devices of Satan, and let not this world hold you back so as to withdraw you from your heavenly inheritance. Moreover, hold this for certain, that God wills you should be laid open by this trial, in order to hide you under his wings, provided you abide constantly subject to him, and seek not that miserable refuge to which Satan by his agents invites you.

Whereupon, beloved seigneurs and brethren, having heartily commended myself to you, I will entreat our heavenly Father to have you in his protection, increase you in all virtue to resist the temptations that are directed against you, and so conduct you by his Spirit that you be not seduced from the right path.

My letter is brief, because I am convinced that our dear and honoured brother, M. Martinengo,¹ will exhort you more fully according as God shall grant him grace.

[Fr. copy.—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

CCCCXX.—TO FAREL.

Fresh symptoms of the sacramentarian quarrel—new tract of Westphal against Calvin.

GENEVA, 10th October 1555.

Though, my dear Farel, I may justly glory in these reproaches which envenomed and petulant tongues heap on me, since they defame nothing in me except what I know to be

¹ The Count Celso Martinengo, of the noble family of the Martinengo of Brescia. Converted to the Reform by the preaching of Peter Martyr, he quitted Italy in 1542, withdrew first to the *pays des Grisons*, and afterwards to Geneva, where he became minister of the Italian Church. He died in this city in 1557. Spon, *Hist. de Genève*, tom. ii. p. 55. note v.

approved of by God and angels; yet I should wish I could hide myself in some retreat, to see if their fury would be perchance softened which my presence seems to inflame. I do not speak of the rabble whom I learned long ago to despise as they deserve,¹ but what not without reason gives me pain, is that now from hatred of me the heavens are continually warred on by these giants. Let us endure, however, when we know that it is not by chance that we are tossed about by such violent tempests. Westphal has published a savage pamphlet against me, to which I know not if it will be expedient to make an answer. My friends indeed beg of me to do so when I shall have read it over. The Lord will suggest counsel. You too, as if I could beget and bring forth books at the same moment, wish to see me send out several commentaries, which the course of a long life spent in perfect leisure, would scarcely afford time for writing. But in truth, how much vacant time do you think remains on my hands? I wish others rather would take up these tasks. I shall most keenly spur Philip on. But you know very well how slow he is. Farewell, best and worthiest brother. May the Lord always stand by you, protect and support you. My friends and brethren warmly salute you, and among these our brother Beza, who is now with me.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 103.]

¹ In a letter to Peperinus, of the 28 October following, Calvin gives some details about the absurd accusations of which he was the object at Geneva. In spite of the disinterestedness of which he had given so many proofs, he was accused of amassing a fortune: "All know how frugally I live at home. They see that I am at no expense for the sumptuousness of my dress. It is known to every body, that my only brother is neither very rich, nor has obtained any thing by my influence. Where then can that buried treasure be lying hid? They give out too, that I have robbed the poor. . . . But if while alive I cannot escape the reputation of being rich, death will at last vindicate me from that reproach." *Opera*, tom. ix. p. 103.

CCCCXXI.—TO RICHARD VAUVILLE.¹

Christian consolations on the occasion of his wife's death.

(November, 1555.)

How deep a wound the death of your wife must have inflicted on your heart, I judge from my own feelings. For I recollect how difficult it was for me seven years ago to get over a similar sorrow. But as you know perfectly well, what are the suitable remedies for alleviating an excessive sorrow, I have nothing else to do than to remind you to summon them to your aid. Among other things, this is no mean source of consolation, which nevertheless the flesh seizes upon to aggravate our sorrow, that you lived with a wife of such a disposition, that you will willingly renew your fellowship with her when you shall be called out of this world. Then an example of dying piously was offered to you by the companion of your life. If it were my task to exhort a private person, I should order him to weigh in his own mind, what he owes to his Creator. For we unjustly defraud God of his right, unless each of us lives and dies in dependence on his sovereign pleasure. But it is your duty to reflect what part you sustain in the church of God. As, however, our principal motive of consolation consists in this, that by the admirable providence of God, the things which we consider adverse, contribute to our salvation, and that we are separated in the world only that we may be once more reunited in his celestial kingdom, in this you will from your piety acquiesce. As

¹ To Richard Vauville, pastor of the French Church of Frankfort.

A letter printed with an incorrect date, 1556. Vauville, falling a victim in this town to the plague which had carried off his wife, died in the latter months of the preceding year, as is testified by a letter of Calvin to the Church of Frankfort of the 24th December 1555: "As to the death of our good brother, Master Richard Vauville, it was very sorrowful news for us. For God had provided for you in him a good and faithful pastor, which is a thing not always easily to be found." The letter of consolation addressed to Vauville on the occasion of his wife's death, should be placed as we think in November 1555.

I hear that the heat of contentions in your church is a little abated, you will do your endeavour that no secret grudges remain in people's minds. That cannot be accomplished all at once, I know. Therefore by degrees you will study to mollify the tempers which have been exasperated, till offences be completely softened down. Farewell, my most worthy and dearest brother. May the Lord alleviate the sorrow of your widowhood, by the grace of his Spirit, and bless all your labours.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 112.]

CCCCXXII.—TO FAREL.

Complaints about the conduct of Bullinger—news of Saxony and Spain—Poetry of Marcourt in praise of Calvin.

GENEVA, 23d November 1555.

What Bullinger lately asked of me you will learn from his letter which I send to you. Reflect twice what answer I shall make to that head, in which he reminds me that there is danger if any mention is made of predestination. That he thinks nothing should be attempted about a convention is a thing neither new nor surprising to me. For I had figured to myself this answer before I wrote. At the same time, however, you see how coldly and hesitatingly he gives me hopes of his protection, and that of the church of Zurich, which in the beginning he promised with an excess of generosity. But as I have undertaken the cause without counting upon the help of others, so now, though they deceive me, I will not desist. Nay, to confess to you the truth, as a freer field will now be open to me, my alacrity is even increased. For you know how much I was obliged hitherto to concede to their fastidiousness. Of the state of our city I have nothing certain at present to write to you; for not before fifteen days will the deputies set out for the renewing of the treaty of alliance. But what is now in agitation no doubt our friend Roset has already exposed. Of the marriage of the Saxon, though I

had heard nothing, yet I am disposed to think it a fabulous report.¹ It is a story from the same mint which is handed about concerning the emperor's turning monk.² But that in my turn I may pay you with similar coin, I shall tell you that Marcourt,³ suddenly seized with inspiration to sing my praises, has become a poet. I know not what bickering had fallen out, as was usual, between him and that band. Wishing then to break with them, and having composed a distich, he attempted to return into my good graces. He sets me above Hercules because I have vanquished two monsters. The two monsters he calls the lion and the dragon, (for he himself has stitched a commentary to his words,) and what Augustin writes of the church, that the church tramples under foot the lion and the dragon, because it bravely resists tyrants and heretics, that our poet may apply this to me, he says, heresies have been crushed in Servetus, and the rage of persecutors in Perrin. It is lucky he began so to speak of me in the first quarter of the moon, because I shall thus enjoy my eulogy for at least twenty days. Our friend Humbert has come here, later than I should have wished, but yet seasonably enough, if he can accomplish the object of his journey. For it is not possible that he can conveniently return to you. I have already declared that I will not suffer it. Farewell, my best and most worthy brother. May the Lord long preserve you in safety, and continue to direct you by his Spirit. My fellow pastors salute you, as well as numerous friends whose names I omit to mention not to fill up another page. Do you also present my respects to your prefect and common council men, and fellow pastors. Again, Farewell.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

¹ Alluding to an unknown fact.

² Abdicating the crown of Spain in favour of his son Philip II., and bequeathing the empire to his brother Ferdinand, Charles V. had indeed just retired to St. Justus to the great astonishment of Europe.

³ See vol. i. p. 74, the note relative to Marcourt. He had long since ceased to exercise the ministry at Geneva.

CCCCXXIII.—TO FAREL.

Lutheranism and Reform—Palinodia of Marcourt—wishes for the renewing of the alliance with Berne.

GENEVA, 7th December 1555.

It is with reason that you rejoice that the Confession of Augsbourg has been courageously defended by the German princes. But if you hope that any succour will come from these patrons to our unfortunate brethren who are oppressed in France, you are greatly mistaken. They will rather inflame the cruelty of the persecutors, and unless some sudden conversion miraculously take place, they will drag us also to be butchered. But though I foresee what dangers are impending over our heads, I rejoice nevertheless that in some place the reign of Christ is propagated.

The poet who you fear will again strike up my praises, has perhaps already sung his palinodia, because he perceives that he had laid out his labour poorly and without any advantage, unless perhaps, because there is nobody to whom he can address himself, he prefers to suspend his opinion. But let him suspend himself¹ if he likes, provided we abide in the Lord. Our deputies who were sent to renew the alliance, will begin to treat next Monday. God grant that ere long they announce to us that the business is despatched. If our neighbours obstinately reject what we offer, it will be necessary to go a little farther, and not without their disgrace. There is no opportunity for religion being mixed up in the question, but some chink or other will be opened through which it will pass. The Lord stand by you, my most excellent brother, and govern you by his Spirit. Salute the brethren in my name.
—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Zurich.* Coll. Simler, tom. 86.]

¹ Literally, let him go be hanged

CCCCXXIV.—TO THE CHURCH OF FRANKFORT.¹

He exhorts the members of this church to be reconciled to their pastor, and not to renew the ancient quarrel of the Guelfs and Ghibelines.

GENEVA, 22nd December 1555.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

BELOVED BRETHREN,—It gives me great pain, that I have no sooner had occasion to bless and praise God for the prosperity of your church, than I have to declare to you with what sorrow, I have received disagreeable news of your state. The death of our excellent brother, Master Richard Vauville, was very sad tidings to us, for in him God had furnished you with a good and faithful pastor, a thing not always easily replaced.² Nay at the present time the number of those who faithfully labour in the service of God is very small. I trust that you have already experienced how useful his labours were, and in what uprightness he walked. Nevertheless I hope that our brother, Master Francis,³ whom you have elected to succeed

¹ To our well beloved brethren, the elders, deacons, and the whole body of the church of Frankfort."

This church, one of the most important among those of the refugees, owed its origin to the dispersion of the foreign congregation of London, during the reign of Mary Tudor. Its fugitive members, repelled from the harbours of Denmark, arrived in great numbers at Frankfort on the Maine, and obtained permission from the senate of that city there publicly to celebrate their worship, (18th March 1554). This conduct, as prudent as it was generous, procured for the magistrates of Frankfort the public thanks of Calvin: "This news, certainly, has afforded me great consolation. . . when I heard that the good and faithful children of God, flying from England and other places, had arrived in your city, where they were humanely received and lodged, and that you had not only granted a refuge to their sad exile, but had also done suitable honour to the Son of God, by deciding that his gospel should be loudly and openly preached among you in foreign tongues." *Commentary on the Harmony of the Gospels*, dedicated to the Seigneurs of Frankfort, 1st August 1555. The French church of this city, increased by new emigrants, had for moderator John Laski, for ministers Valeran Poulain and Richard Vauville. The death of the latter exposed the rising community to long troubles, which rendered necessary several times the intervention of Calvin.

² See note I, p. 236.

³ Francis Perucel, then minister of the church of Wezel.

him, will so acquit himself according to the grace which God has bestowed on him that you shall not be left destitute, and that at the same time the poor brethren of Wezel shall not remain unprovided for, convinced as I am that you will see to it, and that every thing between you shall be done with one accord. For their necessity also admonishes you to come to their aid. What now urges me to write to you is the sorrow which I bear in my heart on account of the troubles and contentions that are kept up too long among you. I was indeed persuaded that every thing had been appeased, and here I praised God for it, after having heard the report which our good brother, Saint André, had given on the whole business; my grief is therefore redoubled when I see the evil which I thought had been stifled still persisting.

Your attention was then directed to some faults which you found in our brother, Master Valeran, your pastor.¹ So suitable a remedy had been applied to them, that you had ample reason to be satisfied, and the rather that he had submitted to every correction. Now, by what I hear, there is at present a new difference to be settled: For some are disinclined to consider or avow him for their pastor, till he have given in his resignation of his office and a new election be proceeded to. For my part I am obliged to declare that those who insist on such points have not duly reflected, shewing an excessive rigour which is but ill calculated for the edification of the church. I am not informed minutely respecting the manner in which he began to preach among you, nor how he was settled in the place where he now is. If all the forms had been observed which are usual in an election, I suppose it would not now be called in question. Let us adopt the supposition then that some objections might be made to it. Nevertheless reflect, I

¹ A letter of John Laski to Calvin, initiates us perfectly into the faults attributed to this minister: "These disturbances arose in the French Church from some aversion conceived, I know not why, against Valeran Poulain, for things distinct from his personal merits. For though I confess that many things are to be desired in him which he does not possess, just as in all of us, for we are all men yet, more than his personal character, namely, the fidelity of his ministry and his good name were attacked, and that not without danger to the whole church." Letter of the 19th September 1555. (*Library of Geneva*, vol. 112.)

pray you, if a brother comes to ask in a foreign country for a place and permission to assemble a flock belonging to Jesus Christ, whether the inhabitants of the place assembling themselves with him and listening to his doctrine, do not in point of fact elect him, though the customary formalities may have been neglected. Nay, it seems to me that there is ingratitude in afterwards rejecting a brother, when he has already contributed to plant a church, and in thus making no account of his labours after these have furnished the means of first forming an assembly in the name of God, and under his direction. I confess to you that when a settled state of things is established, it is not lawful to disturb order; where as yet nothing has been edified, the case indeed is very different. Look at the numerous churches all over Germany which have been acquired for our Lord Jesus Christ. Have not those whose labours first planted the gospel in them, been received as pastors without any other ceremony? I mean not to draw you away from the authority of men, but I adduce to you this example to prove the point I am handling; viz., that the same manner of election is not requisite in an unsettled state of things as when a church is already duly regulated. I find then neither reason nor foundation for such scruples; on the contrary I am tempted to believe, that people only seek to make a handle of them.

For the rest, only think in what a labyrinth we should be plunged if such notions were admitted. What would become of all the baptisms that have been administered during all that time? How could you be said to have participated of the Lord's Supper? I will say nothing further on this subject, because these considerations should suffice to check the contentions which in reality are become excessive. But if they are not sufficient for the brethren, who, stirred up by zeal, are too obstinately attached to their own opinions, I pray them, in the name of God, to reflect on the dangers to which they expose the whole society. You are settled there as it were in a borrowed lodging. When people will perceive how difficult it is to satisfy you, will your peevishness not tend to indispose the kind seigneurs who have received you with so much humanity? Afterwards you see that in the person of

him whom they oppose, you are, every one of you, assailed by those who seek nothing but a pretext to ruin you. It is marvellous how the Guelfs and the Ghibelines come to an understanding, when they see an enemy elsewhere, and that this example should be lost upon you, who ought to be united in the truth of the gospel. Those who are opposed to you with regard to the Lord's Supper, begin to make war on you in order to have your assembly suppressed.¹ Master Valeran is prepared to repel them and sustains the first attacks. That he should be molested by you into the bargain is really too extraordinary. His distress even ought to soften the hearts of those who may have had occasion to be offended with him, especially when you see that God has visited you with the plague, and that he has already taken away one of your pastors, threatening as it were to deprive you of all spiritual nourishment, since you are so little disposed to be satisfied.

I write to you these things as wishing to extinguish a fire that has been kindled; still if any one feels himself aggrieved, let me entreat you at least in the name of God, that without stirring up strife or bickerings, you have the patience to listen to good counsel and follow it. I hope indeed that my remonstrances will suffice, but I have addressed them to you as my last expedient. Notwithstanding all that, I should greatly prefer that the evil were at once and without delay corrected, and a good understanding re-established. Were it so, I declare to you, it would be no small matter of rejoicing to your brethren, who are desirous of your tranquillity and eternal welfare, and would wish as far as it depends on them to secure that end.

Whereupon, commending me to your fervent prayers, I supplicate our heavenly Father to govern you by his Holy Spirit in all meekness, wisdom, and virtue. My companions all most cordially greet you.

Your humble brother,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. orig.—Arch. of the French Church of Frankfort.*]

¹ Allusion to the ultra-Lutheran party, who saw with pain the introduction of the Reformed worship at Frankfort, and who by its intrigues, obtained the interdiction of this worship in 1564. Valeran Poulain combated the intolerance of this party in a virulent pamphlet, entitled *The Antidote*, which appeared in the month of May, 1557. *Documents of the Lutheran Church of Frankfort, tom. ii. passim.*

CCCCXXV.—TO THE KING OF POLAND.¹

He exhorts him to undertake courageously the reform of his states in proposing to him the example of David, Hezekiah, and Josiah.

GENEVA, 24th December 1555.

Most excellent king, though I neither wonder nor doubt that at the time in which your majesty held a convention of your estates, distracted as you were by a load of business, and a multiplicity of weighty cares, you had no leisure to peruse my exhortation ; nevertheless I am confident, that since the pressure of affairs is a little diminished, you have found a vacant hour to give to it, so that my labour may not have been altogether unprofitable. For from the letter which your majesty condescended to send, I understand that my earnestness was not displeasing, that neither from haughtiness nor contempt was that writing of mine rejected, in which I had briefly attempted to point out the true method of reforming the church, and what were the most suitable measures to begin with. What is more, as your majesty has signified that you had graciously received and willingly inspected it, and that, when a more perfect leisure would permit, it was your intention to meditate more attentively on each of the points to which it referred, I have thence naturally concluded, that greater encouragement was held out to me to renew my task of writing. If now therefore I am emboldened to exhort a second time your majesty, I deem it superfluous to demand

¹ See the letter p. 99. This prince always inclined towards the religious reformation of his states, to which he flattered himself to associate the Pope himself ; but the nobility of the kingdom did not share his illusions, as is attested by the following fragment of a letter of Laski to Calvin : “ The king and the order of the nobles now seem to differ a little respecting the cause of religion ; the difference is not so great as to prevent the progress of the cause. The king wishes to determine nothing without having first consulted the Pope, whom he entreats to send deputies to the first Diet, in which, in preference to every other thing, the question of religion is to be handled. The nobles demand, that whether the Pope send, or do not send, his representatives, the true religion be restored.” Calvin in his turn addressed frank advice to the king.

further permission or trouble you with any laboured apology. I am not ignorant indeed nor forgetful of the vast distance which separates a person of my humble and abject condition from the exalted rank in which God has placed so great a king. But as your majesty perfectly comprehends the import of that heavenly edict by which all kings are commanded to embrace the Son of God, and knows at the same time that by the external rite of embracing is denoted that obedience of faith which reverently accepts the holy admonitions proceeding from the mouth of Christ and the Spirit, it seems to me that all fear and hesitation are put an end to. Since then in Poland true religion has already begun to dawn on the darkness of Popery; since many pious and wise men having cast aside impious superstitions, voluntarily aspire after the pure worship of God, I whom the King of kings has appointed a preacher of his gospel, and a minister of his church, call upon your majesty in his name, to make this work above all others your especial care. And assuredly as much as the eternal glory of God surpasses the obscure and perishable state of this world, so much does it become us, giving a subordinate place to every other consideration, to put forth all our endeavours to defend and assert the doctrine of piety. That Poland up to this time, defiled by the corruptions of Popery, and a polluted and perverted worship of God, has gone astray after human devices; that, in fine, sunk in the slough of errors, it has been deprived of the view of the heavenly light—was a sad and wretched spectacle. But now, when the Lord begins to deliver it from that foolishness and infatuation with which the whole world has been struck, it is necessary that all—the highest like the humblest—should awake from their lethargy. Ought kings then to loiter whom God has set on high for this very purpose, that from their elevation they might send forth their light to all people? Besides, of what importance we should deem undefiled religion through which a tribunal is erected among us to Christ—of what importance the legitimate worship of God, in which the symbol and lively image of his presence shines forth—your majesty knows too well to require to be reminded of it by

me. And indeed if the example of David alone does not animate us on this subject, our sluggishness is altogether inexcusable. For when in his days the fathers worshipped God only under obscure figures in an earthly tabernacle, it is nevertheless related, that he had solemnly sworn, that he would neither give sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eyelids, nor enter the threshold of his house, till he had found out a place for the Lord, a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. If a pious solicitude for a legal worship did not suffer that prince to rest, but that day and night he was not less anxiously than assiduously intent on seeking out a fixed abode for the ark of the covenant, how much more at present should the spiritual worship of God absorb all the zeal of a christian sovereign, and all his endeavours be more keenly directed to the discharge of this office so distinguished and honourable, by which Christ should be exalted above all! Add to these considerations that David, though he was deprived of the honour of building the temple, did not cease however during the whole course of his life to amass stones, materials, gold and silver, in order that Solomon, his successor, furnished with all the means, might forthwith, without any delay, set about the work with greater alacrity. Wherefore it becomes a christian king so much the more courageously to bring together all his means for the reconstruction of God's temple, and strive with all his might, that the worship of God lie no longer defaced amid unseemly ruins. And though obstacles are never wanting to retard this pious zeal, yet your majesty has far less difficulty to struggle with, than of old the pious princes Hezekiah and Josiah, who had an arduous and severe contest with the contumacy of their people; whereas in our days the greater part of the Polish nobility shews a prompt and cheerful disposition to embrace the faith of Christ. With such aid it becomes a wise prince to rouse himself, and in his turn put his hand not less actively to the work. Nor indeed should you give ear in this matter to those flattering reasons by which, through the instrumentality of profane men, Satan, spreading a mortal coldness, plunges in an ignoble lethargy the senses of many. On the contrary, shaking off all torpor,

you should bestir every member to proceed in so excellent a work, and especially since things now seem ripe for action ; for if the opportunity offered by God is neglected, you may afterwards have to stand in vain before a door that is closed. Meanwhile we will put up continual prayers, that the Lord of his incredible power may happily perfect the work he has begun, may arm your majesty with an heroic spirit, and preserve you safe in a prosperous condition.¹

Your majesty's most devoted,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 104.]

CCCCXXVI.—TO BULLINGER.

Last steps adopted to obtain the renewing of the alliance with Berne—second writing against Westphal.

GENEVA, 23d January 1556.

I wrote some time ago that our citizens had deliberated about renewing the alliance according to the old regulations ; but finding the Bernese opposed to this, they strove to shew a conciliating spirit. At length it came to this, that in the principal article which the Bernese greatly insisted on, our townsmen preferred to yield rather than incur the charge of obstinacy. This point being conceded, we hoped that they would be so mollified as not to shew themselves troublesome about the rest. Since we have been disappointed in this expectation, our citizens implore the trusty intervention of your most illustrious senate, to influence by their friendly entreaties the Bernese. And hence you see with what truth I had affirmed to you, that it was not to be feared that our citizens would adopt any turbulent measure, as the Bernese had been led to suspect, or at least as the rumour had been spread.

¹ Follows here, the date of the letter, (Christmas eve,) accompanied with the following wish : " The day before the feast of the nativity of Christ, who, as he has been endowed with all power by the Father, I desire may be welcomed reverently in your palace, and worshipped according to his claims by all."

But it would be superfluous to charge with a longer writing the bearer, who will discharge perfectly well the functions of a living letter. Of you privately I require nothing, except to confirm by your authority your townsmen, who are, I trust, sufficiently well inclined of themselves to render us this service. Of the refutation of Westphal of which I send you a copy, I should like very much to know what you yourself think, and what is the judgment of others.¹ I see that I have been a little more violent than I had intended. But I know not how I have forgotten myself in the course of dictation. If the book has not pleased, you may say that it was not written by me. But seriously I hope, that it will be so agreeable to you and the brethren, that there will be no occasion for seeking to make an apology for it. You will of course give your opinion freely. Perhaps also, something may have been published by yourself, which will stand in the room of a criticism, because then the method which has been approved of by you will be evident. One thing I see, which is, that I have so provoked the hatred of those that have hitherto been hostile to you, that the war which they will wage with me, will procure you a truce. May the Lord then add to my courage and strength, to support this heavy task. Farewell, most accomplished sir, and ever honoured brother. My colleagues salute you. In your turn salute yours in my name. May the Lord continually preserve, direct, and bless you, your wife and your family.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.*—*Arch. of Zurich*. Gest. vi. 166, p. 25.]

¹ *Secunda defensio piæ et sanæ doctrinæ, etc.* The second defence of the pious and orthodox faith concerning the sacraments, against the calumnies of T. Westphal, in Svo. 1556. *Opera*, tom. viii., and *Opuscules*, p. 1498. In his first answer, Calvin had abstained from naming his adversary. He showed less forbearance in the second.

CCCCXXVII.—TO NICHOLAS ZERKINDEN.¹

Explanations on the subject of the difference between Berne and Geneva—wishes for the good intelligence of the republics.

GENEVA, 21st February 1556.

Nothing has occurred for a long time more agreeable to me or better adapted to mitigate my vexations than your letter. For I have no need to say how deep and bitter a wound was inflicted on me by my despair of renewing the alliance. Among you many pretend, for the sake of making me odious, that they are persuaded of the contrary. But whoever will take the trouble to inquire, provided he gives a serious attention to this subject, will acknowledge, even should he be unfavourable to me, that all my efforts were directed to maintain unimpaired the alliance of the two cities, and that I feared nothing with so much anxiety, as lest our obstinacy should throw us into these difficulties. At the commencement when the conditions were discussed, I was admitted by the senate to their deliberations. You will ask why I should mix myself up with those affairs, which do not become my profession, and engender great animosity against me among many. Though rarely I meddle with these political matters, and am dragged on to them against my inclination, yet I sometimes allow my-

¹ The negotiations between Berne and Geneva for the renewing of the alliance, retarded by the intrigues and machinations of the parties, had just completely failed, to the great regret of the good citizens of both republics. The moderate Zerkinden made himself the organ of this opinion in an eloquent letter addressed to Calvin: "I am indeed astonished that, amid so many men of distinguished talent belonging to both republics, not one has presented himself to oppose vigorously this evil. Oh, what times! Oh, what manners, void of all fairness and integrity! Shall then through our perversity, suspicion, tergiversation, collusions, calumnies, dissensions, bickerings, animosities, open and concealed, at last perhaps wars, seditions, and universal disorder every where, without let or hindrance assail us? I believe that our countrymen, dear as they hold their eyes, would rather have them put out than once open them to see the truth. By the everlasting God, what is the cause why treaties of alliance, not only ratified by civil sanctions, but sealed by the word of Jesus Christ, and by our own salvation, should be thus from slight and unworthy motives torn to pieces?" *Letter of the 14th February 1556. (Library of Geneva, vol. 114.)*

self to be persuaded to take part in them, when necessity requires it. Certainly I have hitherto maintained that moderation of which I do not repent. I know how the wicked prate about that. But I have so carefully abstained from the management of affairs, which they loudly accuse me of ambitiously usurping, that I am a stranger in this city. For every day I hear persons of the lowest rank discussing matters, which are utterly unknown to me. The senate, moreover, are never accustomed to send for me except when they are in difficulty for want of counsel; either because they think it unbecoming, or because they do not willingly implore assistance of others, or because they see that I myself am averse to it. I wish I had been at liberty to demand my exemption. But since I returned here fourteen years ago, when God held out his hand to me, men importunately solicited me, and I myself had no decent pretext for refusal, I have preferred to bestow my pains in pacifying troubles to remaining an idle spectator of them. To pass by earlier examples, unless some one had calmed the first burst of hostile feeling, what kind of commencement should we have had to this transaction? Our citizens are not so dull as not to feel that they are hardly dealt with in many articles. The minds of all were so bent upon having the treaty concluded on a new basis. If they accepted the old form it was due to the efforts of him, who, unwilling to see this city ruined, wrung from them, after long and arduous struggles, their consent. I indeed who was present am astonished that what you see was effected. For just as each delivers himself most audaciously, though his ravings cause our ruin, yet as he seems to defend the public rights more courageously than the others, so he easily moves and even inflames the inexperienced. What a storm of angry passions was to be laid, before so calm and sedate an answer could come to you! I confess also in a friendly letter, that some little sparks of resentment were passed over, but some allowance was to be made for bitter feelings till by degrees resentments should be softened down. But nothing contributed more to break off all negotiation than your peremptory rigour in refusing. Already the minds of our townsmen had

been exasperated by the excessive favour you had shewn to their enemies. A threatening and stinging letter had been sent from your city, whence it might readily be concluded, an occasion for insulting us was seized upon. It grieved us also that so much license was allowed to the defamations of wicked and condemned criminals, when the scrupulous observance of the league bound us on both sides to protect mutually the honour of each other. When finally you rejected the offered adjustment, by writing to Germany, which had never been done before, you seemed as of set purpose to bring open contempt upon us. But for the most part the person who is inferior in power is suspicious. You know the reflection of Terence, those whose circumstances are not very flourishing take every thing for an insult. And yet you now perceive that our citizens, after they had been received as they thought not very courteously, nevertheless had recourse to no hostile measures in consulting their own interest. On the contrary they politely endeavoured to bring about, by the intervention of common friends, that reconciliation which you yourself personally desire. Here I was unwilling that our citizens should wrangle too obstinately about the rights of hunting and trifles of that sort, and they are ready also to listen to what you wish they should give up. But as I am afraid that they will with difficulty endure to be despoiled of a jurisdiction which they have hitherto possessed, a plan of mutual compensation seems the most expedient resource, and that I have also, to the utmost of my ability, exhorted them to. Since the question hinges on this point, I have no doubt but you will study to forward in every manner the solution which corresponds to your wishes. For your letter proves that you have this cause so much at heart, that you have thence conceived such assured hope of success as will impel you to leave no means unessayed. I have thus no occasion to spur on by my exhortations one who is already at full speed. On my side I shall not desist from pursuing my course of action here, so that you may know that life itself is not dearer to me than the holy bond to which is annexed the public welfare of our city. You readily guess the cause which heretofore occasioned

my delay in addressing myself to you, I was cut off from all access to you. For to my other vexations was added that crowning sorrow which afflicted me more than was proper. I had heard not only that I was an object of suspicion to you, but that certain offensive expressions had dropped from you indicating, in a manner not to be mistaken, your dislike of me. These I shall not repeat, that I may not give you pain while I am congratulating you. Farewell, distinguished sir and honoured brother. May the Lord always stand by you, direct you by his Spirit, and support you by his strength.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

As you know what dangers evil disposed persons have endeavoured to create for me, it will be the duty of your wisdom and justice, to tear to pieces these sheets by which I have freely poured into your bosom, as you see, my inmost thoughts.

[*Lat. orig.*—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107 a.]

CCCCXXVIII.—TO JOHN CLAUBURGER.

Marks of sympathy on the occasion of a family mourning—attempts to bring back peace to the bosom of the French Church of Frankfort.

GENEVA, 28th February 1556.

Although, distinguished sir, the grief which I had felt for the death of that most worthy and accomplished man, M. Adolph Clauburger,¹ was renewed by the receipt of your letter, it nevertheless could not but be very dear and pleasing to me, on account of the affection which it everywhere breathes for me. He was snatched from us, if it were allowed us to frame our judgments according to our desires, not very seasonably; but because we must abide by the judgment of God, having finished the allotted course of his life, he has been received into the blessed haven where in peace he awaits

¹ See page 182, note 1.

our arrival. He was taken away by divine appointment, lest malice should change his heart; a sentiment this, taken from Jesus the son of Sirach, and applied by that preacher of yours to the person of M. Adolph. I certainly confess, that God best consults for the welfare of those whom he delivers from the numerous and terrible corruptions that, in our days, prevail every where over the world. But to attribute as a fault to your kinsman what was worthy of the highest praise, is a proof of a malignant and perverse disposition. I say nothing of his ingratitude, nor that he blushed not to detract from a man after his death, whom he had felt himself obliged to caress when alive, influenced most certainly by the mercenary motives of numerous favours. But what can you do with the frowardness of such people, who make it heretical to differ ever so little from their whimsical reveries? How should such people spare men who, in their wanton arrogance, no less trample under foot the sincere doctrine of piety which their crabbed snappishness rejects. Though, most excellent sir, this indignity, from your spirit of moderation, was endured by you in silence; yet the smart of a private wrong reminds you that remedies should be applied in time to restrain that violence. I myself having found, as I thought, a fitting occasion, have begged by letter your illustrious senate to provide against these intestine divisions. And though my arrival among you might not be perhaps without its utility, and the French refugees desire it, yet as it would be absurd in me to interfere officiously, I have modestly declared, that the journey would be neither burdensome nor disagreeable to me, provided only some of your preachers who are offended with my doctrines, would admit me to a quiet conference. For I do not want reasons with which I would endeavour, as far as it might be in my power, and the defence of the truth permitted, to appease them; but you, most distinguished sir, in your wisdom will determine what may be useful to be done, and you will direct the whole proceedings. Meanwhile, I shall not cease to exhort, as I have done, the men that speak my mother tongue, to cultivate peace with one another. If any of them be stiff-necked, I will admonish

them not to rend one another with their perverse dissensions. For among your virtues I with justice honour this one; that hitherto you have been indulgent to many faults which might have alienated your mind from our people. If it were necessary to add to your intentions to persevere, I should not decline the task. But when I reflect in my own mind what you are doing, and see you spontaneously anticipating my wishes, and testifying your paternal anxiety, lest any thing should fall out differently from what we could wish, I am prevented by shame from asking any thing of you. Only Christ is to be asked, that in order to suffer patiently these mortifications, he would give us the stay of invincible fortitude and constancy, and raise up such protectors as you for his pious exiles. In what concerns myself individually, it is to me exceedingly grateful, that you still preserve the recollection of our ancient intercourse. I in my turn will study by all the good offices in my power to correspond to your kind-heartedness to me. Farewell, most distinguished and honourable sir. May the Lord always bless you and protect you and your family.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 108.]

CCCCXXIX.—TO THE MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH OF FRANKFORT.¹

He testifies the desire of maintaining with them fraternal relations, and invokes their protection in favour of the French Church established in their city.

GENEVA, 2d March 1556.

Though I have, not only no intimate connection, but not even a slight acquaintance with you, reverend and beloved

¹ The ministers of Frankfort, rigid partisans of the Lutheran doctrine, had seen with a certain distrust, the establishment in their city of a church of refugees, who on several points of secondary importance, professed maxims opposed to the received symbols. Their distrust extended to Calvin himself, who, in a journey undertaken some months afterwards, could not obtain from them at Frankfort a fraternal confidence, and saw all his projects of conciliation fail before the secret opposition of the clergy, who did not hesitate to style diabolical, the faith of the churches of Switzer-

brethren, to procure a favourable reception for my letter, nevertheless the fraternal union which from the rights of our common ministry ought to subsist between us, has appeared to me a sufficient motive, why in writing to you, I should confidently expect to find an open door and a courteous welcome, such as is to be wished for from your good natured indulgence. When not long ago my Harmony to the three Evangelists was published, and inscribed with the name of your most illustrious senate, I know nothing but bashfulness that prevented me from writing to you. For I am scarcely ever, except when compelled by necessity, in the habit of writing to unknown persons. And I call unknown, lest the bluntness of the expression should offend any of you, all those with whom I am not on terms of intimacy. I solemnly affirm, that most certainly you were not passed over from contempt or neglect. But when the booksellers returned from the fair, I was surprised, I confess, that a book not less silly than virulent, of one Joachim Westphal, impugning my doctrine respecting the sacraments, had been published in your city. For I was persuaded that we perfectly agreed in our opinions, or if our manner of teaching was not altogether the same, there was no such discordance as could break out into an odious contention. It is possible indeed, that the book in question came out without your having any knowledge of it, as certainly I do not think that it met with the approbation of your suffrages. Nor do I mention this circumstance for the sake of expostulating with you, but because at the same time a report was conveyed to me, that the doctrine which I lay down respecting the sacraments, displeases some persons of your society, I have thought proper then to anticipate their remarks, lest I should cherish by my silence or dissimulation any grounds for dissension. Certainly though I do not willingly obtrude, yet if any of you is offended by my doctrine, no means of satisfying him shall be neglected by me. And if to remove offences, it might be useful that I should undertake a journey to your

city, though the road is long and fatiguing, I will refuse no trouble which it will cost me. For not only I think that it is incumbent on me to promote this desire of a holy concord between us, but also because your most illustrious senate accepted, with the greatest politeness, the dedication of the Harmony which I had offered to them, and testified by a letter that my courtesy was gratifying and agreeable to them; they thus so bound me to them, that I conceive they are entitled for their merits to require this service at my hands. Nor do I labour so much for my own sake, as that you should embrace with sincere affection the foreign brethren, to whom the Lord has granted an asylum in your city. For I hear that they dread I know not what bickerings and contention which may trouble their repose. Moreover as you are aware that some of them, expelled by the violence and tyranny of the enemies of Christ, have wandered to your city, that others, in order to profess along with you the pure faith of Christ, have imposed on themselves a voluntary exile; how much the wretched condition of the one party, and the prompt obedience to follow Christ of the other, ought to conciliate your favour, it is superfluous for me to enlarge upon. Nay, what is more, if you perceive any little imperfections in them, as it is very probable that they may chance to labour under their own peculiar defects, you should yet shew them a certain degree of forbearance and indulgence. Rather however than that what has been hitherto a secret heart-burning, should break out into an open strife, I am prepared to undertake any task you shall please to impose on me. Certainly I shall always faithfully exhort and aid both parties to come to a reconciliation. Farewell, dearest, and sincerely respected brethren. May the Lord govern you by the spirit of prudence, fortitude, and gentleness, and bless all your labours. Amen.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 109.]

CCCCXXX.—TO THE FRENCH CHURCH OF FRANKFORT.¹

He exhorts the members of this church to make to one another mutual concessions, and announces to them a new minister.

GENEVA, 3d March 1556.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

BELOVED AND HONOURED BRETHREN,—I praise God because he has hitherto restrained Satan, so that the troubles which he has stirred up among you have not entirely ruined you nor scattered the poor church, as there seemed but too much reason to fear. I trust that as He has begun to remedy the danger, he will bring all things to a prosperous issue. I most ardently desire it were in my power to busy myself more actively in your interest. As it is, I shall not fail to acquit myself of my duty, as much as my abilities, and the means afforded me, will permit.

I am much surprised that there should be among you, people so difficult to be satisfied, who wish ever to set up their own conceits, instead of following the rule which is enjoined us of conforming to one another. I do not enquire who are most capable in your church of having the direction of the whole body. I take it for granted that those who have been reputed such, have been elected by a majority of the people. But admitting that there was a small number of persons able to judge better than the rest, assuredly it is the height of presumption on their part, to wish to annul and set aside an election on pretext that it is not to their liking, or because, as

¹ After the death of Richard Vauville, two parties had been formed in the bosom of the French congregation of Frankfort. One, assigning for their reason that Valeran Poulain had not been regularly elected, asked that this minister should be set aside, the other demanded that he should be retained. The two opposite parties seemed to agree for the choice of a second pastor, Francis Perucel. But this minister having refused, they elected instead of him, William Olbrac, minister of the Church of Geneva. MSS. divers de l'Eglise de Frankfort. *Documents Luthériens*, tom. ii. *passim*.

they conceive, people had not acted with due deliberation, or even that there may have been some informality in the proceedings, for affairs are never conducted with such perfection as to leave nothing to be desired. For the rest, if some persons impelled by a zeal not tempered by moderation, but mixed up with too violent passions, have stickled more keenly than was needful, these it will be your duty to bring to reason with all meekness and humanity. And to that end you will forget what has been said or done inconsiderately, in the heat of the contentions which have agitated your church; to which proceeding I doubt not but you are inclined, which is the reason why I dispense with exhorting you at greater length. For you know the rule which the Holy Spirit lays down to reconcile us to one another. It is that each should yield and give up his right, that we should seek rather to edify our neighbour in his eternal interests, than consult our own selfish desires. And this I hope you study to do, as indeed you are in duty bound. Considering into what confusion things have been thrown, we must pardon a great deal.

In answer to your letter, requiring a successor to our excellent brother, Master Richard, I may mention that though we have here some learned men, who wish to serve God and who have walked with such uprightness among us, that I can bear witness to their worth; nevertheless, as formerly your church desired to have our brother, Master William Olbrae, and as I know him to be a man well versed in the scripture, of proper zeal and straightforwardness, and so moderate and peaceable, that I should esteem him suited for this place, if you can contrive to wait two months longer, my choice would fall on him rather than on another. Should he be prevented from complying with your desires, in consequence of the obstacle which the bearer will tell you of, I shall write to you most willingly of those that we can present to you, in order that you may deliberate. I am aware how heavy the burden must be for our brother, Master Valeran, and therefore I could have wished we had provided for your necessity forthwith; but you see the motive of the delay, which will be my apology till I have again learned what are your intentions.

Whereupon, in conclusion, having commended me to your fervent prayers, I supplicate our heavenly Father, to have you in his holy keeping, govern you by his Spirit, and increase you in all good. My brethren and companions greet you.

[*Fr. copy.—Imperial Library, Coll. Dupuy. Vol. 102.*]

CCCCXXXI.—TO VIRET AND BEZA.

Call of a minister to Paris—counsels addressed to the inhabitants of the Pays de Vaud
—mention of Ochino.

GENEVA, 10th April 1556.

Of our most excellent brother Morel, this is my opinion, that he ought not to be detained any longer in a place where many vexations torment him with little or no advantage,¹ where every day contests await him without any corresponding reward, though he seems to have discharged his functions as well as it was possible to do. For he has constantly attempted with unwearied patience whatever could be demanded of a servant of God. I wish he were here to exempt us from the trouble of deliberating. For beyond our expectations it has happened that the assistant teacher remains in his post. For though the probity of the man is well known to us, yet we had to apprehend something from calumny if he had been admitted. He would be most useful, as you say, at Paris. Certainly if, out of a great number, the option were given them, I see none of those who are disengaged better fitted. The brethren of Frankfort, if they understood that he could be detached from thence, will with very good reason desire to have him. But before any decision has been come to respecting him, it will be advantageous that some person of moderate abilities be substituted in his room, lest Satan should occupy the place which has been deserted. Etienne lately wrote to me that our

¹ Francis de Morel exercised the ministry in the valley of Sainte Marie aux Mines, near Montbelliard, before being called to Paris. Haag, *France Protestante*, tom. viii. p. 500.

brethren of the Alps, because they had learned that violence was being prepared against them, were getting themselves ready to oppose force by force.¹ Whence will arise a new necessity. As soon as I can find the opportunity of a messenger, I will endeavour to appease their minds. But they have resolved to try every thing rather than surrender themselves to another. To fly into the mountains, however, they think to be absurd, whence hunger would soon force them. I congratulate the Bernese on having formed so correct an estimate of Ochino, and I trust that the Zurichers, taking the hint from them, will abate something of their indulgence.² I, in the mean time, as you advise, will hold my tongue. I wish that our deputies would at length accomplish something. The Lord must be entreated to remove all difficulties. A headache, arising from a catarrh, forces me to break off my letter abruptly. Farewell, my most excellent and upright brethren. Because there was no messenger about to set out to Farel, let him know on the earliest occasion what I have written about Etienne. May the Lord ever preserve, direct, and support you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

¹ The year 1556 saw redoubled the cruel persecutions so long exercised against the Waldenses of Piedmont, and to which they only replied by the patience and self-devotion of the Apostolic martyrs: "At this period," says the historian of the valleys of the Waldenses, "there is not a rock which is not a monument of death, not a meadow which has not been witness to an execution, not a village which has not had its martyrs." Muston, *Histoire des Vaudois*, tom. i. p. 199, and the following. See likewise Gilles, Perrin, Leger, ann. 1555, 1556.

² Ochino had become the year before the pastor of the Italian church of Zurich, and had received, in that capacity, the congratulations of Calvin, who only withdrew from him his confidence when he saw him more and more engaged in the party of the Antitrinitarians. See a curious letter of Ochino to Calvin, which terminates with the following words: "May He who has called me, grant that I never deceive your expectation and that of many." (*Library of Geneva*, vol. 116.)

CCCCXXXII.—TO THE CHURCH OF ANGERS.¹

Counsels and exhortations to the persecuted Brethren of this church.

19th April 1556.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

BELOVED BRETHREN,—When a messenger passed not long ago through here, though from sympathy I felt in what anguish you must be, and desired, as if I had been one of yourselves, to find out some proper remedy for your afflictions and misfortunes; nevertheless, clearly perceiving that the means which had been pointed out to you were frivolous, I declared to him frankly that it was a waste both of time and money to amuse yourselves with them. I see indeed though he pretended to follow my advice, that his courage led him in a quite opposite direction. And since then, as I have heard, the effect has demonstrated that he had concluded in his head to do what I had shewn to be altogether foolish and unreasonable.

Now I entreat you, when I do not approve of such enterprises, not to suppose that I do not feel that deep solicitude

¹ A letter without any superscription, addressed, as every thing leads us to believe, to the brethren of Anjou, during the cruel persecution which arose in this province, in the year 1556, and which excited great troubles in the whole country. Informed of these movements, Calvin wrote to Mercer: "Among the inhabitants of Poitou and Anjou, great troubles have been excited for the sake of religion. A great number of men, struck with fear, fly in all directions. I am anxious about the unfortunate brethren." *Letter of the 21st June 1556.* Among the victims of this persecution which had nearly provoked a civil war in Anjou, were reckoned the two ministers, John Rabec and Peter de Rousseau, burnt at Angers 24th April and the 22nd May of the same year; Beza, *Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 108, and *Hist. des Martyrs*, p. 377, 378. It is to these two ministers, formed in the schools of Lausanne and Geneva, that Calvin particularly addresses himself in the end of his letter. "Our dear brethren, Master William Farel and Master Peter Viret, had each purposed to write to you, but since they have not arrived in time, you will consider the present as the joint production of us three, and also of my brethren and companions, who send you their greeting." John Rabec was no longer alive when this letter reached the church of Angers; but the voice of the Reformer no doubt fortified Peter de Rousseau for his last combat, and it inspired the indignant population of Anjou with calm and submission.

for you that I ought. But the friendship which I entertain for you, requires that I should not deceive you. At present I am in still greater trouble and anxiety on account of the threats that are addressed to you, and the prospect which is abundantly evident of a greater persecution than you have experienced since a long time. Be assured in truth many of your worthy brethren are in like anxiety on your account. We can only groan in prayer to God that he would be graciously pleased to preserve you, by the hand of that good and faithful Shepherd to whose keeping he has entrusted you. You must long have premeditated on the precariousness of your situation there in the jaws, as it were, of the wolf, and how you have neither security nor repose save what respite God may be pleased to give you from day to day. If, after having given you his support for some time, it should please him to give loose to your enemies, you have to pray him for two things: that you be not tempted beyond your power, and that in the mean time he should fortify you with such courage that you be not so dismayed by whatever may happen to you as to fall away from him. We ought to be all thoroughly convinced that our life is dear and precious to him, and that he will be our protector in all assaults. But this is not to exempt us from persecutions, by which it is his will to put to the proof, the patience of all his children. Or rather, as St. Paul remarks, the condition to which we are foreordained is to pass by such a trial. Wherefore, strive to strengthen yourselves and put in practice, in time of need, that which you learned in the Scriptures, and of which you are daily put in mind. For if we know not what it is to do battle, what kind of crown can we expect? Now the manner in which we are to maintain the fight, has been shewn us by the Son of God, viz., in patience to possess our souls. This is a hard thing for our frailty, but since he has promised to give a courage not to be overcome to those who shall ask him for it, let us study to submit to his doctrine, rather than by gainsaying to seek for vain subterfuges. I do not say that you are not to be moved when you hear of what is now being devised against you, provided always it do not make you lose courage, so as to abandon the confes-

sion of your faith by backsliding, but rather that it stir you up to pray to God, and at the same time awaken your zeal to maintain his truth as our duty requires, when he calls on us so to do.

For the rest, I have heard that several of you deliberate whether, if an attempt is made to outrage them, they shall not resist such violence, rather than allow themselves to be hunted down by ruffians. I entreat you, beloved brethren, to abandon such designs which will never obtain the blessing of God, so as to come to a happy issue, for he does not approve of them. I very well perceive what perplexity distracts you, but it belongs not to me nor to any living creature to grant you a dispensation, to act in opposition to the command of God. When in your affliction you shall have nothing which you can perform except your duty, this consolation will not fail you, that God shall look on you with compassion, and come to your aid in some manner or other. But if you attempt more than you are warranted to do, not only shall your expectations be frustrated, but you shall have the bitter remorse of feeling that God is against you, and so much the more because by your rashness you have overstepped the limits prescribed by his word. Call to mind then this maxim: Whatever reposes not on faith is sin, and if that is true in regard to eating and drinking, what must it be in an act of higher importance? If you are tormented by the unrighteous for having heard the word of God, withdrawn yourselves from idolatries, and confessed that you cleave to the gospel of Christ, at least you shall always have this to support you, that you suffer for a righteous cause, and one in which God has promised that he will stand by you. But he has not armed you to resist those who are established by him to govern. Thus you cannot expect that he will protect you, if you undertake what he disavows. What then remains to be done? I see no other resource but this, that laying aside all thoughts of your afflictions, and commending your lives into the hands of Him who has promised to be the guardian of them, you calmly wait for the counsel he shall give you, and doubt not but he will open up such a way of escape as he shall see most proper for your deliverance. I see

clearly however, in what an extremity you are placed, but even should you be obliged to resist, striving unto blood, think of the value of that heavenly life which is in store for us, on condition that we pass through this world, as if we quitted a strange country in order to arrive at our true inheritance. Think also that we have no excuse for refusing to suffer for Him who died and rose again, in order that we should dedicate our lives as a sacrifice to him. And though the world not only derides our simplicity, but detests our persons, let it content us that it is a service above all agreeable to God, to bear witness to the truth of his gospel. In a word, since the Lord Jesus is the pattern to which we should conform ourselves, take heed to model yourselves entirely on him.

Our dear brethren, Master William Farel and Master Peter Viret, had purposed each to write to you. But since they have not arrived in time, you will consider the present as the joint production of us three, and also of my brethren and companions, who send you their greeting. On my own part, I assure you, that when they shall have an opportunity they will confirm every thing which I have written to you.

Whereupon, beloved brethren, having commended myself to your fervent prayers, I supplicate our heavenly Father to be to you as a fortress and rampart against all your enemies, to support you in the midst of their fury, in the mean time to govern you by his Holy Spirit in upright wisdom and charity, so that, in despite of Satan and his agents, his name may be glorified in you to the end.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

CCCCXXXIII.—TO JOHN LASKI.¹

Expresses a wish for the assembling of a conference, and the pacification of the churches—judgment about Vergerio—progress of the gospel in Poland.

GENEVA, April 1556.

I knew some time ago, and I learned also from the letters of certain persons, that you had been at Spires, venerable brother, making some attempts to obtain a conference. But because neither from you nor any one else have I received one word respecting your success, I conjecture from that silence, that nothing has been concluded; and indeed that is what I always feared. For in the direction of religious business the lukewarmness and procrastination of the princes is well known, and as they generally depend on the advice of others, it is evident that they are swayed by those who for the most part are not very well inclined to us. The furious perversity of the adverse party causes all persons to shrink from an amicable adjustment, as if it were something detestable. Nothing however gave me greater dissatisfaction than your mixing yourself up with the designs of Vergerio, whose vanity I am surprised you were not sooner acquainted with.² Certainly whatever he attempts is suspicious. But if the af-

¹ Without a date, April 1556. Before returning to Poland his native country, Laski displayed the greatest activity in re-establishing ecclesiastical peace and concord in Germany. But his efforts produced no results. In a letter addressed to Calvin, 19th September 1555, looking back on the vicissitudes of his life which was destined to come to a close a few years afterwards in Poland, he expressed himself thus: "In respect to the vicissitudes of my life, these indeed are not so vexatious as to prevent me from reaping great consolation from them, especially when I see that by the divine blessing they have not been unfruitful. The inconveniences of my health I reckon among my advantages, even should the flesh protest, as indeed I see that I am not far from the haven after which we all sigh." (*Library of Geneva*, Vol. 112.)

² Brought up in the pomp and effeminacy of the Romish episcopacy, Vergerio had abandoned his humble parish of Vico-Soprano in the Valteline, in order to frequent the courts of the German princes, and take an active part in the negotiations destined to cause the formulary of Augsburg to be adopted in the countries of the Reformed doctrine. For these reasons he had become an object of suspicion to the Swiss Reformers, and particularly to Calvin, who had at first received him with a hearty welcome.

fair turn out better than I now think and than my mind always presaged, I have no doubt, however, but you must have experienced, of how little advantage the empty vanity of that man was to you. I wish nevertheless that I may be a vain prophet, and that I may learn ere long, that you have obtained whatever was to be desired. Though, if I shall hear that you have been sent away merely with some hopes, this will be cold news for me. For I shall suppose that a pretext for a decent refusal was sought for by the princes, who are not ashamed to make liberal promises. If however, which I scarcely think credible, they have seriously resolved to bestir themselves for the pacification of the churches, we must strive to let them feel that we are favourably disposed to every measure of moderation. If I shall be sent for, I have most certainly decided to hurry thither. It will be difficult to persuade our brethren of Zurich to do the same thing, for they do not dissemble that they are entirely averse to every kind of conference. I knew some time ago that this was the state of their feelings, but I fancied that our universal agreement respecting an opposite line of conduct, as well as the numerous reasons that had been more than once presented to them, had made them change their opinion. Bullinger, however, in a prolix letter which he lately wrote to me, laboured to prove that the affair would be in every respect disastrous. For here is the dilemma he lays down: If we deviate ever so little from the pure and simple profession of our doctrine to curry favour with the other party, nothing would be more disgraceful for us, and far more troubles would immediately spring up out of that concession; but if we defend freely and constantly the doctrine we profess, we shall receive this very sorry recompense of our pains, to be styled stubborn and refractory zealots. And one or other of these alternatives he takes for granted will be the necessary consequence. I on the contrary, though I admit that nothing is more pernicious than an obscure and ambiguous or equivocal conciliation, yet do not despair but that a sincere and candid moderation may be hit upon, which will be dear to all honest men, and will destroy the influence of those hot-headed individuals, who with their tumultuous

clamours disturb the peace of the world. Though then the Zurichers are averse to a conference, if an opportunity should present itself, I will endeavour to draw them over to us. And certes, I do not think they are so untamable as to refuse. It will be your business in the mean time, most accomplished sir, to be on your guard, lest they should imagine that, carried away by your too great easiness of temper, you are attempting any thing which might from unfavourable prejudices injure our cause. Though, unless the princes make haste, I know not if it will be in your power to wait any longer. For if what Lismannini writes to me be true, the Polish nobility who have embraced the gospel, have decided three months ago, that you should be sent for. I know that formerly it was not your intention to repair thither, unless you were expressly summoned by the king. I also recollect what fear presented an obstacle to your departure. But when I see the king willingly seated between two stools, and yet that the pious are making active progress with his consent, I think you should by no means delay your departure, provided you be summoned; but we shall not know what orders your messenger has brought.

I know not what to say respecting the dissensions of the French Church. If the rumour is true, an implacable aversion for Valeran reigns in the hearts of many, of which the causes are unknown to me. Olbrac, who will succeed to Richard, will study with good faith to heal all differences. But if finally he do not succeed, some other means must be adopted, of which I have dropped a hint to Valeran.¹

[*Lat. orig. Minute.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

¹ The end is wanting.

CCCCXXXIV.—TO BULLINGER.

Thanks for a volume which he had sent him—the gospel in Austria and Bavaria—
Vergerio.

GENEVA, 22d April 1556.

I received, venerable brother, your most delightful letter, and at the same time the refutation of Westphal, for which I thank you from a double motive, first on account of your labour publicly laid out for the advantage of all the pious, and next for having honoured me with this mark of your esteem.¹ Of the league I write nothing, because we are still floating in doubt, but the result you know from the messenger. I wish it may be of that sort which will afford us a common joy.² If our neighbours reject what is now at last offered, they will no longer betray their peevishness, their haughtiness, and their contempt of us, but their implacable hatred. The Lord will not suffer so great a quantity of good seed as has been sown in Austria and Bavaria, though it should be choked for a time, to be utterly eradicated. He shews, by inward signs, that it is his will to bring down the ungovernable contumacy of the world. If he should begin with us, we deserve to receive his severest chastisements. But he is to be entreated, that of his fatherly clemency he would forgive us. John Laski flatters himself with the hopes of getting up some convention, of which I myself have no expectation, not only because the warmth of action often blinds men's minds, but because Vergerio, a shallow fellow as I perceive, is the principal actor in the piece. If nevertheless there should be any thing in it, as soon as it shall be announced to you, I make no doubt but you will be prepared. This much at any rate, it

¹ See Melchior Adam, *Vitæ Theol. Germ.* p. 494, and Hospinian, tom. ii., *passim*.

² The Republic of Zurich was itself negotiating at this time an alliance with the Catholic cantons. The latter wished the oath of union to be pronounced in the name of God and the saints, (*per Deum et per sanctos*.) The evangelical cantons were inclined, in the interest of the union, to make a concession, to which Zurich refused to lend itself.

will be our duty to do, lest we should seem to avoid conferences, which I say is avoiding the light. As the hour now summons me to my lecture, I shall put an end to my letter. Farewell, then, most excellent sir, and highly esteemed brother. Be careful to salute your fellow pastors. I was grieved, as you may well suppose, to hear that your society was diminished by the death of that holy man, Pellican.¹ May the Lord gather us happily to himself. Meanwhile, may he continually protect and govern you, your family, and all the others.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Zurich, Coll. Simler. Vol. 87.*]

CCCCXXXV.—TO AMBROSE BLAURER.

Malady of Calvin—the sending off of several writings—explications on the subject of the conflict with Berne.

GENEVA, 15th May 1556.

It happened unfortunately that when Wittembach brought me your letters I was sound asleep, worn out by a violent fit of fever, with which I had been attacked. This prevented me from saluting him, as it was my wish. And as I do not stir abroad, it would not have been polite to invite him to come to my house. Besides it is not a very pleasant thing to visit sick people. The issue of my malady I commit to the hands of God, for I have had a hard struggle and my constitution is not at all robust. The doctors however have good hopes.² When you asked for the defence of our consensus, I was surprised that you made no mention of the refutation of Westphal, for I had already expected to have your opinion about

¹ Conrad Pellican died the 6th April at the age of 79. He was one of the most learned hebraists of the age, and at the same time a man of incomparable humility. He had for successor Peter Martyr.

² The illness of Calvin was so serious that the report of his death was spread about in France, and produced transports of joy among the Catholics. The canons of the town of Noyon, his birth place, celebrated on this occasion a solemn thanksgiving to God, and similar manifestations took place at Fribourg.—Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

it. I suspected, therefore, that the copy which I had sent you must have miscarried. At present I have not hesitated to send you one at your own expense. Nothing new has been published here which I believe would interest you, except perhaps you should like to see a history of the martyrs of our own times. But because you may chance to have already a copy, I was unwilling to burden Wittembach with parcels, and you with expenses. If you wish however to see it, Farel will procure it for you. Nothing has been done at Berne. When we thought that the affair had been almost settled—lo, unexpectedly, new conditions are proposed. It is sufficient for our townsmen to have refused nothing to which equitable men judge that it was their duty to have yielded. For whoever shall read the demands of the opposite party, will easily see that from confidence in their own power, they have wished to impose laws which destroy all equality of rights. Our citizens had the alliance much at heart, provided it were supportable. It is no new thing that the fault should be thrown on me, but I have become callous to such nauseous twaddle. Respecting other matters, if I recover, I shall write to Farel, begging him to communicate my information to you. Farewell, distinguished sir, and most venerable brother. All my colleagues as well as the syndic, and Roset, salute you. The money of which you make mention had been paid back long ago. Salute in my name your colleague, Funch, and other friends. May the Lord support you by his power, protect you by his defence, and increase you with his blessing.—
Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Zurich, Coll. Hottinguer. Vol. F, 43, p. 465.*]

CCCCXXXVI.—TO THE ELDERS AND DEACONS OF THE
FRENCH CHURCH OF FRANKFORT.¹

He exhorts them to calm the opposition formed against them, and to make use of their authority with moderation.

GENEVA, 24th June 1556.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

BELOVED SENIORS AND BRETHREN,—Your letters would have been a greater source of pleasure to me, in as much as they inform me that tranquillity is now re-established in your church, were it not that a common report is spread abroad, that nothing has been as yet amended, and that animosities and debates prevail in it as much as ever. I am well aware that such maladies are not of a sudden so radically cured, but that some traces of them remain; that where altercations have taken place, one of the parties must continue discontented till time have worn out all disagreeable impressions. But the rumour is that there is a vast number of persons in your society who murmur and are more alienated than ever. If such is the case, I know not what issue is to be expected; I fear only that there will result great disorder, which I pray God to remedy. In the mean time, do ye also advise how you

¹In spite of the reiterated exhortations of Calvin, the French Church of Frankfort was always a prey to the same divisions. This anarchy had penetrated into the body of the elders and deacons, whilst a fraction of the church, devoted to the minister Valeran, and punished with excommunication, threatened to separate themselves from the rest of the flock.

It was in these circumstances that Calvin again let his voice be heard. The double message which he addressed to the directors and members of the church of Frankfort was confided to William Olbrac setting out for this city. He arrived there, 16th July 1556, equally charged with a letter from Farel: "*To the brethren of the holy French Church,*" which is still preserved in the archives of this church. Olbrac exercised not quite two years the functions of the ministry in the congregation of Frankfort, which was continually rent by divisions. He signed for the last time the Registers of the Consistory 27th November 1558, and became, the following year, pastor of the Reformed church of Strasbourg.

may put a check to it. Especially I entreat you to preserve as much moderation as possible, not to exasperate those who are already but too much irritated; and this I say not without cause, for, to confess frankly what is the general opinion, I wish you had not used such rigour towards those who disapproved of the election made by you. If after sentence had been pronounced, they had continued to condemn you, there would have been just cause for calling them to account as people forming a separate sect. But since they do not prevent you from discharging your functions; since they even make answer before you, submitting to the common order; it appears to me that it was not right to urge them further; for since they did not give their consent to your election, you cannot fail to observe, that they deemed it illegal as far as they were concerned. No doubt that is a private feeling which I confess to be faulty. When they endeavoured to annul and set aside the election, the evil was still more serious. Now, here is the manner in which I would have proceeded. Since it is known that the election was displeasing to them, I would not have exacted of them a formal declaration of their approbation of it, as you now do; provided, however, they consent to accept you as elders, without offering any opposition to you in the discharge of your functions, and also that they shall hold themselves amenable to discipline. How many good and pious elections, think ye, have there been, and those too of excellent men, which, for all that, have not given satisfaction to every body? I will cite one example. When our worthy brother, Master Richard, was elected, he was not to the liking of certain persons. These were displeased, but they did not however form any opposition to the election, or if they did, they finally acquiesced in what had been done. If a declaration had been exacted of them that the election was duly made, would not this compulsory measure have seemed too harsh? For my own part, I have not always approved of the elections which I have consented to, for I am not bound to believe that every one possesses such sound judgment and discretion for electing, as were to be desired; wherefore it seems to me that people have reason to be satisfied with me,

if I simply yield to the majority of voices. In a like case, it would have been more useful, methinks, to exhort those who have molested you to beware of breaking the union of the church or separating themselves from the body of the faithful, and advise them at the same time to aid you who are its ministers in the discharge of your duties. If they had refused to recognize you, they would then have shewn themselves entirely rebellious and schismatical. But they protest that, without making a public declaration of their approval of your election, they were prepared to conform with the others and submit to your discipline. When that did not satisfy you, most people will say that you carry your cause with too high a hand, or at least so as to afford a handle for blaming you; and many will gladly lay hold of it. For that reason it would have been better not to insist so strongly on what concerns your persons. Touching the laying down of the offices which they held, not to speak of the weakness and vice which such an act involved, we must always condemn it as being at the same time an ungracious proceeding. But one thing is certain, that to constrain them will be esteemed by many a violent act. Especially as there already existed some time before certain grudges, people will easily presume that you have watched for an opportunity of vexing them. Now we should be on our guard not to expose ourselves to these suspicions, even if they should not conclude that you did it on purpose. I know not if any one will think you have done right in excommunicating them on such pretexts. For my own part I would not have given my consent to such a proceeding; I write this to you, however, not to oppose your sentence nor to annul it, but because I consider myself bound to let you know my opinion in compliance with your own request. For I would not intrude upon the charge of others, and well I know the danger that results from one church's undertaking to absolve those that have been condemned by another. Only I remind you of what people may think of you, that you may take measures that a second fire of discord be not kindled which it might be too difficult to extinguish.

As to the election which you have in view to make in order

to increase your society, it is a good and praiseworthy intention. I could have wished, however, since you direct your views to our quarter, that you had deferred your project till the arrival of Master William Olbrac. For you will never be able to act so well, but that your conduct will always be exposed to calumny, for not having waited for the coming of a second pastor. But since it is an act accomplished, I will pray God that he will be pleased to bless the whole transaction, begging you, my brethren, not to be offended at the liberty which I have taken in declaring to you what I had on my mind. For these are things which I should not and could not dissemble in writing to you. For the rest, you will see how I write in general to the whole church.

Wherefore I will conclude, having commended myself to your fervent prayers, and on my own part, having supplicated our heavenly Father to have you in his holy keeping and govern you by his Holy Spirit, that you may further the edification of his church.

Your humble brother,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

CCCCXXXVII.—TO THE FRENCH CHURCH OF FRANKFORT.¹

Eulogy of the minister Olbrac—double duty of respect and charity.

GENEVA, 24th June 1556.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

¹ At the same time that he exhorted the spiritual chiefs of the French congregation of Frankfort, to make use of their authority with moderation and prudence, Calvin, addressing himself to the whole of the members of their church, offered them counsels dictated by a spirit of forbearance and peace. Such also was the purport of his correspondence with the senator of Frankfort, Clauburger, and of the letter which he wrote the 24th June, to the minister Valeran, inviting him to resign voluntarily his pastoral functions, if the majority of the church continued to be opposed to him: "After all remedies have been tried, if you perceive that you are disagreeable to the majority of the church, you should retire rather than expose yourself and your minis-

DEARLY BELOVED SENIORS AND BRETHREN, — Though after the death of our excellent brother, Master Richard, it would have been highly expedient for you to have been immediately provided with another pastor, especially on account of your troubles and divisions, and also because a prolonged state of suspense was painful to you, nevertheless I trust, God willing, that the fruit you will reap from the arrival of our brother Master William Olbrac, will give you so much satisfaction and so indemnify you for your inconvenience, that you shall have no reason to regret having pined for some time, rather than by too great a precipitation, to have procured a person less suited to your wants. For Master William is a man well versed in the scriptures, and who possesses a sincere and perfect zeal to edify the church. Some of you have known him, and here among us he has given such proofs of his worth, that, but for our respect for you, we should have retained him in our society. Wherefore, according as he shall endeavour to employ faithfully, for your profit and spiritual welfare, the gifts with which God has endowed him, deliberate how to render them more profitable, for by giving him a kind welcome, and submitting with docility to the doctrine which he shall teach you, you will give him courage to acquit himself still better of his duty. I doubt not, but that on his side, he will study to promote peace and concord, and should there be any remains of your former wrangling and contentions, that he will remedy them by the most suitable means. I entreat you in the name of God, to conform on both sides to whatever tends to bring you back to a sincere union, for it is not enough that your differences are so far appeased, that you are no longer by your divisions at open war with one another. The main point is, that all of you should be so intimately conjoined, as to serve God with one mind and cordial desires. For this end, you have need to forget whatever is past, for I clearly perceive, that the recollection of it, which some still preserve, nourishes in them a root of bitterness, which will produce from day to day fresh heart-burnings, unless it be
try to continual reproaches, that new accusations should every day be contrived, and the church torn by a deadly dissension."

duly purged. I will cite you one example which has come to my ears of the truth of what I advance. When a person of the name of Cisberg, a native of Guelderland, was signalized to you as a man of mischievous and pernicious opinions, in order that every body might beware of him and shun him as a person rejected by the church, you know that one of the flock rose up to contradict the statement. Now, admitting that he had some reason for doing this, yet most assuredly the proceeding was neither polite nor christian like. And after all, when a man has been examined respecting his doctrine, by men who have an office in the church, among whom was our respected brother, Monsieur Laski, and has been found by them perverse and obstinate in his errors, what kind of excuse is it for him, that a joiner alone should take upon him to be judge and rescind whatever had been decided? But so it is when our hearts are embittered with animosity, suspicions must needs get the upper hand, and dispose us to put an unfavourable construction on every thing that is done by those whom we dislike, to such a pitch that from ill-will to individuals we will call white black. If things go on in this train, new evils will never cease to break out among you, and at last the mischief will acquire such intensity as to destroy every thing. Wherefore we have need to bridle our affections more carefully, in order to tame and moderate them. Nor is this the only advantage flowing from self-restraint, for in bearing with one another's infirmities in the spirit of meekness and humanity, we give occasion to those who have been alienated, to unite with us again. Thus, my brethren, I beseech you in the name of God, to put in practice more and more this lesson of St. Paul's, "Let nothing be done from contention, nor from lust of victory," as the word which he employs imports, for the moment every one shall lay himself out to support his own quarrel, people must of necessity come to a battle. Rather let each man avow his faults, and those who have been to blame, submit of their own accord; let people give up all attacks which are good for nothing but to keep up mutual grudges. For if we can endure nothing that displeases us, it would be necessary for each man to order his

manner of life apart, and it is for this reason that St. Paul, wishing to exhort the Ephesians to maintain unity of mind in the bonds of peace, and especially to bring them back to humility, meekness, and patience, insists on their bearing with one another and supporting one another in charity. Thus, my brethren, forget that you have a cause to gain—remember only that you have a battle to gain against Satan, who asks for nothing better than to keep you divided, because he knows that your safety consists in your good and holy union.

In expressing myself thus, I mean not to approve of all faults, but if there has been subject for reprehension in some things, since the interests of religion are not compromised by them, let that be buried in oblivion; and let no one pursue points of form, or errors of inadvertence, or other infirmities, as if they were mortal and insupportable crimes, and especially let him not persist obstinately to disperse, that is to ruin entirely, a poor church. What I say is not in favour of persons, nor because I am badly informed, for I love you all, desiring that your imperfections were corrected as well as my own, and the zeal I have for your salvation is the cause that your spiritual state interests me as much as if I were closely connected with you. For the rest, my brethren, permit our excellent brother, Olbrac, who is gone among you, to be a physician to those who have hitherto been too much the slaves of their passions. And to prove that you are desirous of a holy union with one another, let each one strive to make it up with him to whom he has been an enemy.

Whereupon I will conclude, having prayed our heavenly Father, to have you always in his holy keeping, to guide you in all wisdom and uprightness, to cause you to walk with one accord in his service, and to increase in you all his blessings, after commending myself at the same time to your fervent prayers.

Your humble brother,

JOHN CALVIN.

CCCCXXXVIII.—TO JOHN CLAUBURGER.¹

Complaints respecting the sad condition of the church of Frankfort—answer to an accusation—refutation of the doctrine of the damnation of children that have not been presented to baptism.

GENEVA, 24th June 1556.

When you have undertaken so many troublesome affairs, to prepare in your town, for the persons who speak our language, the little church which is placed under your faith and protection; and have been exposed to so many vexations, illustrious and right honourable Seigneur; not to reap such fruits of your labours as was to be desired, and as I expected, causes me the deepest sorrow. This was the proposed recompense of your labours, to see a holy unity reign among those, who had formerly torn one another to pieces in their mutual discords; to see a church flourishing in peace, which intestine convulsions would have ruined a hundred times, unless the Lord had miraculously preserved it. Now that they are again contending with bitter hatred, that murmurings and detractions do not cease, that a fresh virulence in fine has broken out, and that there is no end to their disturbances, it must be, I imagine, a sad and painful spectacle to you, and the total absence of good feeling in them who ought to prove their docility towards you, offends me no less, than fear for the fatal issue fills me with anguish. And yet to dissemble nothing, I am afraid that

¹ Raised above the prejudices of the Lutherans by the nobleness of his character, this magistrate had not hesitated to take under his protection the foreign congregations which had been formed at Frankfort, and he applied himself to cause to reign among them a spirit of moderation and prudence, which could alone disarm their numerous enemies. Such was the sense of a letter which he wrote to Calvin in the month of December 1555: "Since by the providence of God, an asylum has been granted in this city to these exiles, and at the present moment not only Frenchmen, or Flemings, but even Englishmen have their separate assemblies, I earnestly entreat that of your piety, you would be pleased by your letters to exhort those who are in the doctrine of the true faith, that laying aside all envy, they should not allow themselves to be circumvented by the wiles of Satan to sow and stir up useless contentions, &c. (*Library of Geneva*, vol. 109.) These prudent counsels transmitted by Calvin himself to the exiles of Frankfort, and unfortunately but too little attended to, did not appease the troubles of which the prolongation rendered necessary soon after a journey of the Reformer to Frankfort.

certain persons of the adverse party puffed up by their victory exasperate still more minds, already more than sufficiently prone to contention. To tell you frankly all I think, in that sentence pronounced by you, of which a copy was sent to me, there is one article which I could wish had been omitted, and which I doubt not was suggested to you by a certain individual. For it would not of its own accord have presented itself to your mind, to consider his former ministry as entitling him to the same rights among you as if he still occupied his full rank in England.¹ Nothing perhaps has contributed more from the beginning to create discords, or at least to beget heart-burnings, than that rivalry; for the greater part thought themselves degraded from their equal rank and contumeliously excluded from the common society, if the church which had found an asylum among you should receive laws from one party. It would have been more advantageous then to have suppressed that clause and created him pastor, only from the time at which by the demand of the dispersed flock he had obtained a place in your city, and had exercised the functions of a pastor. I see how obstinately Augustin² endeavours to defend all his pretensions, but some regard should also have been paid to those, who, it was hoped, would be more pliant. I have thought proper to touch slightly on this subject, not that I disapprove of your judgment, but that nevertheless you should carefully examine whether that fear, which makes me not a little anxious, was altogether unfounded. For you see that the pastor in question is detested by, or not very agreeable, not only to the perverse and peevish, but also to some honest and simple people, because he has not much consistency, and seldom persists in a uniform course. And though he is attacked by unjust spite, yet I know that he has lost the affections of the greater part of the church, and if they be not reconciled, a sad dispersion is at hand; nor do I see any other

¹ Allusion to the position of Valeran Poulain already minister of the French or Flemish refugees in England, but whom a numerous party wished to subject to a reelection in his new parish. In refusing this right to a minority, Calvin accorded it to the representatives of the whole community.

² A deacon of the church, and an adversary of Valeran Poulain.

remedy, but that he essay to appease them, which he has promised to do, but which, as many affirm, he has not done. But my very excellent sir, on the present question you see better how things stand. If, however, after all, their aversion is implacable, it will be better that the man should be transferred to some charge elsewhere, than that he should be a subject of contempt to his own partisans, and exposed to continual calumnies, not without disgrace and dishonour to the functions which he discharges. I should never concede, indeed, to forward people that their pastor should yield to their perverseness, because such a thing would set a bad example, and such excessive facility would only increase the fury or audacity of his opposers. But if the greater part of the church, disgusted with their minister, can scarcely endure to listen to him, even should we grant that their disgust is unfounded, which however there is no reason to suppose, having attempted all remedies, there remains but that extreme one to which I have just now alluded. I wish, however, that their minds would gradually become mollified, so as to retain him whom they have at present taken such an aversion to. In taking care to have letters delivered to your preachers by your illustrious burgomaster, you have acted with prudence. I also approve and follow the advice you give me to suspend my journey; nor was it my intention to press it further, provided it should only be evident that zeal was not wanting on my part to endeavour to foster mutual peace between us; and if any contention should break out, they ought to be blamed for it, who disapproved of the offered condition. And indeed they courteously declared that they would remain peaceable. But though they do not dissemble that they dissent from my doctrine, they nevertheless promise that they will make it their business that the churches shall not be disturbed by their contests. Since they acknowledge, however, that I am a faithful minister of Christ, and have deserved well of the church, I was very much surprised that, when they lately maintained that infants should rather be baptized at home, and even by women, than that they should depart out of this life without baptism, they odiously brought an accusation against me. If

they had only blamed what I teach, it was my duty to endure their censure; but when they give out that the French, by my example, wish to impose laws on others, and add moreover that I here exercise a tyranny, their conduct by no means corresponds to that brotherly kindness, which they by letter promised me. And how vile the calumny is about my tyranny, I leave the judgment to my colleagues and brethren, who certainly have never complained that they were oppressed by my authority. Nay, they have often expostulated with me, because I am too timid, and do not employ with sufficient liberty, where there is occasion, that authority which they all approve of. I wish your ministers could see on what hard conditions I discharge my office of teaching, and that, in the mean time, I arrogate nothing to myself; they would certainly, from their own good feeling, be ashamed of their rashness. But though I do not by this moderation escape the sarcasms of ungodly men, not only the testimony of my conscience suffices me, but also the evidence of the thing itself, and of manifest experience, by which is refuted whatever ill-intentioned persons murmur against me. I should like to know, however, from themselves who find my power offensive even at so great a distance, what they consider tyrannical in me. Is it because I offered to render to them an account of my conduct; that I was ready to undertake a long and difficult journey for their sake; that when not one of them had ever addressed to me one little word of civility, I anticipated them in that act of courtesy; is it for any of these reasons, that I seem to be aiming at despotic power? Assuredly they are by far too irritable, if, not satisfied with rejecting friendly conditions, they vent their spite into the bargain. And yet their churlishness shall never make me repent of the good office I undertook. But what grieves me is that they thoughtlessly fall foul of an unoffending brother, so as not to abstain from the most atrocious outrages in respect of him. As regards the question itself, I am not ignorant how deeply rooted this persuasion is in the minds of many, that the infants who go out of this world without baptism are excluded from all hope of salvation. But on what slight grounds this error has been propagated, it may not be

amiss that we should examine together. The celebrated saying of Christ is quoted: "Unless a man be born of water and the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of God." But first of all I deny that the external baptism of water is in that passage conjoined with the regeneration of the Spirit, because it is rather the identical thing that is twice expressed, and the words *of the Spirit* are subjoined by way of comment. For it would have been absurd when Christ wished to strip Nicodemus of his carnal nature, in order that the latter, laying aside his pride, should descend to true humility in the manner of a little child, that our Lord should immediately begin by baptizing him. But should I grant the words in question to refer to baptism, still the necessity is not absolutely insisted on, but an external sign is added as it were an accessory to newness of life; as if it had been said that the entrance into the kingdom of heaven is not open to any one without newness of life, of which baptism is the symbol. Certainly Luther, whose name those men are always bringing forward, remarked with great intelligence, that when Christ is represented in the gospel of Mark as saying: Whoever shall believe and be baptized shall be saved; he does not repeat in the second member of the sentence: Whoever shall not be baptized shall be condemned. For, if without baptism there is no salvation, the thief on the cross, who was admitted into the kingdom of God without baptism, will have to be withdrawn thence.

But that all doubt may be better cleared away, this principle should ever be kept in mind, that baptism is not conferred on children in order that they may become sons and heirs of God, but, because they are already considered by God as occupying that place and rank, the grace of adoption is sealed in their flesh by the rite of baptism. Otherwise the Anabaptists are in the right in excluding them from baptism. For unless the thing signified by the external sign can be predicated of them, it will be a mere profanation to call them to a participation of the sign itself. But if any one were inclined to refuse them baptism, we have a ready answer; they are already of the flock of Christ, of the family of God, since the covenant of salvation which God enters into with believers is common also to their

children. As the words import: I will be thy God and the God of thy seed after thee. Unless this promise had preceded, certainly it would have been wrong to confer on them baptism. Now I ask whether the word of God is sufficient by its intrinsic virtue for our salvation, or whether some aid must be borrowed elsewhere to supply its defect, or help its infirmity? If this promise is not believed to be efficacious in itself, not only the virtue of God, but also his grace and truth will be attached to the external sign. Thus those men, while they strive to honour baptism, cast serious ignominy on God. Now what will become of so many passages in which Christ is represented as satisfied with faith alone? They will deny that faith is separated from baptism. I admit it, where an opportunity of receiving it is afforded. But if a sudden death carry off any one who shall have embraced the gospel of Christ, will they therefore doom him to destruction, because he has been deprived of the outward washing with water? Do not ancient histories furnish us with some examples of martyrs, who were dragged away by tyrants to execution before they had presented themselves for baptism? And for this want of water, will the blood of Christ be of no avail to the holy martyr, who does not hesitate to shed his own blood for the faith of the gospel in which is placed the common salvation of all? Assuredly the Papists were more moderate, who, at least in this case of necessity, substitute for the washing of water the baptism of blood. In one word, unless we choose to overturn all the principles of religion, we shall be obliged to confess that the salvation of an infant does not depend on, but is only sealed by its baptism. Whence it follows that it is not rigorously nor absolutely necessary. And should we even grant what they perversely demand, viz., that when the danger of death is imminent, infants ought to be baptized, still it should be administered according to the institution and command of Christ. Now let them shew where Christ has given orders to laymen to administer baptism. Certainly no one in the church usurps this honour to himself, and Christ, by the testimony of the apostle, prescribed to all the others not to take upon themselves a public function. The order which

Christ gave to the apostles is a special one: Go ye, preach and baptize. Whoever then by his proper authority shall attempt it, will be condemned for rashness. What then is to be said of women to whom it is not permitted even to speak in a public assembly? But I have discussed with you, illustrious sir, these points at greater length than was necessary, or than the limits of a letter warranted; however, if a more copious and exact handling of this question should give you any pleasure, the appendix which is added to the tract against the Interim, will furnish you wherewith to satisfy your wish. Farewell, noble and venerable Seigneur. May the Lord preserve you in safety along with your family, sustain you with his power, govern you with his Spirit, and enrich you with every blessing.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 111.]

CCCCXXXIX.—TO BULLINGER.

Conference of Spire—attitude of the German Princes—suitableness of a new colloquy.

GENEVA, 1st July 1556.

As a month and a half have nearly elapsed since your letter came to hand, and I have not yet answered it, I feel somewhat ashamed of so long a delay. Lest however you should fancy that I have nothing to offer for my excuse, you must know that at the time I received it, I was ill of a tertian ague, which gave great uneasiness to many, and a fleeting hope of wicked delight to some.¹

Since then, M. John Laski has kept me in suspense. He had gone to arrange matters for a conference at the convention of Spire. I was perfectly ignorant of what he had been about, till I learned by a letter from M. Peter Martyr, that in the duchy of Wirtemberg, he had a disputation with Brentz. Now certain reports are flying about, from which it appears that though Brentz had sillily and dully maintained the infinite extension of the body of Christ, our brother, as if vanquished,

¹ See note p. 269.

had kept silence. Since the adverse party are already celebrating their triumphs, Peter Martyr is of opinion that Laski had acted inconsiderately in engaging in the dispute privately without competent witnesses and judges. Three days after, letters came from Frankfort, written not without the consent of Laski himself, which loudly praise the success of this unlucky expedition. It was not himself (for he was confined to bed by an illness) that wrote, but an intimate friend of his who shares all his secrets. This letter informs us, as if the words came from Laski's own mouth, that the Palatine is for us, that the Duke of Wurtemberg is in suspense, that the chancellor of the Palatine gives his voice in our favour. The Prince, in the Diet at Ratisbon, will do all he can in order that learned men of both sides should assemble. Along with the letter, he also sent certain miscellaneous notes in the name of one. . .¹ for the purpose of excusing our brother, which confirm the letter of Peter Martyr. For not a word is said in them about the disputation. The writer only mentions what things Laski reflected on apart, after having returned from disputing with Brentz. It would have been preferable then to remain quiet, unless perchance the Lord, contrary to our expectations, produce something better. He lets us know that Laski was reminded by his nephew that the king of Poland would be gratified, if before he returned to his country he should write an apology demonstrating that his doctrine corresponded with the confession of Augsbourg, and that for that reason he was meditating a short writing which he was about to publish with your consent, that of Peter Martyr, and my own. Though I do not disapprove of the nature of the subject nor the intention, yet I see that the matter may lead to dangerous consequences, unless it be managed with great address. But you will be better able to form a judgment from a perusal of the book.

Respecting the colloquy, you will pardon me if I differ a little from you; for though it does not seem to offer so much advantage as I could wish, yet because it would be far more disgraceful to refuse, than to incur the reproach of obstinacy

¹ The word in the manuscript is illegible.

in asserting with firmness and good faith the true doctrine, I am of opinion that we should commit the issue to God, provided only we do not avoid the light. For my part, I shall contain myself as I have done hitherto, that I may not seem ambitious in intermeddling too eagerly. If the adverse party, however, shall without provocation challenge us, I shall be prepared to defend my faith, nor do I doubt but you are of the same mind with M. Laski. Meanwhile I have let him know that his over-activity does not please me, but you know how difficult it is to turn any one aside from his natural inclination.

Farewell, most excellent sir, and much esteemed brother. May the Lord always stand by you, govern and bless you along with your family. My colleagues and friends kindly salute you. My best wishes to your fellow pastors.—Yours,
JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCCXL.—TO BULLINGER.¹

He invokes the officious intervention of Bullinger, with the magistrates of Zurich, in order to put them on their guard against the intrigues of the fugitive Libertins.

GENEVA, 30th July 1556.

The persons who will deliver to you this letter are honest and upright; you may safely communicate to them whatever you wish me to know. For affairs, it will not be so proper to treat of them in a letter. Both of them are my intimate friends. The one of them, whose wife was a sister of our friend Budé, I see more frequently, because since his widow-

¹ After the struggle with arms in their hands on the public place, against the Libertins of Geneva, commenced a new struggle in the arena of diplomacy. The last leaders of this party, Perrin, Vandel, Berthelier, skilfully availing themselves of the bad intelligence that reigned between Berne and Geneva, demanded a safe conduct to come and justify themselves before the magistrates of their country. To subscribe to their demand was to expose the Republic, now pacified, to new agitations. The only answer the magistrates gave them, was to maintain the sentence of death pronounced against Perrin and his adherents, and to interdict by the severest penalties their recall. Roset, *Chronique*, vi. 4; Ruchat, tom. vi. p. 144.

hood he has contracted a fixed melancholy; I have advised him to visit you, which I know he wished some time ago to do. I hoped that this excursion would contribute a little to divert his thoughts from his affliction, though I did not conceal from him that my advice had another object. For since it is well known that our condemned fugitives have lately been plotting something in the Swiss Diet, it gives us much uneasiness not to know how they were received and what they obtained. We have read indeed a writing filled with atrocious outrages and base falsehoods against our senate, but what we are most anxious to know is, whether any hopes are held out to them, or if their accusations were listened to by the deputies of the states; and though we are confident that they brought away with them the refusal which they deserved, not without disgrace and ridicule, nevertheless the state of suspense in which our expectations are held keeps us very uneasy. For these reasons this opportunity was eagerly seized by me, that our friend might inform us about the whole transaction and its results. Another reason disposed me still more to urge him to this journey, which is, that all the most intelligent persons of our council were desirous that such unworthy calumnies should be exposed; but we are of opinion that nothing should be attempted without advice, and your Burgo-master will, in his wisdom, best explain to us in one word what may be worth while to be done. From his friendly dispositions towards us, he will not hesitate, we think, to render us this service. We thought proper thus briefly to inform you beforehand that it had come to our ears from popular reports, that those exiles had at Baden falsely and maliciously complained of our senate, and at last a paper was brought to us made up of the most monstrous but no less treacherous falsehoods. And though our council make no doubt that this writing was repudiated indignantly as it deserved, by grave and moderate men; and though they are also persuaded that the Helvetian States, as their international law and the mutual relations between the magistrates require, will be more disposed to check this insolence than to pay attention to accusations brought forward by vagabonds and worthless scoun-

drels; nevertheless not for the sake of their own defence, which would be quite superfluous, but that they may preserve their reputation unspotted, they think it right with the most perfect good faith to set forth a true account of the whole transaction. Now it occurs to us that there are two ways of giving publicity to this writing, for to send an ambassador to Baden to plead our cause seems unworthy of the dignity of our city. First, then, it seemed proper that copies of it should be dispatched by friends in all directions with some words of recommendation, that the council of each state might understand that it contained nothing frivolous, and the authority of your Burgomaster, or even of your illustrious council, was to be called in to our aid. The second manner, however, is the one approved of, if indeed it meet with your approbation. It is that a man should be dispatched in the name of the council to each of the cities, to present one copy, accompanied with a letter, in which we beg that its senators should deign to read it. For in this manner some answer will also be drawn from them. Moreover the refutation of their calumnies will cost us no trouble, for they have had the audacity to lie so impudently, and with so little colour of probability, that three words will suffice to cover them with ridicule. In so grave a matter, I personally implore your fidelity, favour, influence, and exertions, that our friend may bring back your decision and that of your Burgomaster. But as he has no acquaintances among you, you will have the goodness to procure him an audience. Respecting our own affairs, our messenger will give you an account. My colleagues respectfully salute you. They have charged me to write you that we have been told that there is at present living among you an individual from the province of Limousin, which is a district of France bordering on Auvergne and Perigoux, a man of tall stature, thin and reddish beard, full and corpulent habit of body, and of a livid rather than fair complexion. This man, we are grieved to hear, has imposed on you. He is even reported to have married a wife among you. If this is true, he is now a *trigamist*. When he came here, about five years ago, he brought with him a woman who passed for his wife, till after a some-

what prolonged absence, it was discovered and proved, by the most undoubted evidence, that he had been already married to another. And yet he was one of those who, in the lustrative sacrifices of the Pope, let out their daily services for the celebration of the mass. But in reality he is a swindler and a cheater of his creditors, of whom I am one. And yet this fellow gave out publicly that I was a usurer in France. What I write to you, if you require it, I shall take care to send you proofs of, attested by public documents.

Again, farewell, most excellent sir, and highly respected brother. My best wishes to M. Gualter, your son-in-law, and the rest of your brethren. May the Lord bless you and your family, and govern you by his Spirit, even unto the end.—
Yours,
JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Arch. Eccl. of Berne. Tom. VI. p. 516.*]

CCCCXLI.—TO RODOLPH GUALTER.¹

Recommendation of a school-boy—destruction of the spire of the church of St. Peter at Geneva.

GENEVA, 15th August 1556.

The father of this lad who will give you my letter is a man of senatorian rank, but of limited fortune. For that reason he wishes his son to be educated in your city at small expense, that he may acquire your language while he prosecutes at the same time his studies in polite letters. Now though I am unwilling to give you trouble, yet I could not avoid promising my friend that I would give his son a letter of recommendation. I entreat you then, as far as your convenience will permit, to direct the boy by your advice, and aid him if need be with your influence and favour. I think it superfluous to write to our friend Frisius, provided you do not account it burdensome to recommend the lad in my name. I am sorry

¹ One of the most eminent pastors and professors of Zurich. He published learned works on the Old and New Testament, and died in 1586. A son named like his father, Rodolph Gualter, and like him a pastor of Zurich, preceded him to the tomb. Melchior Adam, *Vitæ Theol. Germ.* p. 592.

that the scoundrel who had already imposed on you so knavishly has escaped, for he will not fail to play the same roguish tricks wherever he goes. There is even a danger, should he return to the Popish church, that he may by his intrigues hatch much mischief, as is the wont of turncoats, to the detriment of our brethren. But lest he should beget ill-will towards you among foreigners, which is what you yourselves apprehended, his whole conduct must be exposed. Impunity would produce greater hostility than if he were dragged to execution. As his punishment is however no longer in your power, you will receive at least from the secretary of our council such evidence as will be amply sufficient for procuring his divorce. I wish that in accomplishing the offices of friendship towards you, I may have in future a more agreeable subject. However, whatever should fall out in which you require my services, you may always fully count on them. Last Monday, a spire which rises in a conical shape to a considerable height above the top of one of our churches, being struck by lightning a little below the roof, afforded us a sad and terrible spectacle during four hours. For on account of its height and narrowness, there was no means of extinguishing the fire. We had thus to wait till the highest part of it, measuring fifteen cubits or more, fell of its own accord. The remaining part then burnt down to the square tower, which served for a belfry, and in which the clock was situated. The Lord, however, has dealt mercifully with us, since it seemed good to him to retrench that part alone which was superfluous. For, while with great perseverance and no less courage, a great many persons made every effort to bring help, you would have said that the fire had made a point of not touching any part of the building which would have occasioned a serious loss.

Farewell, most excellent sir, and very estimable brother. May the Lord always stand by you, govern you by his Spirit, bless your labours and protect your family. Salute in my name Zwingli, Leverus, M. Wolf, M. Frisius, and the others.—
Yours,
JOHN CALVIN.

CCCCXLII.—To VIRET.¹

Preparations for his departure for Frankfort.

GENEVA, 21st August 1556.

Since necessity urges me, and Clauburger having changed his opinion, now approves of my journey, I have it no longer in my power to decline this labour. The senate also and my colleagues have made a point of throwing no obstacles in my way. Next Wednesday evening then I shall be with you. I am perplexed with doubts about the route I shall afterwards select. If I pass by Farel's, I must quit my fellow-travellers who are going to the fair, which is an inconvenience that I by no means make light of; but any thing rather than miss an opportunity of seeing our dear friend Farel. To ask him to meet us on the road, would not be very polite. And as to what he said about accompanying me in my journey, it is not fitting that he should undergo so much fatigue with small advantage, and moreover not without danger. The plague, as I hear, is raging there. The expenses of the journey will be what he can afford, but it is the trouble which I dread. For what purpose should the pious old man expose himself to dangers, and bring on himself excessive fatigue? Do you, however, decide, since I have no leisure for writing to him just now. When I arrive among you, I shall comply with what you deem most expedient. If M. Eustace thinks of taking the journey, as I hope, he will be at Berne before I reach you. You will therefore keep by you, the letters of Valeran and the elders, when you have shewn their contents,

¹ Calvin was on the point of starting from Geneva to go to Frankfort. As we see by the *Register of the Council*, 20th August 1556: "M. Calvin being entreated to repair to Frankfort, to try to appease great troubles which had arisen in the church of the said city, demands a leave of absence from the council in order to go there, which is granted to him with a request that he will return as soon as possible, and according him, if he desires it, a seigneur of the council to keep him company, and a servant of the town for his service." The 12th October following, Calvin came back and thanked the Seigneurs of Geneva, "for the herald which they had given him for his service."

for I suspect that it will be very important for me to take them along with me.

Farewell, my most excellent and upright brother. We shall talk of your health when I pass by. Kindest wishes to M. Beza and other friends. May the Lord keep you all in safety.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.*—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107 a.]

CCCCXLIII.—TO THE SEIGNEURS OF GENEVA.¹

Reports respecting the proceedings of the refugees.

BÂLE, 30th August 1556.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL AND HONOURABLE SEIGNEURS,—
Having found here a messenger upon whom I can count, I have been unwilling to neglect acquitting myself of my duty. This morning, by the grace of God, we arrived in safety at Bâle. We have let our horses repose the rest of the day. In the mean time I have been to visit the Sieur Bertrand Maior, at present Burgomaster, to whom I communicated your recommendation. Passing by Payerne I had heard of some complaints of the blackamoor.² He declares that you had perfectly well shewn that there was no motive for condemning them, because you had made some investigations secretly communicating to a very few people, after having intimidated them, that Perrin and Vandel with their adherents were bad men, and thereupon you had founded a new process to be produced at Baden.³ At Soleure the report is current that great preparations are to be made, after the next sitting, to collect intercessors. This rumour, I believe, has been spread by your fugitives to keep up their credit. Your people have been

¹ Calvin repairing to Frankfort, (*August 1556*,) picked up on his road, all the rumours that were afloat respecting the proceedings of the refugees, and informed the Seigneurs of Geneva of them.

² Perrin, to whom he gives this nickname on account of his swarthy complexion.

³ Baden in Argovia. The meeting of the Swiss *Ligues* was on the point of assembling in this city.

here, and this afternoon letters are arrived from Zurich, from which I have learned that they had already passed by there. To-morrow we shall depart, God willing, to finish our journey.

Whereupon, right worshipful and honourable Seigneurs, having humbly commended me to your seigneuries, I pray our heavenly Father to have you always in his grace, to guide you by his Spirit in all good, to serve him alone, and to have your city under his protection. Your humble servant.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Geneva, 1250.*]

CCCCXLIV.—TO MELANCHTHON.¹

Necessity of a conference to terminate the religious differences of Germany.

FRANKFORT, 17th September 1556.

I have been dragged hither by the dissensions with which Satan has rent, for nearly two years, the little French church established here, and reduced to such extremities that it must have disappeared, unless some remedy had been very promptly applied. Since I entered the town I have not had a moment's repose, and as if I had not had sufficient occupation in this affair, a madman called Velsius,² to whom you had written twice, involved us in new fooleries. But we have devoted only two days to this importunity. I am continually distracted up to this moment, in appeasing those dissensions which, from the long lapse of time, have struck deep root. You will therefore excuse the brevity of my letter, for when I came in to supper I was told that the messenger was to leave this the following morning. Though indeed I am less anxious about soliciting your pardon, because from your silence I conclude that you feel no great desire to receive a letter from me. And yet I am so convinced, not only of your equity, but also of your

¹ We see by a letter of Calvin to Melancthon, of the 3d August 1557, that the latter long kept silence with respect to the Reformer of Geneva, who, profiting by his presence at Frankfort, pressed him to explain himself, and to co-operate heartily in pacifying the dissensions raised by Westphal.

² A Flemish anabaptist, who, by his preaching and writing, disturbed more than once the church of Frankfort.

true and sincere affection for me, that I cannot doubt but my courtesy in this respect is agreeable to you. Since I have been here I have learned from some letters of yours to your friends, how much you are tormented by the savage ferocity of those men who feed upon quarrels and contentions, not without deadly detriment to the church. But though certain individuals put your patience to the proof in private, yet in consideration of your piety and the prevailing evils, I am of opinion that you should be more deeply affected, and preserve your anguish of mind much longer. Lest then so much fury should assail us any longer with impunity, the remedy which I am overjoyed to think pleases you must be applied. And a convention is so much the more to be desired by us, as these men more obstinately reject it, or rather as they with greater rage recoil from it.¹ It was indeed the business of the princes to drag them to it, since they will not of their own accord accede to it. But while some of the princes, perhaps too much occupied with other matters, procrastinate, and the fear of incurring odium keeps back others, you judge well and wisely that the assembly should be set on foot by private counsels, provided we put in execution what you have written with so much good sense, nor should we wait till a great many join us. But when you have raised the standard, those who have the tranquillity of the church at heart will flock round it. I wish you had gone to the Palatine, for it would have been highly expedient that he had been directed in the beginning by good and sound counsels. But should an opportunity present itself, it is better late than never. Whatever you shall decide upon, I beg and entreat of you, let me know.

Farewell, most accomplished sir, whom I respect with all my heart. May the Lord always support you by his power, govern you by his Spirit, and shield you with his protection. Salute my friends, if I have any, in your quarter of the world.
—Yours, JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. Minute.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

¹ A synod assembled at Nuremberg, with the approbation of Augustus Elector of Saxony, condemned in 1556 the exaggerations of Westphal, to which were soon to succeed the violent attacks of Flacius Illyricus against the doctrine of the Helvetic churches. Melchior Adam, *Vita Melanchthonis*, p. 348, 349.

CCCCXLV.—TO JUSTUS JONAS.¹

Translation of a writing of Calvin's—wishes for the pacification of theological discords.

FRANKFORT, 17th September 1556.

When I was informed that the little French church to which an asylum has been granted in this city was in extreme jeopardy, and my brethren besought me to hasten to quench the flames of discord, I suddenly undertook the journey. But as if it had not been enough to be distracted by so troublesome a business, I have also been taken up with other frivolous matters. Assuredly I have scarcely an hour at my own disposal, so that I have the greatest wish to return to my old work-house, in order to enjoy a little relaxation. You will then excuse me if I answer you so briefly. For as your letter was exceedingly agreeable to me, I should willingly have testified in writing how much my conversations with you benefit and charm me. That you are ready to undertake a translation of my little tract² is welcome news indeed. But though in undertaking of your own accord this task, you have afforded me the most delightful token of your affection, yet I am sorry for one thing, namely, that in waiting for my opinion on that subject, you have incurred a loss of time. For had you promptly executed your design, what boorishness, or rather what downright rudeness it would have been, not to approve of a labour in my opinion so judiciously employed! But since you have demurred longer than I could have wished, I entreat you to make up by your sedulity for this loss of time. The

¹ The most friendly relations united Justus Jonas to Calvin. The Reformer having addressed to him some of his writings, Jonas hastened to testify to him his gratitude: "But because," said he, "I have dreaded hitherto to din your learned ears with my rude and barbarous style, you will pardon I hope my modesty, and for that reason this letter, though unpolished, will be the more agreeable to you, that the greatness of my affection for you has wrung it from me against my will. For I would have you to entertain this opinion of me, that Calvin is dearer to me even than myself." May 1556.

² No doubt the second reply to Westphal.

fury of these men, as I see, is implacable. Neither by caresses nor mild treatment can we hope to bring them to anything like fair dealing. Since then it is impossible to appease them, the only resource that remains to us is to show up both their ignorance and pomposity. You have cleverly pointed out their artifices, with what effrontery they give themselves airs among the common people, where they run no risk in babbling any nonsense on subjects they do not understand. I wish the princes would make up their minds to take some measures for holding a convention. My second desire is that some pious doctors, lovers of peace, would meet together for a friendly conference. Meanwhile it is our duty to see that the truth be not left among ignorant men without a legitimate defence.

Farewell, most accomplished and highly respected sir. May the Lord always govern you by his Spirit, sustain you by his power, and accompany you with every blessing. Salute in my name the friends I have among you. My associates salute you, among whom are to be reckoned a son and a son-in-law of Bucer, Robert and Stephen.—Yours truly,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.*—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107 a.]

CCCCXLVI.—TO THE AMBASSADORS OF THE LIGUES.¹

Answer to a demand of the diet of Baden concerning the Refugees.

GENEVA, 25th October 1556.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL, NOBLE, WISE, AND MOST HONOURABLE SEIGNEURS, good neighbours, and friends, we have received

¹ Here is the title of this letter, written by Calvin himself in the name of the Seigneurs of Geneva: *Messieurs of Geneva to the Ambassadors of the "Ligues,"* assembled in the Session at Baden, which was opened the 11th October, about the demand made by them for the condemned criminals of this city.

The refugees of Geneva had presented themselves before the Assembly of Baden, protesting their innocence, and asking a safe conduct in order to justify themselves before the magistrates of their country. Informed of these proceedings, and yielding to the counsels of Calvin, the Genevese sent deputies to the diet to inform the cantons of the truth. The cantons having heard them, testified their satisfaction, and judged that Messieurs of Geneva had conducted themselves on this occasion like good and

your letter, dated from Bâle the 15th October, in which you beg, at the request of certain persons, formerly citizens of our town, that we should consent to give them a safe conduct to enable them to come and vindicate themselves from the charge of crimes that have been imputed to them.

For answer, we entreat you to have this opinion of us; that, considering the terms of friendship and good neighbourhood on which we stand with the noble and puissant seigneurs of the Lignes, the kindness they have always shown us, the advantages and pleasure we have always received from them, and which we hope still to receive, it is our most earnest desire as much as possible to gratify them in everything and everywhere; and as far as our slight power extends, we will strive to shew by deeds that they have in us good neighbours, who ask for nothing better than to do them service, and shew them every mark of complaisance. Wherefore we should have greatly desired, that some good opportunity had presented itself of requiring of us something more favourable, and which we could have granted, without the risk of great imprudence. For in that case we should not have hesitated to satisfy their wishes, and it gives us much pain to be forced in the present instance to make our excuses to you for not complying with your demand. Indeed we expect this much of your prudence and humanity, that having heard the reasons for our refusal, you will not be offended at our answer, but will receive it with indulgence, and hold yourselves satisfied by it. For we doubt not but you, and in general the worshipful seigneurs of the Lignes, desire that the state of our city should remain unchanged, and are far from wishing to be the cause of any troubles or vexations that might happen to us, or rather that

prudent magistrates, for the honour of whom they should always interest themselves. Not wishing, however, to dismiss the fugitives without granting them something, they demanded that they should grant them as a special favour the safe conduct which they asked. The deputies of Geneva begged politely to be excused for not according their request, and the cantons received their excuse." Ruchat, tom. vi. p. 186. Disappointed in the result of their complaints before the *Lignes*, the refugees carried them before the Seigneury of Berne, who vainly interceded in their favour. Piqued by the fruitlessness of their proceedings, the Bernese conceived an ill-humour against Geneva, and the question of the refugees became a subject of discord between the two cities.

you would have pleasure in aiding and serving us in all our necessities. Now there can be no doubt, that to grant a safe conduct to those who, to escape from the punishment of their crimes, have become runaways, would be opening up a way for too great licentiousness, and rendering almost null the authority of justice. Especially when we reflect that those who have required you to intercede for them have long occasioned much trouble and confusion in our city by their audacity and rashness, so that you may readily believe that their purpose is not so much to justify themselves, a thing impossible moreover, but to essay, if it were in their power, to stir up some sedition, in order to ruin us all. And in fact, we perceive by your letters that they have not given you correct information, in saying that they were driven forth from our city. For knowing that their cause was being examined in our council, called that of the two hundred, consulting only their guilty conscience they took to flight, and after having been summoned by proclamation several times, not only they did not present themselves, but by deeds and words insulted all our citizens, declaring themselves the enemies of our city and commonwealth. And they have persisted in the same insolent conduct even after having assumed the character of prophets before you, whence you may judge that they have abused your lenity and good nature, since they have broken out into such transports against those to whom they beg you to send a request in their favour.

And since they have induced you to believe, that, having obtained by your means a safe conduct, they would make it their business so to comport themselves as to satisfy everybody, were it but from respect to you, they ought to have, in waiting for the result, carried themselves with greater modesty. But God, whose long-suffering has endured them, now lets them be known for what they are. And on your part let us hope, noble and wise seigneurs, that, aware of this fact, you will conclude that they do not deserve that even persons inferior to you should interfere in their behalf. We are, moreover, persuaded that the right worshipful, the councils of the Lignes, having been recently informed of the truth of the

fact, will know how to appreciate it; and though they so far yielded to importunity as to cause you to forward a request to us, yet would they by no means wish to see us involved in danger or trouble. On the other hand, as a sufficiently long term had been allowed them to present themselves to justice, of which they did not avail themselves, they were condemned by default. We beg you to reflect, if now it is possible to retract these sentences, and admit the delinquents to a new trial, without violating every rule of justice. Wherefore we again entreat you to hold us excused, if we cannot introduce into our city a precedent which was never good, and give a license to people that we know to be of abandoned life, to come here with the design of raising disorders; considering that the misdeeds for which they were condemned are sufficiently notorious, and have been made public, while it was in their power at the same time to reply, had they not felt that they were guilty. For the rest we beg you to remind the right worshipful seigneurs of the Lignes, your superiors, that whatever it shall please them to require of us, and which shall be at the same time in our power to perform, they will always find us ready, as we have declared, to devote ourselves to their service, and comply with their just desires.

Whereupon we desire to be humbly commended to their kind favour, and to your own, praying God that he would be pleased to have you in his holy keeping, and increase you in all good and prosperity.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Portfolio A.*]

CCCCXLVII.—TO BULLINGER.¹

New proceedings to bring about a reconciliation between Berne and Geneva.

GENEVA, 24th November 1556.

Because I am aware that the state of our city is no less the object of your solicitude than if you were in my place,

¹ The rupture of the alliance, between Berne and Geneva, placed in a dangerous state of isolation the Calvinistic republic, hardly pacified at home, and menaced on

reverend brother, and that the renewal of our league with the Bernese, is what you have particularly at heart, there is no need of my giving myself any trouble in the recommendation of a cause, which you yourself without any exhortation are sufficiently disposed to undertake. Since my return the minds of our citizens have been too often so much exasperated by certain offences, that it was no small affair to appease or restrain them. When, however, they had been reminded that if they should again present themselves for the purpose of renewing the treaty, the minds of the adverse party would be more disposed to listen to reason than formerly, they tried again to see what reasons there might be for this supposition. This embassy received no answer. I need not say how much the indignity of this slight offended our citizens. Certainly the fear of meeting with a repulse, deters them from making any more offers, so that the only resource which remains is to try what can be effected by an embassy sent by you not only to Berne, but here also, to exhort the councils of both states and the people also, to contract again an alliance upon reasonable conditions. This our citizens desire indeed, persuaded that it is for their advantage; but they would wish that a complete silence should be maintained respecting their entreaties for that effect, and that it should be represented simply as the effect of the wishes of three states, which had been induced by kindly feelings and zeal for both parties to send ambassadors. If this can be obtained, and I hope it will not present any difficulty, perhaps our neighbours will be ashamed to concede nothing. Nay, unless I am mistaken, they desire nothing better than to be entreated. I am the more anxious on this account because I have a shrewd suspicion that certain persons are tempted by alluring promises to seek for a common league of all the states, in which I think it would be detrimental to us to be implicated. And certainly our senate is averse

all sides by the enmity of the Catholic powers abroad, France, Savoy, the Spaniards. Calvin, invoking the mediation of the Seigneurs of Zurich, made a new effort to bring closer together the two cities whose union had so powerfully contributed to the progress of the gospel in Switzerland. The treaty of alliance was not renewed before 1558.

to it. It is better however to be beforehand, lest an opening should be afforded for a thing of very doubtful advantage. That this step may be better concealed, we have chosen this brother, one of my colleagues, who is to go directly to you, and then to Habn, the Burgomaster. And though this letter was written by the order of the senate, there are only four of us who are in the secret of the dispatch of this messenger. Nay the contents of the letter itself are known only to eight individuals, who were entrusted with the writing of it. The urgency of the case calls on me to implore your aid with the utmost importunity, but as I am not ignorant with what hearty good will you enter into it, I spare myself unnecessary trouble. What I asked you in reference to the Italian, and which you have not found a convenient opportunity of answering, you will now let me know. I learn from a letter of yours addressed to the secretary of our senate what you desire about a Greek Concordance to the Old Testament; I too feel the same wish. But as far as I can conjecture, our friend Robert (Etienne) will scarcely be induced to undertake this labour; he has already kept it back more than a year and a half, and does not seem yet disposed to prepare himself for publishing.

Farewell, most accomplished sir, and highly respected brother. May the Lord protect you and your family, and enrich you with all blessings. Salute in my name all your fellow pastors and other friends.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich. Gest. vi. 166, p. 28.*]

CCCCXLVIII.—TO BULLINGER.

Recommendation of an Italian refugee—reforms in the Duchy of Baden.

GENEVA, 29th November 1556.

I have nothing to write to you about, that might not be dispatched in three words. I am obliged moreover to cut my letter short in consequence of the indifferent state of my health. For the last four days, I have suffered a good deal

from dysentery, and even at present it gives me but little relaxation. An Italian who has come here with his family asked me, upwards of a month ago, whether it were possible for him to obtain civic rights among you, though he did not inhabit your territory. He has no wish to change the place of his domicile, and he desires to become a citizen of your state for no other reason than to gratify his brethren, who fancy that they will be ill looked upon, because he has retired to this place. I wished to let you know these things distinctly, that you might not suppose that he is cunningly attempting to catch at some advantage. He is besides a man of probity and highly esteemed. I beg of you, reverend brother, as soon as you shall have an opportunity, to give me information on this point. I am delighted to learn that for the reformation of the Duchy of Baden, a certain Doctor James André¹ has been lately summoned along with Sulzer. André is a pious and moderate man, and not disinclined to our party. I certainly understand from a letter of Sulzer himself, that the presence of André has been extremely advantageous.

Farewell, distinguished sir, and honoured brother. Do not fail to salute in my name all your fellow pastors. May God always govern, protect, and bless you.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich. Gest. vi. 166, p. 29.*]

CCCCXLIX.—TO THE FRENCH CHURCH OF ANTWERP.²

He apologizes for his silence, and addresses to them christian exhortations.

GENEVA, 21st December 1556.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord

¹ Professor of Theology at the University of Tubingen. He contributed powerfully to cause to be adopted, in the Duchy of Baden, a formulary conformable to the holy Scriptures, and to the principal points of the confession of Augsburg. *Melchior Adam*, p. 639.

² The town of Antwerp, one of the centres of the most active commerce in Europe in the XVI. century, saw betimes the evangelical missionaries flocking within its walls. A French church, formed like those of Wesel and Frankfort, from the scattered remains of the Foreign Congregation of London, was established there in 1554,

Jesus Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

BELoved SEIGNEURS AND BRETHREN,—I hope that our brother, Monsieur Francis, has presented you my excuses, because in consequence of my journey to Frankfort in the month of September it was not in my power to write to you.¹ Since my return I have been almost always ill; not that my malady was continually an obstacle, but nevertheless, when the opportunity of a messenger presented itself, it prevented me from availing myself of it. But for all that, had I thought that you attached so much importance to my letters, I should not have delayed so long, for I would willingly bestow my services on you, even in more important matters. As you have, however, people more at hand that exhort and stir you up, it seems to me you have no great need of my letters, unless it be to console you, by showing what interest I take in your spiritual welfare. For as you have an affection for me, I am convinced that it gives you pleasure that I keep you in remembrance. For the rest, what you expect and desire of me, you will find more at hand if you seek for it carefully, that is to say, if you are diligent in reading God's holy word, and exercising yourselves in the doctrine thereof, and the exhortations drawn from it, you will have ample matter for confirming you in the fear of God, edifying you in the faith of our Lord Jesus, and preserving you in such constancy that nothing will make you swerve from the right path. Only beware of becoming lukewarm, for you know on what condition we are called. On the other hand, you are aware by experience of the means which Satan possesses of seducing and leading you astray, if

by the ministry of Francis Perucel. We read in the *Registers of the Company of Geneva*: "Church of Antwerp, March 1557. The minister Evrard was elected, and sent to announce to them the word of God."

The Church of Antwerp, soon increased by a great number of refugees from Artois and Picardy, passed through all the vicissitudes of the Reformation in the Low Countries. Under the ministry of the celebrated Francis Junius it had to suffer rigorous persecutions, which brought on the momentary dispersion of its members (1567) and gave rise to the foundation of the Church of Aix la Chapelle, but it was reconstituted a few years afterwards. See: *Hist. des Martyrs*, p. 679; Brant, *Hist. de la Reformation des Pays Bas*, tom. i. pp. 131, 132.

¹ See the following letter.

you were not held in check by the bridle of God's word. For however we impose on ourselves, if we relax ever so short a time, all the knowledge we have acquired soon dwindles away. For we are so full of vanities and evil affections that these will very speedily corrupt the good seed which God has sown in us, unless we be constantly intent on cultivating it, plucking up the evil and confirming the good. Above all, you live in a place where so many corruptions prevail, that unless you have remedies constantly at hand, it will be very difficult for you to persevere in that purity which he requires of his own. And I have no doubt that each of you sufficiently feels in himself how Satan strives to turn to account such occasions. So much the more then, it is for you to fight against them. No doubt it is not all to read and to hear, for our chief end is to live to God in all holiness and perfection, and though we cannot persevere in that course, till we be stripped of this corruptible nature, yet have we to walk in uprightness of life, and serve with a pure conscience that God of mercy who has set us aside for himself. But because with our natural infirmities, and surrounded by so many temptations, we speedily lose sight of our high calling, so as not to acquit ourselves of our duty, and in the mean time our natural inconstancy transports us hither and thither, we have much need to avail ourselves of the aids which God has afforded us. Wherefore, my brethren, exercise yourselves not only by reading in private, but also by assembling yourselves in the name of Jesus Christ, in order to call upon God and receive profitable instruction, that you may advance more and more. And by this means each one will also stir up his brethren to take courage, and will himself be stirred up by them. And that nothing may cause you to turn aside, think what kind of a treasure the gospel is, that you may learn to despise whatever is of this world. For though Satan blinds the children of this world with their delights and desires, so that they take no pleasure in the doctrine of salvation, we ought not to wallow in the same sty along with them. For verily it is an inestimable felicity to be able to rest in the goodness of God, to obtain mercy of him, and though we be but wretched creatures, in waiting till

he call us to his eternal inheritance, to hold ourselves under his protection here below. Since by means of the gospel we are possessed of this treasure, let us watch that it be not ravished from us.

I could wish that, besides the casual visits of our brethren, you had a man resident among you for your instruction, that you might have recourse also to him in all your difficulties; and I pray you to strive to have one. For the rest, my brethren, always so walk amid this perverse generation, that your life may indeed shew that it is not in vain that God has separated you from it. Dedicate yourselves wholly to our Lord Jesus Christ, till you be entirely transformed into his image, in order to be participators of his glory; and always keep in mind that we have to pass through this world, and not to be shut up in it.

Whereupon, in conclusion, beloved seigneurs and brethren, having commended myself to you and your fervent prayers, I supplicate our heavenly Father to govern you always by his Spirit, to multiply in you his grace, and fortify you in all virtue, and preserve you from the jaws of the wolf.

Your humble brother,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

CCCCL.—THE FRENCH CHURCH OF FRANKFORT.¹

Conditional approbation given to the choice of a new minister.

GENEVA, 27th December 1556.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus

¹ The presence and counsels of the Reformer exercised a happy influence on the French parish of Frankfort. The parties who had up to that time been divided, agreed for the election of a new minister, destined to replace Valeran Poulain, who had voluntarily laid down his office. The choice of the church fell upon Francis Perucel, called la Riviere, formerly minister of the French churches of London and of Wezel. He arrived at Frankfort in the month of January 1557, served this church during some years, and became afterwards chaplain of the Prince of Condé. It was no doubt in consequence of this title that he took a part in the conferences of Poissy. Beza, *Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 692.

Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

BELoved SEIGNEURS AND BRETHREN,—When I first heard the news of the election you have made, I was sorry for one circumstance only, which is that you have paid no respect to the present necessities of the church of Wezel, at least if you were aware of them. For you know that each church should not consult its own interests so exclusively as to pay no attention to those of others. What is more, in withdrawing our brother Master Francis from Wezel, while matters are in such disorder there, you would have done a wrong not only to the small flock which is assembled in that place, but to the whole of Christendom. For if he had departed, or if even now he should depart from there, without having waited for the issue which God will be pleased to give to the cause for which he is struggling, he would inflict on it a more dangerous wound than you imagine. But I am convinced that you were unacquainted with his position when you elected him, and that since that time you have not been immoderately warm in your demonstrations towards him. For my part, I should never advise him to stir before having gained the cause for which he has combated till now, though he and the little flock should be driven out by force and tyranny.¹ But I still hope for a more favourable termination, and that he will obtain not only that our brethren shall be allowed to inhabit that place, serving God in purity; but also that the truth of the gospel with regard to the article of the Lord's supper, though attempts have been made to oppress it, will finally prevail. I entreat you then not to be so taken up with your own concerns, as not to prefer to your private utility a common good of such importance. Barring this single objection, I shall certainly give my sanction, and so I have written to himself, for his coming immediately to your assistance. For the church of Embden² ought not to prevent him, and the obligation which he alleges is not of such a nature as to deprive him of the liberty of employing

¹ See the letter to the brethren of Wezel, p. 29.

² The Reformed Church of Embden in East Friesland, founded by the Polish nobleman John Laski, and visited by Francis Perucel.

his services wherever God shall offer him a better opportunity. If, as I hope, he follows my advice, you will have reason to be satisfied. Indeed I believe you are sufficiently convinced how much I have it at heart, that you should be provided for. And because I am confident that our brother Master Francis will endeavour faithfully to discharge his duties, and his labours will be useful to you, I would by no means retard, but rather hasten as much as possible his arrival among you.

For the rest, my brethren, I pray you to employ constantly every effort to unite again the body of your church which has been so miserably dispersed, and for this purpose, forgetting all past quarrels and contentions, to bear with the infirmities of those who have been deceived. As to the act of your elders, if it is such as I have heard it represented, they well deserve to be removed from the charge, in which they have governed so badly. Only take measures, I pray you, that that be done without tumult, and with the peaceable consent of parties; and whereas they have wished to sow divisions among you, let them take a lesson from you how to quell the mutinous by good order. I should have thought that Master Valeran would have been somewhat more circumspect, had it been but for his own interest. At present he confirms too clearly what has been said of him. At any rate he has shewn that he is pursuing a reckless course, by which I see that God is hurrying him on to his ruin. In the mean time, bear yourselves with so much the more modesty, and shew that in seeking the edification of the church, you desire not the ruin of any body. I beg of you also in my name to salute the rest of the brethren.

Whereupon I will conclude, after having commended myself to your fervent prayers, and supplicated our heavenly Father to govern you by his Holy Spirit, and increase you in all good.

Your humble brother,

JOHN CALVIN.

CCCCLI.—TO VIRET.¹

Election of a Pastor for the church of Paris—disorders of the wife of Anthony Calvin.

GENEVA, 7th January 1557.

The affair of Paris is in a state of great perplexity. An election to which Christopher by his counsels is favourable is altogether to be avoided. Already the report is in general circulation. It is not yet however the public talk of all the taverns of Berne. I predict that it will be, if any one is publicly elected. If Farel shall be disposed to ask privately of his overseer for a mission, it would be a tolerable manner of proceeding. For he will be ashamed to make too great a disturbance respecting an affair entrusted to his good faith. If Farel refuse this, it will be necessary to fall back upon Enard or Gaspar, though Tomassin also would give satisfaction, if by your exhortations and those of Farel he consented to undertake the charge. If no one can be detached from that place without the votes of the society, perhaps God will find some for us here. But the former plan should be attempted in the first place. My grief does not permit me to say more. For when that abandoned woman, who was then my brother's wife, lived in my house, we discovered that she had committed adultery with the hunchbacked Peter.² The only consolation we have in this affliction is that my brother will be freed from her by a divorce.

Farewell, best and most upright brother. Salute in my

¹ The church of Paris asked for a new minister. Christopher Fabri, Gaspar Carmel, and Farel, were disposed to respond to its call. But the presence of Farel and Fabri was necessary at Neuchatel. It was Carmel who obtained this dangerous honour. See the letter to the church of Paris of the 15th March following.

² Anthony Calvin, the brother of the Reformer, had for his first wife Anne de Fer, the daughter of a refugee of Arras, whom he divorced for adultery. Viret wrote on this occasion to Calvin: "What you write to me of this domestic sorrow very much distresses me. It was not enough for the vile woman to have once offended in so disgraceful a manner the whole church, and troubled and discredited so pious a family. May God have pity on her. Do you in your wisdom moderate your distress of mind." Letter of the 9th January 1557. (*Library of Geneva*, vol. 107 a.)

name the brethren, your wife, and daughters. May God protect, govern, and bless you all.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Gotha. Vol. 404, p. 29.*]

CCCCLII.—TO THE SEIGNEURY OF BERNE.¹

Justification of the measures adopted with regard to the fugitive Libertins.

GENEVA, 29th January 1557.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL SEIGNEURS,—We have received your letters bearing date the 23d of the present month, in which you deal towards us with a rigour which does not seem to become good friends and neighbours. You will be pleased to pardon the sorrow which the expressions you employ have caused us. For if your intention was, as you say, to address to us an amicable request, it was not proper to insult us by saying that we have followed out our legal procedure with inhumanity; and we conceive that the respect and modesty which we observe towards you should have procured us a little more indulgence. For the rest, as to the fact about which you have written to us, we see that you have been partly ill-informed, for we have never by proclamation summoned Amy Perrin

¹ The differences that had taken place between Berne and Geneva on the subject of the refugees, were every day becoming more and more aggravated. Summoned to appear in person or by proxy at Geneva, to give an account of their conduct, the refugees refused to obey, and placing themselves under the protection of Berne, they did all in their power to embroil the two cities in a quarrel. An incident occurred which raised their irritation to the highest pitch. A citizen of Geneva, a relation of Amy Perrin's, having bequeathed by his will 500 crowns to the fugitive Libertins, to aid them in carrying on their process, all his property was confiscated. Informed of this act, and piqued at not having been able to obtain any concession for the refugees, the Seigneurs of Berne wrote to those of Geneva a very passionate letter: "They accused them of having acted with inhumanity against those they had condemned . . . and especially the confiscation of the property of the person who had bequeathed a legacy displeased them, because that person had left a posthumous child, so that they said it was punishing a child yet in its mother's womb. And after several remonstrances, they threatened to grant permission to the said condemned persons, for the ends of securing justice to them, to seize upon the Genevese property." *Chronique de Roset*, vi. 26. The answer of the Seigneury, approved by the two councils, was the work of Calvin himself.

and his accomplices, on pain of having their property confiscated, and never did we make use of such an expression. On your part, you ought not to find it strange that those who have had the handling of the money of our treasury, and have detained it, should be summoned to appear and give in their accounts to those appointed to receive them. In that there is nothing unusual, we suppose. You allege that it is a thing impossible for them, but the example of Peter Vandal demonstrates the contrary, for he, forming one of their number, found means to settle his accounts and establish in whose favour the balance stood, knowing that by the principles of common sense, as well as those of equity, he could not avoid it. We are even persuaded that, after having satisfied us, neither he nor his attorney complains of our having wronged them, or treated them unhandsomely. Wherefore, Amy Perrin, in having recourse to subterfuges, plainly proves that he wishes neither to give in his accounts nor pay what he owes. For about twenty years he has had the handling of the money of our revenue. During that time our city has often been agitated by troubles, which have prevented him from settling his accounts. During that interval, however, he has been more than once called upon, and summoned to lay a statement before us, which demand he has always eluded. Be that as it may, the least he can do is to present it now, and satisfy us to the amount he shall be found to have received. To your remark that we have forbidden all persons to give aid or countenance either to him or his accomplices, and have carried our cruelty so far as to punish their posthumous children, we can only say, that it moves our pity to think that when so many things utterly frivolous are reported to you, you should lend so ready an ear to them. We will not institute a comparison between you and ourselves, for we are quite aware of our insignificance, not only in power, but also in knowledge. Thus I have no occasion to say, that when similar things are reported to us of you, we should never think of believing them. But if they were said of our equals, or of persons inferior to us, if any such there are, still we should be inclined to make enquiries before judging. It is true we have pronounced a

sentence which will turn to the disadvantage of the orphan children of a person deceased, and even of a posthumous child. But this sentence is not founded upon the motives which you have been given to understand, and we have no doubt that, placed in the same condition, if you had had to give sentence, you would not have done less than we; for we deem you such prudent seigneurs, and so well inclined to your commonwealth, that if one of your citizens had declared his wish to have your state kept in a state of agitation at his expense, you would not have spared his person, and still less the property which he should have exposed in so wicked a cause. Nevertheless, there never existed so rigorous a prohibition as you have been given to understand. This is proved by experience, for not one of those who have been condemned has ever been deprived of the privilege of pursuing his rights for want of an attorney in all private suits, whether it were to defend his property, or for any other claim not connected with the criminal pursuit in which their personal appearance was indispensable. Thus, then, we beg of you, instead of listening to such frivolous reports, to deign to make yourselves acquainted with the truth before you condemn us.

Respecting your reproaches on the subject of our refusing to grant a safe conduct to the said Perrin and his adherents, to give them an opportunity of justifying their crimes, when we were solicited to do so by you and by the most high, redoubtable and right worshipful Seigneurs of the Lignes, we conceived that we had satisfied you by the most reasonable excuses. At least we hope that the right worshipful Seigneurs of the Lignes will recognize, and have already recognized, that it was impossible to act better than we have done. Now, though we hope also that you will be pacified by this answer, so far as to allow us to pursue our rights, nevertheless we are compelled to say a word in reply to your threat of granting leave to Perrin and his adherents to invade our property in execution of justice. For in the first place, the expression implies a usurpation by force, which is a thing we find very strange, seeing that the point in question was to make a town collector of revenue give an account of the amount of pro-

perty belonging to the public, which he has detained; we cannot suppose that you should wish to act more unhandsomely towards us than the Duke of Savoy, by whose orders one named Bernard Boulet, who had had the management of the city revenue, was forced, though a refugee, to come here and lay before us his accounts. But since you threaten us with armed force, you will not take it amiss, if in such a case we protest that we shall be forced to lay our complaints before your friends and allies, from whom we hope to find succour and reparation. We know very well that you have inserted in your declaration the expression "in the execution of justice," but when you speak of laying hold of our property by an invasion, we have no other resource but to invoke Him who has promised to come to the aid of those who are trampled down. For, on our part, we will endeavour by a pure conscience to have access to him, and then we will demand justice in the quarter where we shall be able to obtain it. Nevertheless, we cannot help thinking that of your wisdom and equity you will, without raising any disturbance, allow us to claim our rights by the ordinary channel of justice; and we entreat you, in the name of God, to be more moderate, so that we may with due humility maintain ourselves in our modest state, and render you all the services in our power, as we have determined to do, by the help of God, whom we pray to preserve you in his grace.

The Syndics, the Lesser and the Greater Council, named that of the Two Hundred of Geneva, your good neighbours and friends.

[*Fr. orig. corrected by Calvin.—Arch. of Geneva.*]

CCCCLIII.—TO PETER MARTYR.¹

A call addressed to Martyr in the name of the Italian church of Geneva.

GENEVA, 31st January 1557.

How my reply to Westphal and his associates pleased you, (for I am unwilling to augur ill before the time,) I should like to know by the return of this messenger. Whatever your opinion shall be, give it me frankly. Nor shall I be surprised if my manner of proceeding do not altogether satisfy you. I often attempted to change it, but as nothing better presented itself to my mind, I went on with the work as I had begun it. My great haste will also partly extenuate, or at least excuse my faults. But lest I should seem to forestall your judgment, I shall abstain from all apology. And now I have to plead a cause of greater importance, namely, to exhort you to accept a new call. I see as long as you fill your present office, how far the usefulness of your labours extends, of what importance it is that from a distinguished school should come forth ministers of the word, having received a right education, how many places thirst for the books that flow from the fountain of Zurich. So that partly from a scruple of conscience, partly from shame, I durst hardly venture to throw in a word in favour of your call. But on the other hand, when your countrymen represent to me their necessity, pardon me if I incline to their side; my own personal affections too on this question have too much influence over me, and therefore I had rather play the part of one who demands than of one who exhorts, though I do not think that my private predilections blind me to such a degree, as to make me believe that it is my

¹ To that most distinguished man and faithful servant of Christ, Peter Martyr, teacher in the church of Zurich, and my most respected brother.

Peter Martyr had quitted Strasbourg to settle at Zurich, to the great regret of Calvin. In a letter of the 18th May 1556, Calvin thus writes to Farel: "Peter Martyr has gone to Zurich, which I could scarcely have believed. But he himself is of opinion that this opportunity of departure has been opened up for him in order that out of it he may expect to enjoy greater liberty. May the Lord cause it to turn out well!"

duty to abstain from exhorting you to come in aid to the men of your nation, since it is a matter of great importance also that the state of this church should be maintained unimpaired, and no other fitting person for that purpose besides yourself occurs to my mind. I am not ignorant indeed how much beneath your merits this situation is, but we shall have another occasion for calling for your services, if you would not make any difficulty in giving to the French also the benefit of your interpretation of the Scriptures, for we too shall either read by turns, or, what would please me more, and be, in my judgment, of greater utility, I will resign the whole task to you, as far as your convenience will permit; nor is there anything in the difficulty which should make you hesitate, since the manner should be left entirely to your own choice. But as the matter does not altogether depend upon you, it remains that you should leave it entirely to the judgment of the church to which you owe your services. Only this I entreat of you, that if you obtain permission, you will not hesitate to grant us this favour.

Farewell, most accomplished sir, and highly respected brother. All my colleagues cordially salute you. I do not add the salutation of the Marquis, because you will receive a letter from himself. May the Lord continue to direct you by his Spirit, to support and shield you with his protection.—
Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCCLIV.—TO FAREL.

Complaints about the bad proceedings of the Seigneurs of Berne—domestic griefs.

GENEVA, 3d February 1557.

Besides open contentions, you can have no idea, my dear Farel, with how many ambushes and clandestine machinations Satan daily assails us. So then, though the state of public affairs be tranquil, it is not allowed, for all that, to every body

to enjoy repose. When we had already, at home, many concealed enemies, of whom, however, some are delighted to throw off the mask, our neighbours also threaten us in the most outrageous manner. And I wish their fury confined itself to threats, but when an opportunity presents itself they spit out their venom. My brother and Normandie had lately a proof of that. For when they proceeded against Perrin in virtue of an edict of the Bernese, the latter did not content themselves with requiring them to abdicate their rights, but wished the pursuers to incur the whole costs of the trial. Moreover it is past belief how insultingly they exasperate our citizens. And in addition to that we are weighed down by a load of domestic affliction. Of the city I say nothing, for our private calamity almost completely absorbs us. The judges find no way of disengaging my brother.¹ I interpret their blindness as a just punishment for our own, because for upwards of two years though I was pillaged by a thief, I saw nothing. My brother perceived neither the thief nor the adulterer. But if no results can be obtained judicially, we are determined to have recourse to some other method, to break through the difficulty. I warn you, however, not to let a word escape you on this subject, for I should be loth to resort to this measure unless compelled by an urgent necessity.

Of the departure of our brother Gaspar, I have heard no reports. I now rejoice at what I had always apprehended. As to pass by us will make the journey longer, I would willingly have spared him that trouble. Let him decide himself according to his convenience, whether he will have the letter sent to him or receive it here as he passes through. Unless I am mistaken in my opinion, a man admirably fitted for your school has been chosen. He writes elegantly and neatly, and is possessed of that dexterity which suits your

¹ See p. 308, note 2. The divorce was pronounced a short time afterwards, as the Registers of the Council of the 15th February 1557 testify: "Anthony Calvin obtained his divorce on account of the adultery of his wife, who is banished on pain of being publicly whipped." Anthony Calvin married the 14th January 1560, Antoinette Commelin, the widow of the minister John de Saint-André, by whom he had several children, mentioned, as well as those of the former marriage, in the Testament of the Reformer.

countrymen. He is endowed besides with other accomplishments fitted to procure him authority. The messengers will be better able to tell you the rest.

Farewell, best and worthiest brother. Salute in my name your prefect and other friends. Towards your colleagues the messengers will perform this duty. May the Lord always govern and strengthen you even to the end. I commend me to your prayers in my grave inquietudes.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

All our friends whom you begged me to salute, salute you affectionately in their turn.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCCLV.—TO BULLINGER.

Enquiries concerning the sentence of the arbiters between Berne and Geneva.

GENEVA, 17th February 1557.

Since no news has been brought us from your quarter on the return of our friend Macaire, either by letter or common rumour, I was greatly delighted that this messenger presented himself to me so opportunely, that by his means I may extract some information from you, if it suit your convenience. From so complete a silence we conjecture that nothing has been done, but why they have thought proper to delay we can with difficulty suspect. Our neighbours have lately threatened us too atrociously to make it probable that they will long remain quiet and at peace. No letter except what was filled with insults and terrible menaces. But as a longer delay renders our citizens anxious, and these new stinging insults are added into the bargain, I again and again entreat you, venerable brother, that you would signify to me, what resolution the three cities have come to, what next they have attempted, in what position affairs stand, what issue is to be expected, and how long the final decision will be protracted.¹

¹ The difficulties pendent between Berne and Geneva were referred to the arbitration of Bâle, Schaffhausen, and Zurich.

With you I have no occasion to insist further. Only let it be your business that this messenger do not return to us without some definitive account. I have charged him with a book not quite finished, not to annoy you with the tedious and troublesome perusal of it, but to let you see how much leisure our printers can command, who have time to publish things like that; and that M. Peter Martyr may learn at the same time to send forth his matured productions when he sees my untimely births dragged into light. I know not when you have decided to come to us. I am fully persuaded that you will come, and the time is now approaching unless perhaps you choose to put off your visit till the month of April. But I would not have you let that month slip away without seeing me. At that time also we shall have something from the fair about which we shall be able to deliberate among ourselves.

Farewell, most accomplished sir, and venerable brother. My colleagues and other friends send you their kindest salutations. Do you in your turn carefully salute your fellow pastors. May the Lord protect, guide, and sustain you.—
Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich.* Gall. Scripta, p. 30.]

CCCCLVI.—TO THE NOBLES OF POLAND.¹

He apologizes for not being able to go into Poland in consequence of the important duties which detain him in Geneva.

GENEVA, 17th March 1557.

WELL BORN AND NOBLE SEIGNEURS, and brethren whom from the heart I honour. If your letter had been put into my hands at the autumn fair of Frankfort, which I only received at Zurich, on my return I should not have put off my answer

¹ On the back of the letter in an unknown hand writing: "Copy of a letter which had been sent to the well born and noble Seigneurs who have embraced the pure doctrine of the gospel in Poland."

up to this time. For from that public mart, there are always more convenient opportunities of writing, and just about that period our venerable brother, John Laski, was on the eve of his departure, who not only would have taken charge of this commission for your sakes and my own, but in whom I should have found moreover a most faithful interpreter. But as since then I have found no opportunity of a messenger to convey my letter, I did not conceive that there was any need of being in a hurry, especially when from the long interval of time that had elapsed, I might conjecture that there was no very urgent need of my services, and M. Lismannini despairing of being able to prolong any more his stay among you, had rather kept us in suspense in the expectation of his arrival, than encouraged us to use despatch in the hope of securing any advantages. And though it was easy to gather from your letter that my arrival would be agreeable to you, yet as my departure would draw along with it no small detriment to this church, I was afraid lest my precipitation to fly to your assistance before the due time, might incur the charge of inconsiderateness and an excess of zeal. For these reasons, as soon as I came home, I showed your letter to our senate. The members of it were all sad and anxious, till I reminded them that there was no need of any deliberations, since the five months which had elapsed since the date of the letter might most probably have produced some change. I say they were anxious, because they would not have denied any thing to you whose interests they desire so much to consult, and whom they wish to gratify to the full extent of their power, and yet to permit my departure was a thing in the highest degree painful to them. At present, that by the blessing of God you have it in your power to profit by the labours of that most excellent and faithful minister of Christ, John Laski, I do not see any reason for your so ardently desiring my presence among you. For though I am confident that he would make no difficulty in admitting me to be the partner of his labours, and to me it would be a source of great pleasure to co-operate with him for your advantage, nevertheless, if no absolute necessity required it, I do not think that you yourselves would wish me to be violently torn from the

station in which I am usefully employed. Certainly unless you should wish me to incur the charge of levity, nothing was to be attempted in so doubtful a state of affairs. If I did not remind you sooner of this difficulty, it was M. Lismannini that was the cause of my delay, who had written to me that he should most probably be among us within a few months. And though other letters have followed since then from which better hopes might be conceived, yet I perceived perfectly well from his silence, that there was no reason for being in a hurry. Wherefore the only resource which remains for me is that I shall attempt to make up, by the aid of my prayers, whatever inconvenience you may have experienced from my absence. For that is also a true alacrity which has no need of the spur of exhortations.

Farewell, most distinguished Seigneurs, not less noble by birth than for your singular piety. May the Lord direct you by the spirit of wisdom, sustain you by his invincible courage, and cover you with his protection. I have taken upon me to plead the excuse of our senate for not giving you an answer.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. min. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCCLVII.—TO THE CHURCH OF PARIS.¹

He congratulates the members of this church on their fidelity, and announces to them two new ministers in soliciting a leave of absence for one of their pastors.

15th March 1557.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

¹ On the back: To my well beloved Seigneurs and brethren. . .

The Reformed church of Paris, the most important in the kingdom for the number of its pastors and of its martyrs, was definitively established in the year 1555. Its members assembled first in the Pré-aux-Cleres, in the house of a gentleman of Maine, the Sieur de la Ferrière, "to offer up their prayers in common, and read some passages of the Holy Scriptures. This Seigneur having a son, desired that he should be

SIRS, AND HONOURED BRETHREN,—I cannot sufficiently magnify the infinite goodness of God, which is so powerfully manifested in you, and especially because in the midst of the fears and assaults to which you are daily exposed, that indulgent Father fortifies and renders you invincible by his Spirit. It is much that he keeps in check, nay, even in fetters, so many enemies who seek but to devour you, and have the means of doing so were they not otherwise restrained. But I prize still more the grace by which you are sustained, and through which, relying on his promises you persevere; for it is by this grace that he shews the efficacy of his Spirit and wishes it to be known in his church. Now in order to hold on well, let every one exhort his fellow, and all put in practice what is recommended in the scripture, viz: to strengthen the trembling knees and feeble hands, trusting more and more in the protection of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will shew himself to the end the faithful guardian of our bodies, as well as our souls. And though you receive some support from the world, whatever fall out, always glory in your lowly estate, that you may effectually prove that there is no safety except under the shadow of God's wings. In the mean time let your virtuous life be a buckler to repel all the detractions of your enemies. True it is, that in exhorting you I feel ashamed, that on our part we cannot lend you more efficacious aid, as your condition requires and our duty dictates. But I entreat you to have indulgence if we do not fulfil our duty as promptly as it were to be desired. As we had no means whatever of satisfying your demand, we have sent the two brethren whom you will see, who will make you verbal excuses for not having come sooner. On their arrival we

baptized according to the rites of the Reformed church. He made the proposal to the assembly, and begged them to choose a minister from among their body. The unanimous choice of the brethren fell on John le Maçon, or de Launay, known by the name of la Rivière, and not less remarkable for his piety than his talents. A consistory composed of elders and deacons was charged with the visitation of the poor, and watching over purity of doctrine and of morals. The church of Paris thus organized formed a correspondence with that of Geneva, received several ministers from it, and was able to face the persecutions which were destined to assail it with new fury and consecrate it by martyrdom. Beza, *Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 99, and the following.

trust they will supply the want you have hitherto felt. One of them has long ministered among us here, and has even left his fold for a time to go to your assistance.¹ The other has been employed in like ministrations, and always acquitted himself faithfully in them.² Both have consented to leave their families, rather than to fail you in your necessity. I will entreat you to give them a patient hearing, and profit under them before you judge too hastily, as we are apt sometimes to conceive an aversion before having formed a due acquaintance. For when you have given them a kindly reception, I am confident that you shall have occasion to congratulate yourselves on seeing the fruits of their labours, for God has bestowed on them the gifts necessary to edify his church in honest simplicity and uprightness, and I doubt not but he will bless their zeal. Wherefore deliberate how to welcome them as servants of Him to whom we owe all reverence, and who has declared that in despising the humblest of these little ones, we despise him that sent them.

For the rest, in order to provide better and more fully for your state, I should wish to have some communication respecting it with M. de Launay as well as with M. du Buisson, for I hope that the latter, who has left you with your leave of absence,³ will speedily arrive here. With respect to the other, M. de Launay, because he has signified to me his desire to have it in his power to retire for some time, not to enjoy the recreations of a vacation, but to prepare himself at leisure for ampler services, I will beg of you then to grant him this request. For though our Lord has made use of him at these early years⁴

¹ *Registers of the Company of Geneva, 15th March 1557*: "Monday the fifteenth of March, Master Gaspard (Cormel) minister of Neuchâtel, husband of the niece of Monsieur William Farel, passing through here, has started to go to Paris to succour the assembly which is numerous there by the grace of God.

² Who was this second? The registers of the same day (*15th March*) furnish only the following indication: "Along with the said M. Gaspar started M. John d'Espoir in order to go to Rouen to administer the word of God."

³ The minister Francis Morel, sometimes called du Buisson, and more generally Monsieur de Colonges. *Registers of the Company of Geneva, July 1557*: "We expect M. de Coulonge, who being too much exposed at Paris, where he discharged the office of pastor, had received a leave of absence from the said church."

⁴ He was then but twenty-four years of age.

in such a manner that we have reason to glorify him for it; yet of a certainty in permitting him to study at his leisure during two years, we shall render him doubly useful for continuing the service he has commenced. Were I not thoroughly persuaded of his good intentions, I should not make myself his advocate to obtain his exemption; but when you see at what he is aiming I trust you will not oppose him, especially when you perceive that though separated from you he will nevertheless continue to belong to you. Now if you think fit to send him, I beg you to give him full instructions, that we may be better able to conform to your wishes, in making choice of persons to minister, unless you find in your own parts those who may be proper and suitable for this service. For my own part, I assure you that were I only at liberty to travel, without so much ado, I should prefer to consult on the spot. As it is I hope in God, if the two brethren come, they will fall upon some means of satisfying you and providing for your wants.

Whereupon, Messieurs and brethren, commending me affectionately to you and to your fervent prayers, I entreat our heavenly Father to have you in his holy keeping, to govern you always by his Holy Spirit, and to enrich you more and more with his spiritual gifts, till you be finally perfected. My colleagues join in these wishes.

Your humble brother,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[*Fr. orig.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

CCCCLVIII.—TO BULLINGER.

Preliminaries of the assembly of Baden.

GENEVA, 17th March 1557.

Since your most illustrious senate has gained nothing by its authority, influence, and entreaties over our neighbours, we shall apply to the assembly at Baden. But because that assembly is not in the habit of giving an answer, unless the

deputies of the towns and cantons come furnished with full instructions, we again pray your illustrious senate to take care that the demands which our deputies will produce be laid before the confederated states. If you can elicit any thing which it would be advantageous for us to know, I entreat you do not hesitate to inform me privately. Moreover though it is necessary that the business should also be laid open to our neighbours, lest they complain that anything has been concealed from them, nay, lest they dismiss our deputies without according anything under this pretext, we desire however that they should be informed as late as possible, lest they stop up the way, since, on account of the severity of the temperature, it would not be very convenient to leave home for the sake of recreation. Make an effort to see us here at least immediately after Easter. I put off till that time the consultation which you wrote to me that we were to have respecting the letter of M. Laski.

Farewell, most distinguished sir, and highly honoured brother, along with M. Martyr, M. Gualter, your sons-in-law, and the other fellow pastors. May the Lord always bless you more and more.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich.* Gall. Scripta, p. 32.]

CCCCLIX.—To JOHN UTENHOVEN.¹

Hopes of seeing the Reform make decisive progress in Poland—eulogy on Laski.

GENEVA, *March 1557.*

You have given me without hesitation such detailed and exact information respecting the state of the church in Poland,

¹To the noble and most distinguished Seigneur, and truly respected friend and brother, John Utenhoven.

Expelled from London with the congregation of French Protestants, John Utenhoven had followed the destinies of Laski, and along with him had taken his way to Poland. The 19th February 1557 he wrote from Cracow to Calvin a letter containing curious details respecting the religious state of his country and the dispositions of the king, who, in spite of the intrigues of the Nuncio and the party hostile to the Reform,

that I give you my most hearty thanks, distinguished sir and respected brother, for your courteousness and sedulity. And one satisfactory result has already justified our rising hopes, viz: that the king, by letters patent, has suspended the exile of Lismannini, and accorded him permission to remain. Hence I conclude that the courage of the king has increased so much, that he ventures with more boldness to check the insolence of the enemies. Assuredly that indolence was deplorable, even shameful, by which he had surrendered all his authority to the ungodly to such a degree that, from complaisance to them, he banished from his dominions the man whom in his heart he loved. Now he has given a proof by no means doubtful, from which it clearly appears, not that his anger has been so much appeased as to admit of his sparing a man malignantly oppressed, but that he is no longer fettered and kept in bondage by a party. I rejoice that M. Laski had been courteously received by him, even before he professed so independently the sentiments of his mind. I wish he were more frequently admitted to private conferences and familiar conversation. But if he has with difficulty access to give sound advice and holy admonitions, this fault will be corrected, I hope, by time. If after having finished the war, the king will seriously direct his attention to the reformation of his churches, there is no doubt but M. Laski will obtain that favour with him and all the nobility which he merits for his piety, learning, experience, and adroitness. Any recommendation of mine at present would not only be useless but also ridiculous. I am still uncertain whether the last letter to the king which Lismannini carried with him ever reached his hands. I therefore dispense with writing till I shall feel assured that my cooperation is not repudiated by him. In the prosecution of these duties I shall willingly address myself to the illustrious

had given a favourable reception to Laski. The latter had added to the letter of Utenhoven, some words addressed in haste to the Reformer of Geneva: "I am at present so overwhelmed with cares and business, my dear Calvin, that I can write nothing. On the one hand the enemies, on the other false brethren assail us, so that we have no repose. But we have many pious men, thanks be to God, who are both an aid and a consolation to us. . . farewell."

prince, the Palatine of Wilna. In a general epistle which I have determined to write, I will study to promote the same end. In a word, it shall not be my fault, if M. Laski do not obtain that authority among his countrymen, of which he is worthy. Of this I think I gave a very striking proof last winter. When the person whom you indirectly point at, spoke to me at great length about intestine feuds, this was my reply, "The piety of M. Laski is so perfectly known to me, that I am fully convinced he will labour faithfully and strenuously in extending the kingdom of Christ." When I commended his doctrine and zeal, I confessed it to be possible that he might have erred now and then from an excess of austerity; but as I was at too great a distance from him, I could not pronounce a judgment on matters unknown to me. In respect to my dedication of some work to the Duke, I can only say that my Commentary on the Psalms had been published before your letter came to hand; nor shall I have another opportunity very soon. For though I am now revising my commentary on Isaiah, yet that labour will remain dedicated to the memory of the most excellent king.

Farewell, most honoured sir and brother. My colleagues, and especially Remond, salute you, for the Lord has taken to himself that most excellent man Saint-André. My brother also and many friends wish you all kinds of prosperity. May the Lord always be present with you, govern you by his Spirit, and accompany you with all his blessings.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Gotha.* Vol. 404, p. 19.]

CCCCLX.—TO THE COUNT OF MONTBELIARD.¹

Explications concerning the Italian Antitrinitarian Matteo Gribaldi.

GENEVA, 2nd May 1557.

MOST ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE AND SEIGNEUR,—When it is my greatest desire to comply with the wishes of your highness, an obligation which I consider due not more to your rank

¹ George de Wurtemberg. Vol. ii. p. 241, Note 1.

and the eminence of your family, than to your distinguished virtues, and especially to your singular piety, I wish a more agreeable occasion, of testifying this respect and proving my duty to you, had presented itself. But as it has pleased you at the present moment to make some enquiries about Matteo Gribaldi,¹ I shall briefly explain to you how he conducted himself here. And first of all, he lived in this city without ever having professed his duty to our senate or bound himself by any pledge of fidelity, and was always reckoned in the class of strangers or foreigners. But as he was in the habit of coming here every year, it is possible he was among us at the time when Servetus was thrown into prison. And at that time dissembling his participation in the impious errors of that man, he contented himself with insinuating, in the conversations which he held, that punishments ought not to be inflicted on men for holding false opinions, for that every one should be allowed liberty of conscience. He discovered afterwards however, what at first he had concealed, that he had complained of the severity of our senate merely that he might have an opportunity of venting with impunity his own impious ravings. And about that period indeed, I confess, he demanded to have a conference with me, which I refused, because I was already acquainted with the temper of the man. No better method of avoiding his demand occurred to me, than that of requiring that proper witnesses should be present at our conversation, a thing he purposely shunned. Thus he at that time withdrew. A short time afterwards when he returned, I signified to him through an intimate friend, that he was free to have a fraternal conference with me if he chose,

¹ Matteo Gribaldi, a learned lawyer of Padua, quitted that town in 1548, to withdraw from the persecutions directed against the partisans of the Reformed doctrines, and obtained by the recommendation of Vergerio a law professor's chair in the University of Tubingen. Distinguished for the subtlety of his genius, and habituated betimes to the controversies on the mysteries of religion, he pronounced against the doctrine of the Trinity. Having purchased the estate of Farges in the district of Gese, he made frequent excursions to Geneva, and adroitly disseminated his doubts in the bosom of the Italian congregation of that city. This was the motive for the sentence of banishment pronounced against him at the instigation of Calvin, and of the rigorous measures which he also incurred at Tubingen and Berne. Having retired to Farges during the latter years of his life, he there died of the plague in 1564.

provided it were in the presence of my fellow pastors and three ecclesiastical elders. I also let him know beforehand that he had no danger or fraud to apprehend. He consented, and came to the place which had been appointed. But as he came into the apartment where we were seated, because I did not on his first entry hold out my hand to him, he went off immediately in a blustering manner; and yet politely, and even with some complimentary phrases, I begged to be excused for declining a ceremony with which I did not think it right to comply, until we should be found to agree in the principles of our faith, for that the affair we had to treat of, was too serious to admit of our amusing ourselves with deceitful ceremonies. When we saw that our man could not be appeased by friendly demonstrations, we decided, that being cited to appear in the council chamber he should give an account of his faith. There he not only shuffled, but shewed evidently that he was unwilling to profess openly what were his real sentiments. After a short interval, however, some expressions escaped him from which we had no difficulty in concluding in what pernicious errors he had been entangled. When we counselled modestly, he shewed by his vainglorious boasting, that nothing is more audacious than ignorance. Thus with such perverse obstinacy our pious and useful admonitions were of no avail. Meanwhile as a buckler to protect himself, he opposed to us this conclusion, that it was an undue and unjust degree of rigour not to suffer him in the city, because he differed from us in doctrinal points of faith. This objection, as it was our duty, we refuted. The senate did not think fit to press any further a foreigner. We too deemed it enough to take care that he should no longer propagate among us the poison of his impiety. There is my testimony; your highness will judge what credit is to be attached to it. Certainly it does not proceed from enmity, of which none ever existed between us, as Gribaldi himself will avow. For the rest, though he uttered many other incoherent follies, I shall give you only one specimen from which your highness will easily perceive that hitherto I have spoken with less harshness of the man than his detestable impiety warranted or even required. And here it is

not from my own account or that of any other person you will have to form your opinion, but as he betrayed by a writing in his own hand the kind of doctrine which we condemn in him, your highness will thence judge whether we ought to suffer the impious man who so perversely rends asunder the essence of God, and pretends that Christ is a newly invented divinity, different from the Father, and of a different essence from the Father. But as it is not my purpose at present to refute his impieties, lest the prolixity of my letter should tire out your patience, I conceived I should best discharge my duty, and in a manner most conformable to your sentiments, by sending to your highness the confession written and signed with his own hand, in which he attempts to exculpate himself to his Italian brethren. Whence the most illustrious prince your nephew will sufficiently, and more than sufficiently, perceive how profanely and wickedly this wretch saps and perverts the chief article of our faith.

Farewell, most illustrious prince, and by me profoundly respected Seigneur. I shall humbly supplicate our heavenly Father to support and protect you and your most illustrious consort, and to enrich you with every blessing.

CCCCLXI.—TO MATTHEW PFARRER.¹

Congratulates him on being re-elected to the functions of Burgomaster—Expresses his desire for the total abolition of the Catholic ceremonies at Strasbourg.

GENEVA, 19th May 1557.

When Doctor Othman² wrote to me that you had been re-elected burgomaster, most distinguished sir, I had resolved, from the respect I bear you, to congratulate you, and that you might with more alacrity discharge your functions, to add my

¹ The friend of Bucer and of Sturm, a magistrate as pious as he was firm and full of capacity. Pfarrer contributed powerfully to the reformation of Strasbourg, and thus deserved the eulogies of Th. de Beza. *Icones Virorum Illustrium*, 1580.

² Since the preceding year he had opened a course of lectures on Civil Law at Strasbourg.

good wishes and prayers. Now then that a fresh opportunity of writing to you is offered me, I willingly embrace it. For my brother, who had been to your city to purchase corn, informed me that he had been so courteously received, that he had no difficulty in perceiving that my name was with you as good as a letter of recommendation. If I did not then thank you for this token of your affection, I should think myself devoid of all politeness. My confidence in writing to you was also increased, when I reflected that it was not at all doubtful but that a letter from me would give you pleasure. And although being naturally disposed to do your duty, you stand in no need of any exhortations, if nevertheless, for the sake of our old friendship, I may venture freely to stimulate that ardour with which you are endowed, this officiousness of mine will not, I trust, be offensive to you. And first of all when you see that the eyes of all good men are fixed on you and on your magistracy, and that they conceive greater hopes from this year than from the five preceding ones, this expectation lays you under so sacred an obligation that you cannot suffer, from any sluggishness on your part, the event to disappoint them. But another consideration ought still more sharply to stir up your zeal and pious efforts, which is that, by the admirable counsel of God, a remarkable opportunity has now presented to you of purging from the defilements of Popery, your city, in which, after having seen true piety, and the pure worship of God flourishing for thirty years, your eyes are now compelled to witness (what we are convinced must be to them a sorrowful spectacle) a fresh invasion of unhallowed mummeries. But it will be to you a source of inestimable consolation, if dying, you shall leave it purified from superstitions; nay, if even now in your old age you restore that worship of God, in the establishing of which you formerly laboured with so much activity and fidelity. Another thing I ask of you, and entreat it by the sacred name of Christ, that you take under the protection of your patronage the unfortunate exiles, for the wretched condition of the times imposes on us the necessity of exercising hospitality towards one another.

Farewell, most excellent sir. May the Lord always stand by you, govern you by the Spirit of invincible fortitude and holy prudence, and bless your magistracy. Amen,—Truily yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 114.]

CCCCLXII.—TO CONRAD HUBERT.¹

Thanks him for a private service—ecclesiastical news—sends him a copy of verses.

GENEVA, 19th May 1557.

The aid you lately gave my brother, and other acts of courtesy you have done me, are so many proofs that I stand well in your affections. If in your turn you should have occasion for my services, you will perceive that I am not ungrateful. It happened very luckily, however, that he was unable at that time to procure a greater quantity of corn, because a short time after my brother's departure, the dearth which had threatened our suffering, common people with famine diminished a little. Thus there is no reason why you should give yourself any trouble in making an excuse, because in the small quantity which he purchased, he will be put to less expense than if he had been able to procure more. The abdication of *Beatus Venter*,² has effaced one stain and blot from your society, but it will not wipe out and clear away all causes of disgrace from among you. For I do not reckon it a small dishonour to your church, that the associate of Joachim Westphal bears sway among you. He it was, you know, who reckoned our most excellent father Bucer in the number of heretics. Would that Marbach would learn to embrace Jesus Christ together with his members, rather than puff himself up

¹ Conrad Hubert, after having long been secretary to Bucer, whom he had followed in his exile to England, had returned to Strasbourg where he exercised the functions of the ministry in 1576, and died at an advanced age.

² He alludes here to the abdication of *Beatus Gering*, to whom they gave from derision the nickname of *Venter* (belly). Röhrich, *Histoire de la Reforme en Alsace*, tom. iv

with windy vanity. What you wrote to us respecting the affairs of Saxony, ought deservedly to affect us with the deepest sorrow, though the moment that Philip shall depart from thence they will vent their spite more atrociously against him. Nevertheless it is necessary that he should quit them in order that he may at length begin to feel himself free. All good men augur no very happy results from the conference at Worms.¹ I do not see what is to be hoped for from Schnef² and such like persons. In your name I begged Budé to redeem his pledge. He has promised that he will take care that you shall receive something at the time of your fair. I thought proper to have had sent to you a tract published a short time ago by Henry Etienne, if perchance it should be of any use to you. I had naturally rather a turn for poetry, but having bid adieu to it I have composed nothing since the age of five and twenty, except that at Worms. I was induced by the example of Philip to write, by way of amusement, the poem which you have read.³ Wherefore I have nothing of my own to insert. Viret declares that the muses are so unfavourable to him that it is impossible for him to attempt any thing in verse.

Farewell, most excellent sir, and my very respected brother. Among your fellow pastors, if there are any, that still remain my friends besides M. Theobald (for of him I entertain no doubts), pray, salute them all affectionately in my name. When I passed by your town, I was surprised not to find M. Lenglin,⁴ though I made enquiries for him. He seemed to fly from my sight. May the Lord have you in his keeping, support you by his power, and direct you by his Spirit. Amen,—Yours,
JOHN CALVIN.

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

¹ A conference was convoked at Worms for the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs in Germany.

² Erard Schnef, a divine of Wurtemberg and professor at the University of Jena. He died in 1559.

³ *Epinicium Christo cantatum*, Geneva, 1541, in Svo. *Opera*, tom. viii.; this piece is a song of the victory of Christ over the Pope. There are some fine verses in it. It is Calvin's only poetical attempt, who was less richly endowed than Luther with the gifts of poetry and music.

⁴ Minister of the French Church of Strasbourg.

CCCCLXIII.—TO BULLINGER.¹

Mission of Theodore Beza to the German Princes to demand the convocation of a conference—measures to be adopted to insure its success.

GENEVA, 30th May 1557.

I have received three letters from you, most excellent sir, and venerable brother, within the last two months. In the first you mentioned that M. Peter Martyr and M. Gualter would come hither, but that the state of your health would prevent you from leaving home. You reminded me that there was small hope of success from a private conference, as Brentz everywhere obtains the principal parts, a man of an intractable character and too much wedded to his own undigested reveries. For my own part, though I have often protested how much such disputes were to be apprehended, nevertheless I was unwilling for that reason to shrink from them, lest our adversaries should sing triumph over our distrust. But as our excellent brethren Farel and Beza have announced to me that, if the opportunity of a conference should present itself, you were disposed of your own accord to embrace it, I abstain from further remarks, except that I should wish vehemently to entreat you to use your influence with your illustrious senate, that they might urge on our neighbours. For the good will of the prince, whom we thought unfavourable to our cause, is not to be repudiated. We should be very prompt to let him know in good time, that the desires of our party are all in favour of his design. But as the whole of this task must be undertaken by you, unless you make haste and strenuously urge the matter, it is to be feared that the others will

¹ Farel and Beza, charged with a mission to the Protestant cantons and Princes of Germany, were on the point of setting out to solicit the meeting of a Synod in which should appear the deputies of the Swiss and French churches. The object of this assembly was to proclaim a unity of doctrine among the different members of the great Reformed family, and thus place the Protestants, persecuted either in France or in Piedmont, under the protection of the German Princes. Ruchat, tom. vi. p. 203 and the following.

² The Duke of Wurtemberg.

eagerly allow the time to pass without making any effort. Now because it is expedient, nay almost indispensable, that a suitable witness should be sent to remind the Prince of Wurtemberg of his promise, reflect whether our friend Beza should not be sent there accompanied by one or several persons. However, if you see that that will create difficulties, I should not wish the least obstacle to be thrown in the way, for there will be delay enough from other causes. I have wished however to expose to you freely what must naturally have suggested itself to your own mind, merely that you may turn it over in your thoughts. If my advice is followed, there will be no mention of the confession on the present occasion. For should it be difficult to gain access to the prince, the confession will furnish a convenient pretext for insinuating yourselves into his presence.

Now if any one hostile to our project should wish to interpose himself between us and the prince, that person will object, before we proceed to the conference, that we are prescribing laws, and his objection will fall to the ground, because the prince will already have anticipated it. Nay, nothing will more further our cause than to assume, in our confession, that the doctrine of our party is substantially the same as that of our adversaries, and that with the exception of one article, there is a fortunate agreement between us. Thus a confession respecting a clear and undoubted matter would remove all grounds of controversy. I have not yet told Vergerio what I have determined to do. When an opportunity shall offer, I will write to John Laski, not to exclude, by pressing matters too rigidly, the Waldensian brethren from our flock. I shall do nothing, however, without letting you know. Only I told Vergerio that our most excellent brother Laski was wont sometimes to be austere, but as I have not yet duly examined this cause, I recommended him not to pronounce definitively respecting it. The Waldenses, sixteen years ago, when I was still at Strasbourg, had sent a confession which was there approved of by the most excellent Bucer and myself; but a certain copy of it has since been shewn me in which there are things which I do not approve, and which I should be unwilling to admit.

Farewell, most accomplished sir, and highly respected brother. My salutations to M. Peter Martyr and all your colleagues. My fellow pastors respectfully salute you all. May the Lord protect, sustain, and enrich you with every blessing.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Archives of Zurich. Gest. vi. 166, p. 32.*]

CCCCLXIV.—TO JAMES ANDRÉ.¹

Differences of opinion respecting the Lord's supper.

GENEVA, 1st August 1557.

Your letter, distinguished sir and respected brother, was not a little dear to me, at least as coming from you, because amid the untoward and sad contentions with which I am tried, it testifies that you are always actuated by the same feelings toward me. Would that Westphal had left it in my power to employ my efforts for the quieting of our contentions, with that moderation with which I had set about it. This rage however is now surpassed by certain of his neighbours of Saxony. They openly declare that the only reason they had for their wrath, was that I had addressed them in a more kindly manner than they desired. Now that their petulance compels me to lay aside my bland manner, I have been forced to treat them a little more sharply. This vehemence shall not prevent me, however, from approaching in a quieter spirit, any who may have a pacification really at heart. And in truth, in proportion as the conflagration has raged more violently, it becomes all those to whom it has been permitted hitherto to remain in peace, to hasten to extinguish it. As I am unacquainted with the German language, I gave your book to a

¹ We see by a letter, without date, of Calvin's to Barthelemy Hagen, that he was deceived in the hope which he had at first founded on the conciliating spirit of the Theologian of Tübingen. "For I was surprised to find that he dissented not less from us than from our professed enemies, of which thing he had hitherto given no signs."

friend of mine to peruse and let me know the contents of it. As far as I can understand it, without any bitterness or reproach to any one, I must say that you defend what I oppose. And though I feel with kindness, and commend your moderation, it gives me no small pain to perceive that there is a greater discrepancy in our sentiments than I had thought. But that our differences should not break out into hostile bitterness, the Lord will, I trust, open up a way. What my opinion was respecting promiscuous manducation, I had formerly exposed, and in this last work, I repeat it again and again. So far am I from being shaken by your arguments, that I wonder it should not have occurred to you, that the ungodly, by rejecting rather than by receiving Christ, call down on themselves destruction. If, however, you desire any explanation from me when you shall have weighed my reasons a little, be so good as to let me know. I conjecture no other issue of the conference at Worms, except that the Papists, by spinning out the time, will in their usual manner baffle the princes, who are the patrons of pure religion.

Farewell, most excellent sir, and respected brother. Salute Brentius cordially for me. May the Lord continue to direct you by his Spirit, support you by his strength, and increase you with his blessing.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 114.]

CCCCLXV.—TO MELANCHTHON.¹

He complains of the long silence of Melanchthon, in exhorting him to shew more firmness than he has hitherto done.

GENEVA, 3d August 1557.

How it has happened that for more than a space of three years, you have not given me one word in reply to my letters,

¹ The year 1557 saw realized a last attempt to bring about a reconciliation between Rome and Lutheranism. Such was the object of the conference of Worms, convoked by king Ferdinand, and presided over by Julius Pflug, bishop of Naumburg. Melanchthon was present at this conference. Numerous were the discussions respecting the rule of faith, which the one party placed in the common and perpetual consent of the

I know not. As moreover from so long a silence I might well conclude that they were not very agreeable to you, and even that my affection for you was repudiated by you, I should not have ventured at present to write to you, were I not informed by this excellent old man that you still entertain the same disposition of mind towards me, a thing I should otherwise have had some difficulty in believing. Now having recovered more confidence, because I trust that during this month you will be at Worms, where my letter will come earlier and more safely into your hands, I was unwilling to let slip the present opportunity. I could wish only that I had a more agreeable subject to write on. And yet if you retain a spark of your old affection for me, you will easily get over the uneasy feeling, should you experience any, arising from my unburdening myself familiarly of my cares and sorrows into your bosom. That your neighbours have broken out on me with so intemperate a rage, is, I doubt not, when I consider your moderation and courteousness, exceedingly displeasing to you; nay, when they make war not only on one individual, but on all pious men, not on the doctrine of a single person, but on the common faith; this ought to occasion you no common sorrow. But as it is no longer in the power of him who has once been dragged into this arena speedily to withdraw from thence, and as it would be absurd to treat these savage wild beasts in the manner of men, you will grant some indulgence to my vehemence which, amid so much indignity, I have not been able to bridle in. If I have given you any personal cause of offence, I do not think that I shall need to make a long apology. Because from time to time I perceived that my adversaries made use of your name to give a plausible colour to the representations which they employed to deceive the ignorant, that I might not seem in so clear a matter to tergiver-

Church, the other in the holy Scriptures. The evangelical party unfortunately allowed its sad divisions to break out in asking, by the organ of some of its most violent members, the condemnation of the Zwinglians. Thus discord did not fail to increase among the Reformers to the great joy of the Catholics present at the conferences, which were very soon after broken up by the departure of Melanchthon. See Melchior Adam, *Vita Melanchthonis*, p. 348.

sate, (which would have been far from candid,) I did not hesitate more than once to appeal to your testimony. I am so far from recognizing that in so doing I was guilty of any fault of which it would be worth while for me to exonerate myself, that I think I have the very best right to complain of your hesitation. Though you shrink from noisy contests, yet you know what Paul prescribes by his example to all the servants of Christ. Certainly you cannot desire praise for greater moderation than that which was evidenced in him. When he then, who was endowed with so much forbearance, passed intrepidly through seditions, we cannot give way where the circumstances in our times are by no means so painful. But, in one word, you should maturely consider whether your too obstinate a silence may not leave a stain on your reputation in the eyes of posterity. If you wait till these hippocentaurs pierce you from all sides with their darts, it is to be feared that your confession will not appear very seasonable, or rather it will seem wrung from you by urgent necessity. What if death should anticipate your wishes? That you may be stripped of all authority and that all confidence in you may be destroyed, will they not call out that you were slavishly timid? I do not think you need to be reminded in many words how necessary it is for you to hasten to wipe out this blot from your character. If a means of pacification is sought for, our only hope lies in a conference; which I doubt not but you desire, but which I could wish that you called for more courageously. For when you perceive that the princes not only are loitering, but that they are even dragged by their doctors in a contrary direction, you no doubt conclude that every avenue has been closed, unless your authority should serve as a rein to some, and a spur to others. I learned lately, what I was far from expecting, that the Duke of Wurtemberg was of his own accord inclined to this measure, nay, had there only been that common politeness which there ought to have been, we were presented with that opportunity which we constantly wished for; but as there lurks in many minds a perverse suspicion that the sentiments of the princes were too much alienated from us to admit of our being listened to, all

stand in fear of the conference. They add, moreover, that with the single exception of yourself, none but intractable men would come to them, who would imperiously prescribe that there should be no departure from the opinions they had thought fit to lay down. Nor is the sourness of temper, on the part of those who hold this language, such as would prevent them from coming with good will if they were called. Reflect then that this task now depends on you, viz., that influenced by your discourse the princes should invite the men of our party to a conference, and a convenient place for assembling might be either at Strasbourg, or Tubingen, or Heidelberg, or even at Frankfort. If you could only obtain this, that both parties would come forward prepared for a peaceable discussion, I trust there would be a better result than many suspicious men conjecture. But if you betake yourself again to Saxony before the accomplishment of this business, I fear me you will repent too late that a remedy had not been applied by your efforts to those fatal disturbances. Moreover remember that in the present case you must enter upon the work, not with mere wishes, but with a vigorous solicitude that, for the accomplishment of your task, you must set about it with greater fervour than is compatible with your natural character. And now, even if the princes shall not be gained over, you must not neglect what you wrote to some friends last year, namely, that you would do your endeavour to come yourself to the colloquy with some pious, upright, and moderate men. If you class me in the number of such men, no necessity, however urgent, will prevent me from putting up this as my chief vow, that before the Lord gather us into his heavenly kingdom, I may yet be permitted to enjoy on earth a most delightful interview with you, and feel some alleviation of my grief by deploring along with you the evils which we cannot remedy.

Farewell, most excellent sir and brother, whom from the heart I honour. May the Lord always govern you by his Spirit, shield you with his protection, furnish you for this undertaking with holy prudence and unshaken fortitude, and bless all your efforts.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 115.]

CCCCLXVI.—TO THE SEIGNEURY OF BERNE.¹

Protestations against an arbitrary sentence of a Bernese Bailiff.

GENEVA, 6th August 1557.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL LORDS,—We are sent hither on the part of our superiors to make known to you their complaints, in as much as they have been ill-treated, a thing evident to all, when we consider the fine promises with which you have fed them, and still more the entreaties and exhortations which were addressed to you by the Seigneurs of the Leagues your allies, not to molest the city of Geneva by acts of violence, but to settle your differences by the course of justice. Now if you say that you attempt to compass nothing by violence, we would beg you to reflect better on the reasons which have been already pointed out to your consideration, and which we will here briefly recapitulate.

¹ Encouraged by the bad understanding that existed between Berne and Geneva, the fugitive Libertins posted themselves in arms at the bridge of Aroe, and there committed all sorts of excesses which the tribunals of Berne left unpunished. The Procureur General of Geneva having laid a complaint in June 1557 before the Bailiff of Ternier, the latter at first refused to judge the affair that was submitted to him; reflecting more maturely afterwards, he pretended to call before his tribunal the trial of the Libertins, and reconsider their sentence. The Genevese protested that such a decision of the Bailiff was null, as being an infringement on their sovereignty. The decision was not the less confirmed by the Court of Appeals of Berne, in spite of the absence of the Procureur, who being judged by the Bailiff of Ternier without being heard in his own defence, had not appealed to a higher tribunal. The Bailiff went still further, and by a sentence of the 5th of August he pronounced the fugitives liberated from the accusation brought against them, condemning the Genevese to pay the costs. This extraordinary procedure pursued in defiance of all right, and reducing a sovereign state to the rank of a subject city, excited much irritation at Geneva. The councils assembled in an extraordinary meeting humbled themselves before God at the voice of Calvin, and resolved to resist oppression by all legal means: "For remedy we see no other, but having recourse to the *Lignes* in order to form our complaints before them, for so many acts of extortion and violence, but that in the mean time it might be proper to go first to Berne and shew the Seignery of that city the manner in which we are treated is altogether insupportable." *Registers of the Councils*, 5th and 6th August, 1557. Roset, *Chronique*, vi. 26. Two deputies, Le Franc and Louis Roset, set out immediately from Geneva with a memorial of the Seignery which Calvin himself had drawn up.

You are aware that during the time of the state-alliance between our two cities,¹ when we required you, in virtue of the mutual obligation which bound us to maintain the honour of both cities, to be pleased to take measures to prevent our being outraged, as we were, by those on whom we had pronounced a condemnation; that you constantly gave us a favourable answer, declaring that if we called for justice it should be granted to us promptly and impartially, and that you had given orders to your officers to that effect. Meanwhile, seeing no result from your promises, and the evil on the contrary always augmenting, we have come to the resolution, after much long suffering, to ascertain if justice shall be done us. Nevertheless, to avoid all cavilling and crooked subtilties, in presenting the cause we have expressly protested that the enquiry should be limited to the fact of the outrages, without attacking the sentences we have pronounced, for which moreover there is no reason nor pretext.

Even had such protestation not been made, you are yet aware that, by common equity, if the most humble person in the world has sustained an injury, it is the business of him who denounces the injury to prove the fact, or otherwise he will be condemned. How much more then should this manner of proceeding be maintained, when it is justice itself which has been outraged by malefactors? Now so far are we from having been treated with that equity which has always been observed towards the most contemptible of mankind, that we have been subjected by your Bailiff to prove that we had justly condemned our own subjects, and that too according to his manner of viewing the question. And more than that, he has not failed to proceed against us in favour of the said convicts, though they had participated in an action which was common to them and two persons that were hanged under your jurisdiction and by your order. Now since those two were named as associates in the trial, and the convicts that survive had received and avowed them for their accomplices, as the public acts

¹ The treaty of alliance between Berne and Geneva had expired the 8th of February 1556.

testify, the least thing their heirs could do was to adopt their cause, since the action of which both parties were accused was one and the same. In that we had sufficiently just cause for appeal, and also, because, without waiting to see if we should appeal or not, contrary to all legal forms, your bailiff adjourned to the eighth day following, the parties having the right of appeal in your city. And while the most insignificant individual shall have ten days to introduce an appeal if he think proper, we your neighbours are forestalled of this common right, and before having opened our lips we are sent before your judges of appeal, if we pretend to appeal. Now for these reasons we did not appeal, but our Procureur protested that the whole affair was null, because in truth the sentence of the Bailiff was null *de facto*, as we shall shew by and by, more distinctly. But be that as it may, your judges on appeals, nevertheless, took cognizance of the cause without our being able to decline their authority, seeing that it was arbitrarily brought before them. We beg you to reflect duly if such a thing was ever seen or heard of as judges on appeal taking cognizance of an affair in which none of the parties have ever appealed, or casting one of the parties for non-appearance, without having adjourned the cause. And to shew you how much we had to hope in making an appeal, whereas your Bailiff had reserved the expenses of the suit till the pronouncing of the definitive sentence, the said judges, without giving us a hearing, have condemned us to pay all the costs.

You now declare that we ought to have appealed, if we had been aggrieved. And in fact there were but too many reasons for doing so. But we have not so far forgotten the favour which God has granted us, as to place our jurisdiction in the hands of your Bailiff, or your judges, or any other aliens whatever. And because by your letters it appears that you have perfectly understood the necessity which compelled us to make a protestation of nullity, we shall in this place briefly renew it, begging you to reflect on it more maturely.

Even though your Bailiff should not have judged our cause to our satisfaction, still we should have had patience, making use of the usual remedy, an appeal; and though we had not

obtained in your city what we expected, we had also made up our minds to arm ourselves with patience with regard to this point. But when your Bailiff, expressly in opposition to our protestation and the form of the process that had been brought, undertook to judge respecting us, and notoriously overstepped the bounds of his authority, and not only judged our cause, but infringed moreover our rights, in such a manner as no free city would, or should, do in respect to another, it would have been the height of folly in us to appeal from his sentence, as if he, or even those whom he charged to judge our subjects, had possessed any jurisdiction over us.

In one word, though there had been no protest, it was your Bailiff's duty to pronounce judgment simply on the fact of the wrongs, unless it was his intention to introduce a new custom; namely, that all malefactors might bring an action against their judges, declaring that they had been unjustly condemned. But the protestation had barred your Bailiff from taking any such cognizance, which nevertheless he has done, and in so doing has gone beyond the limits of the cause. It is for that reason we made a protestation of the nullity of the procedure, in which protestation we persist, and cannot, without doing ourselves the greatest detriment, enter upon an appeal, the rather that it would be making subjects of ourselves, a thing which you should neither pretend nor desire.

In the mean time your Bailiff, having rated the costs in which under pretext of our non-appearance he cast us,¹ without any adjournment, gave a definitive sentence against us, condemning our Procureur General to make an honourable reparation to convicts justly sentenced to the gibbet, which reparation they on the contrary were held to make to us, together with all the damages and costs. We are not so blind as not to perceive the object and tendency of all these proceedings. And in fact it was but too evident that the adverse party held themselves well assured of gaining their cause even before the judge had pronounced his sentence; for, all at once, they be-

¹ The costs of the process were fixed at 1469 florins 7 sols, instead of 2000 crowns, which the exiles had demanded. Roset, vi. 25.

came gallant horsemen, though their rank was that of humble pedestrians, and no one had ever seen them on horseback before, just as if they had wished to shew that our purse was in their hands. But of that we take no further notice, for it is not your business. Only in what concerns you, we entreat you in God's name, to appreciate better the remonstrances we have already made you, that all the legal procedure which has been gone through since the sentence of your Bailiff, by which he enjoined that our suits should be carried before him to be decided, is null and void. The fact is, that he himself has sufficiently proved this, for before he issued his injunction to that effect, he requested our Procureur General to consent to withdraw his protestation, and seeing that he could not obtain that, he declared that he could not pronounce a sentence unless he were enjoined to do so.

He saw clearly then that it was unlawful for him to attempt what he afterwards did, we know not by what authority or permission. But since so it is, we beg you to let us know if you are content to submit the decision of the affair to the diet of Baden, as our superiors have always thought you would do, though indeed they have been much astonished, that after having twice or thrice required and solicited you to hold a common meeting, in which the differences between city and city should be enquired into, you have lent a deaf ear to the proposal, which is not as we imagine agreeable to the intentions of your allies.

We know that you are strong and powerful, but so much the more ought you to moderate the power which God has bestowed on you, to support your poor brethren, so that they may hold intercourse with you. On our part we are well aware of our littleness, and are not so devoid of common sense, thank God, as to have an overweening idea of ourselves. But unless you be pleased to come to our aid by some timely remedy, we cannot endure to be thus trodden under foot, without seeking redress where we hope to find it, and as God has given us an opening: that is the lords of the Lignes will ascertain on which side is the right or the wrong. Nevertheless we trust that having heard these reasons in which we have opened our

hearts to you, you will on your part give us such an equitable answer, as will satisfy our Seigneurs, and cause the troubles and scandals which might ensue to be put down. And in truth the devil has already had but too free scope, without our furnishing him fresh materials. For the rest, in case your Bailiff undertake anything with the intention of putting his sentence in execution, we protest that, whatever colour or form of justice he may try to give it, it will be but an act of violence and oppression from which we pray you to refrain.

[*Fr. orig. in Calvin's hand.—Arch. of Geneva.*]

CCCCLXVII.—TO BULLINGER.

Theological labours—explanation on the subject of a confession of faith presented by Theodore de Beza. Malady of Celso Martinengo.

GENEVA, 7th August 1557.

While I am occupied and strenuously labouring in the defence of our common doctrine,¹ I cannot for very sorrow tell you how unjust a reward for my pains I meet with from our neighbours. This friend of ours will inform you. And our good brethren who daily from the pulpit harangue on the communion of the saints,² are not moved by so great a danger. If they are touched by no concern for the state of this city, how can they sit quiet spectators of the ruin of the church? I do not speak hyperbolically. Know that unless we be speedily succoured, the fortunes of all the citizens will be given up as a prey to our exiles, and their persons thrown into prison, lest any one should venture to escape. This indignity, though it should be concealed by the silence of men, ought to rouse the very stones to cry out. I hope, however, that as soon as the thing shall be made known, a timely remedy will be found. I am well aware that neither your good faith nor your activity will fail us among your fellow-

¹ Calvin published this year his third defence against Westphal, "*Ultima admonitio ad Westphalum*," etc., in 8vo. Geneva, 1557; see *Opera* tom. viii. and *Opuscules*.

² Alluding to the Bernese, p. 268, note 2.

citizens. Whether I have conducted myself adroitly among the Saxons, you yourselves shall judge, for I have preferred to send you my work not yet quite finished, rather than keep you in suspense waiting for it. When I know that I have brought on myself the hatred of all, it will afford me no common consolation if the accomplishment of my duty has at least met with your approbation. Certainly because I was confident that I was engaged in a work pleasing to God, I have not hesitated with intrepidity and alacrity to stir up against myself the fury of those wild beasts.

As there is no lurking danger in Beza's confession,¹ I readily excuse him, because, in consideration of the brethren, with studied moderation he has endeavoured to conciliate fierce men, especially as he previously distinctly explained all his different meanings. If on his return he did not communicate it to you, be perfectly assured that that happened from mere inadvertency. Nor should I have known any thing about it, unless Valerand had disseminated his poison as far as this, whose ambition or temerity forced the French and English strangers at Frankfort to subscribe the Confession of Augsburg, with one exception however, respecting the word *substantially*. It was decreed that the German preachers should not henceforward give them any molestation until the leaders of both parties should come to some agreement. I wish that the crabbedness of your citizens had not thrown any obstacles in the way of its reception, which was what we should greatly have desired, but for what cause it was rejected I know not.

Farewell, most accomplished and honoured brother. I pray you carefully to salute M. Peter Martyr, M. Gualter. and your other colleagues. All your friends respectfully salute you.

The Count Martinengo is still confined to bed, but out of danger. For four or five days we despaired of his life. Now the debility arising from his illness, alone detains him in bed.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Archives of Zurich. Gest. vi. 166, p. 33.*]

¹ This confession was that which Beza and Farel had presented in the name of the Waldenses to the Protestant princes of Germany, as in all points conformable to those of the Swiss churches. The Theologians of Zurich complained that it was ambiguous, and that it had not been previously communicated to them. Ruchat, tom. vi. p. 205, and the following.

CCCCLXVIII.—TO THE SEIGNEURY OF BERNE.¹

Demand to annul the sentence of the Bailiff of Ternier.

GENEVA, 18th August 1557.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL, PUISSANT, AND MOST REDOUBTABLE SEIGNEURS,—Our ambassadors have put us in possession of the answer which they had from you on the 11th of this month; and though we are far from being as well acquainted with your intentions as we could have desired, however, as the common diet of Baden will soon meet, in which it will be expedient, nay, indispensably necessary, that the worshipful Seigneurs, your allies, should know what has been transacted between us, that matters may not always remain in a state of suspense; we have judged it fitting, without waiting for any further answer, to notify to you that on the last day but one of this month, our deputies will arrive in your town, to treat, if such is your pleasure, about some amicable arrangement before it be necessary to take further steps. Already we have begged and solicited you to the same effect, and it is to us matter of astonishment what circumstance can have prevented you from giving us a single word in answer to our request. Nevertheless when you shall feel disposed to favour us with a communication, it will be better late than never. If, moreover, you will be pleased to inform us more amply of your intentions by this messenger it would give us much pleasure, and we beg you to do so, that we may have it in our power to give better instructions to our deputies.

¹ The deputies of Geneva having arrived at Berne, obtained a delay for the sentence of the Bailiff of Ternier, but without being able to conclude a definitive arrangement. *Registers of the Council*, 18th August 1557: "Letter of our deputies in Switzerland by which they inform us of what they have done at Berne and Soleure, and that they have agreed to fix upon an amicable meeting to be held at Berne on the 30th of this month, and to which the council has appointed the Seigneurs Curtet and Migerand." This meeting had no results, and the discords between the two towns survived the renewal of their alliance, which was accomplished the 9th of January, 1558. Roset, vi. 35. Ruchat, tom. vi. p. 229.

One point there is on which we cannot dissemble. To hold a friendly conference for the purpose of entering into an arrangement with the runaways that our tribunals have condemned, is a thing not for one moment to be thought of. We should prefer coming to any extremity rather than derogate in any one instance from our judicial acts, or make an arrangement to the detriment of our honour, and expose ourselves to the blame, insults, and opprobrium which have been already cast upon us. For you see that it is a thing not to be tolerated, that your Bailiff, not being a competent judge, nay, more than that, having absolutely no title to examine, or take cognizance of anything in this business, has nevertheless, annulling sentences pronounced by our sovereign authority, condemned us to make reparation. Accordingly, we trust that before all things some expedient will be adopted to abrogate such a sentence, a sentence so extraordinary and exorbitant, that we desire that the knowledge of it may not spread farther, but that by your wisdom it may be annulled, as in law it must be held null. We shall say nothing further respecting it, supposing that without any further remonstrance on our part, the thing cannot appear to you either doubtful or obscure.

For the rest, when our honour shall be re-established, our convicts remaining charged with the condemnation we have pronounced on them, we are not persons who could wish to refuse to gratify you as far as it shall be in our power. We beg you then affectionately to be pleased to give orders that our deputies obtain a hearing upon their arrival, and make a further trial, if it be possible, to devise some proper means of coming to a good understanding, as well with regard to our state-alliance, as other matters; in order that the report of the proceedings may be laid before your allies at the next assembly, the rather that a longer delay cannot but be detrimental. You see also that the existing troubles should urge you to seek for a solid pacification. (Hereupon praying our Lord to endow you with his grace).¹

[*Fr. orig. in Calvin's hand.—Arch. of Geneva.*]

¹ In the handwriting of the Secretary of the Republic.

CCCCLXIX.—TO THE AMBASSADORS OF GENEVA, DEPUTED
TO THE LIGUES.¹

An order to repair with all dispatch to Baden.

GENEVA, 18th August 1557.

NOBLE, WISE, TRUSTY AND WELL BELOVED BRETHREN,—
Having been informed by your letters of what you had done at Berne, we have notified to the Seigneurs of that city, a friendly conference for the last day but one of the present month, to devise some means of getting rid of these heart-burnings. And because the affair is of importance, it will be necessary to have there a greater number of people than we had decided upon sending: contrive to make such haste as to be present, for your absence would greatly compromise our interests. Wherefore we beg and exhort you not to be a wanting. We are quite convinced that the reports which you have heard as you passed, have not prevented you from accomplishing your commission; and counting the days we doubt not, but that you will arrive in time to negotiate at Berne, if so be that there is any chance of appeasing some of the differences. But notwithstanding, the moment you receive this, make all the haste possible. Meanwhile may God have you in his keeping, and continually guide you till he bring you back in full prosperity, to the end that we may have still more reason to praise him.

[*Fr. original in Calvin's hand.—Archives of Geneva.*]

¹ Favourably received by the Diet of the *Ligues* at Baden, (September 1557,) the deputies there exposed the subject of their complaints against Berne. At their demand the Cantons exhorted the Bernese to moderation, and offered to act as mediators between the two towns. Roset, vi. 28. Ruchat, tom. vi. p. 191.

CCCCLXX.—TO WILLIAM OF HESSE.¹

Recommendation of a young French Seigneur stripped of his property.

GENEVA, 30th August 1557.

MOST ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE AND SEIGNEUR,—This intimate friend of mine, who on account of his piety and other virtues is very dear to me, purposing to visit your Highness, has persuaded himself that if he carried a letter from me his reception would be more friendly. By force then of solicitation he has wrung from me my consent to do him this friendly office. For as I deservedly feared, if I should attempt to set forth others by my commendation, being myself unknown and not possessed of any great influence or authority, that I should incur the disgrace of foolish forwardness, I more than once begged to be excused. But when he declared repeatedly that he had learned from my brother John Garnier, that this duty of mine would not be disagreeable to your Highness, he at length prevailed on me to write. He had been already at your court last year, and had made mention of a son of his wife's, whom, for the sake of testifying his deference to you, he has resolved to present to the illustrious prince your father and to yourself. The young man is of high birth, of an ancient and wealthy family, his mother of singular piety and distinguished virtues; the excellent woman, when to fly from idolatry, she abandoned her country, made no account of her ample revenues, but by no means neglected her son, whom she considered as her most precious treasure. This greatness of soul is worthy of no small praise, to have preferred, in despising the riches of the world, to burden herself with this youth, the companion of her exile, rather than leave him in the pollution and defilement of Popery. Hence it is that his relations have alighted, as on a prey prepared for them, on the property of

¹ Third son of the known Landgrave, Philip the Magnanimous. He was Count of Hesse Rheinfelds, and died in the year 1583.

the young minor. But the very sagacious mother, and also his stepfather, having known the disposition of the young man, are apprehensive that as he grows up, repining at being deprived of a splendid patrimony, he may return to France, and too covetously bent on recovering his fortune, may perchance forsake the church of Christ. To obviate this evil, the following has seemed to them the most eligible method; viz., that aided by the influence of your illustrious house he might recover from that shipwreck of his fortunes, at least some part which might suffice for him to live in a modest style. That they may not seem however to consult their own interests by putting you to trouble and inconvenience, all they desire is that the lad should be enrolled under the protection of your illustrious house, a thing which I trust it will not be difficult to obtain. I had thus no other motive for writing, but that your Highness might be further encouraged by my testimony to accord this kindness; and that the illustrious prince your father, if need should be, being informed of the family of the youth and the virtue of the mother, might confirm more willingly and amply the favour which he has already of his own accord granted. May the Lord preserve safe and flourishing your most illustrious father, and your whole house, and enrich it with all blessings.

[*Lat. orig.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCCLXXI.—TO BULLINGER.

He urges him to adhere to the project of the assembling of a conference. News of Geneva and France.

GENEVA, 31st August 1557.

As I sent you not only the remaining part, but also another copy of my tract,¹ I eagerly expect your opinion. However they may continue to rage against me, I shall always intrepidly receive all their attacks. For nothing can happen to me which I had not anticipated from the beginning. Not even

¹ See note 1, p. 344.

the ingratitude of certain persons shall ever make me repent of the work which I have undertaken. I agree with you respecting the pride or the obstinacy of the adverse party, and yet nothing shall prevent me from adopting the offered opportunity of a conference.¹ If you do not adhere to it, see what a charge of rashness I have thoughtlessly brought on myself, since I pledged myself for all of you to Philip; in despairing of the results, your opinion is not materially different from my own. But, believe me, our adversaries will hear things which will blunt their fiery zeal for the future, and unless I am deceived in all my conjectures, though they will not become wise, they will depart from the conference a good deal tamed. Nor should the discussion which took place in private between Laski and Brentz deter you. Laski was alone and not very well prepared, moreover, to contend with a snappish man. He entered the lists with greater courage than prudence. It will be a very different thing when Philip, whose timidity does not permit him to declare freely what he thinks, will associate himself heartily with us. A letter of his was lately shewn to me, written in the month of July to the senate of Frankfort, in which though he does not frankly confess his faith, yet he openly complains that his neighbours are troubling the church with new and strange expressions, and does not conceal his opinion that something should be decided among learned men respecting the infinity and the adoration of Christ's body. Let us prepare ourselves then for the conference, and be armed beforehand, provided only we display our firmness with that meekness which is worthy of the servants of Christ. I do not perceive what Beza's confession contains that is not quite in harmony with our doctrine,² for what you adduce respecting the word *substance* may be recon-

¹ One of the German divines present at Worms, Zeuleger, addressed to Calvin the following statement: "Believe me, I feel how blinded the minds of our countrymen are, and how occupied with those odious names of Sacramentarians and Zwinglians, to such a degree that they cannot bear to hear you spoken of." He advised Calvin at the same time to expose his opinion respecting the sacrament, and to shew "that the reality was bound up with the sign," in order to dissipate all prejudice. But that was precisely the point in dispute. (*Library of Geneva*, vol. 109.)

² Note 1, p. 331.

ciled with it without any difficulty. And he himself, doubt not, will extricate himself adroitly from all the objections of which you are afraid. He has not explained, I admit, with sufficient clearness, the whole controversy, but the time did not allow of it, nor was it expedient, since it was a brief excuse and not a confession which he had to present. Of any danger I feel perfectly secure; since I by no means distrust the integrity of the man, nor has he so entangled himself as to afford the enemy any occasion for boasting. I come to other matters, though up to the present moment my fellow citizens have obtained nothing equitable from their neighbours, nay, by decided refusals, all their hopes have been destroyed; nevertheless, I have persuaded them to send another embassy, and if it shall prove fruitless, a certain decision from the other Swiss States is what is relied on here. Their obstinacy is indeed prodigious, what results it may lead to is what I fear. You can scarcely believe how great and how miserable a trepidation has prevailed over the kingdom of France.¹ Now by degrees they begin to recover from their consternation. And as if the king had been at leisure to busy himself with such matters, our neighbours fancy that we have been treating about some secret negotiations with him. Or at least they feign this belief, that in their usual way they may crush us under false suspicions. Nor can you imagine with how much puerility they talk nonsense to every one that will listen to them.

Farewell, most excellent sir and honoured brother. May the Lord always stand by you and continue to bless you along with your family.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Archives of Zurich. Gest. vi. 166, p. 33.*]

¹The persecutions redoubled their intensity in 1557. Scaffolds and stakes were erected every where, and a fanatical and cruel clergy exciting the popular passions preached undisguisedly that all the Lutherans were to be exterminated. See Beza and the *History of the Martyrs*, lib. vii.

CCCCLXXII.—TO THE PASTORS OF ZURICH.¹

The second call of Peter Martyr by the Italian Church of Geneva.

GENEVA, 1st September 1557.

When it is perfectly evident to me that your academy is a fertile seminary for the rearing of pious teachers, and it does not escape my observation, moreover, that the labours of our venerable brother, Peter Martyr, are of high utility in that pure and holy institution, I am afraid that I shall appear to shew but little modesty in wishing to demand him of you, to discharge the functions of a pastor among a poor little flock, and thus withdraw him from the celebrated and distinguished career which he now pursues in training up future ministers of the word. And assuredly if a teacher were to be sought for, for our academy, which neither in the number of its students nor its other endowments can be at all compared with yours, I should act very inconsiderately if I essayed to draw over to us a man so admirably suited to you. But as I am compelled to make this concession to the entreaties of our guests of the Italian nation, I have no reason to make a more lengthened apology. Would that I had like confidence in the possibility of my gaining the object of my request, as I have that the demand itself will not be offensive to you! And yet such is your solicitude for the church of Christ, if you can spare him to us without the very highest inconvenience to yourselves, I am convinced that the condition of a flock deprived of its pastor will have a greater weight with you than to permit you to turn a deaf ear to our most anxious prayers. Mr. Peter Martyr himself knows what was the character of Martinengo,

¹ On the death of Celso Martinengo, which took place on the 12th of August 1557, the principal members of the Italian congregation at Geneva, among whom is to be reckoned the Marquis of Vico, addressed a new call to Peter Martyr. But he did not conceive that it was in his power to adhere to their desire, and the functions of the ministry were confided to Lactanzio Ragnone of Sienna, who was in his turn succeeded by Nicolo Balbani. Arch. of Geneva, (*Documents Italiens.*)

to succeed whom he has been called; with what faithfulness he discharged the duties of his office, I am the best witness. Certainly his memory is so cherished that few will be found fit to support his charge, for it is to be feared that his successor, if he do not correspond to so bright a model, will fall into contempt, and that thus the church will dwindle away. Besides, it is not a small number of men who demand Martyr, (he has been elected by the common suffrages of all,) and among them are many intelligent and grave men, some of them even learned, so that our friend Martyr in undertaking this office would have the satisfaction of having his worth appreciated.¹ Moreover if an affair of this importance is to be judged of by the sentiments of our guests, they have no doubt, if he come here, but he will reap a richer harvest of his labours. I myself, though I dare not pronounce an opinion, know nevertheless that it is an affair of no small moment that the state of this church should be preserved intact, from which, up to this moment, the light of heavenly doctrine has been disseminated so far and wide. As then you have the common edification at heart, weigh well again and again whether it be possible for your church to dispense with the services of this man, who is not only desired with the most ardent wishes, but who, if he shall obtain a mission from you, will lay out his labours to the incredible profit of both the men of his own nation and ourselves.

Farewell, most excellent and honoured brethren. May the Lord continue to direct and bless you, and in this affair to govern you with the spirit of wisdom. My colleagues respectfully salute you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig.—Archives of Zurich, Coll. Vol. ii. Gest. vi. 106, p. 685.*]

¹ The Italian refugees of Geneva saw their numbers rapidly increasing. Before the end of the century, more than a thousand of them might be reckoned up, the flower of the cities of the Peninsula. From their ranks issued distinguished divines and Jurisconsults, the Balbani, the Burlamachi, the Diodati, the Turettini, etc.

CCCCLXXIII.—TO MELANCHTHON.¹

Recommendation of a young Frenchman repairing to Worms. Military and Political news of France.

GENEVA, 6th September 1557.

I have written to you twice within a few days, nor indeed have I now any thing new to communicate, but I was unwilling to let this most excellent young man set out without giving him a letter of recommendation for you, the rather as he asked me for it as the highest favour. Would that Saxony produced a good many that resembled him! He was studying law in France, where he frequented the religious assemblies of the pious which are there held secretly, not without the imminent peril of the lives of the worshippers. On his return he has lived among us about six months, and has shewn such tokens of piety, modesty, and integrity, that I esteem him worthy of the affection of all good men. If I can convince you of this, I have no occasion to enlarge any further in his favour, for with your usual facility you will grant a ready access to a man who is very desirous of imbibing your doctrine. If any thing is to be seriously handled at Worms, he has determined to make a stay there of at least two or three months, until the result of your conference shall have operated some improvements. For many good men are still in hopes that, after all pacification with our avowed enemies has become a desperate case, there are some princes who have hitherto stood quite aloof from us who will willingly lend their aid to appease intestine discords. Of this design I have no doubt but you will be an active promoter.

¹ Melanchthon was then present at the conferences of Worms, and in vain displayed his eloquence in an attempt at reconciliation between the different religious parties. Accused himself by the Ultra-Lutheran fanaticism of forming a compact with the Catholics on the question of those rites and ceremonies that are indifferent, and with the Reformed churches on the question of the Lord's supper, he had nothing further to do but to withdraw. He quitted Worms, in fact, in order to follow the Elector Palatin to Heidelberg, where he received the melancholy tidings of the death of his wife whom he was destined to survive only a few years. Melchior Adam, *Vita Melanchthonis*.

Of the state of our Church you will learn more from the conversation of the bearer than I can venture to communicate in a letter. No doubt you are already acquainted with the severe check the king of France has received, and the total rout of his army. However the storming of a strongly fortified city, which took place a short time after, has occasioned a far more serious damage. The town is called St. Quentin.¹ From thence there is not a whole day's march to Noyon. The intervening country is flat and exposed to the ravages of the enemy. Now if the report is true, I shall already have twice survived my native country.² They declare that the king, whether from greatness of mind or from stupidity, is not much affected. The Duke of Guise, who had been promptly recalled, still delays his approach, I know not for what reason. It is to be feared that the conquerors will cut off the means of his return. It is reported that the maritime coast of the kingdom of Naples has been ravaged by the Turkish fleet, but as the brother of the Duke of Guise, who is one of the knights of Rhodes, has sunk four of their galleys, the probable conjecture is that the remainder will be hostile to the French. There is some suspicion also of the treachery of a certain Paulain, one of the king's captains, in the Gulf of Geneva. Like an idler I write these news to you, that I may draw something from you in my turn.

Farewell, most distinguished sir, whom from my heart I honour. May the Lord always stand by you, govern, protect, and confirm you even to the end.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Paris, Coll. Dupuy. Tom. 102, p. 28.*]

¹ The battle of St. Quentin, which had for result the taking of that place, was fought the 8th of August 1557, the day of the festival of St. Lawrence. It was on this occasion that Philip II. caused the palace of the Escorial to be built, of which the form, well worthy of the persecuting monarch, suggests that of a gridiron.

² See Vol. ii., p. 374.

CCCCLXXIV.—TO FAREL.

The Marchioness of Rothelin passes by Geneva—triple message addressed to Melancthon—mission of Beza to Berne and Zurich.

GENÈVA, 14th September 1557.

As I felt a great desire to visit you, it was not without a double portion of sorrow that I was deprived of the opportunity. It was of some advantage to the mother of your prince to have passed by here,¹ because she derived from it at least some consolation, and gained some accession of courage for the time to come. How rapidly she passed through, your fellow-citizens know, who gave her an escort of honour. The very brief space of time we enjoyed, however, was spent by us in excellent conversations, the fruit of which will appear in its season. Why her daughter did not afterwards follow I know not.² She earnestly entreated me to exhort the young person to piety as much as the capacity of her tender age would permit. In regard to my repairing to the meeting at Worms, pardon me if I do not agree with you. For so excessive an activity would have been displeasing even to the good men who desire my arrival, because by it, my authority would be diminished among our adversaries, and an unfavourable impression would have been produced to no purpose among our friends; but I have written thrice to Philip within the last six weeks, to urge him not to relax for one moment his efforts. Since of his own accord he desires the conference, I trust that it will not be without some good results that he has been roused up. Sturm also, by my advice, has promised that he will spur him on a little more. Perhaps he will even proceed thither for the sake of stimulating him. This will be more expedient than if I, by making myself too busy, should render myself almost obnoxious to haughty men, not to speak of the offence I should

¹ Jacqueline de Rohan, Marchioness of Rothelin and mother of the Duke of Longueville, Seigneur of Neuchâtel.

² Frances d'Orleans. She afterwards married the Prince de Condé.

occasion to our own party. With regard to what you say with so much perplexity, both for and against Beza, I may tell you that as far as the Zurichers are concerned, he is free to go to the remotest corners of the earth if he pleases.¹ For they have everywhere stirred up such tumults, that it surprises me, the Bernese have hitherto remained quiet; nor indeed after three or four admonitions have I succeeded in calming them. But as he was lately associated with Viret, in a short time we shall learn how he has been received at Berne. Again I have exhorted him to undertake a new expedition. If he comply with my wishes, he will have an opportunity of meeting as he passes these ill-tempered men who reject all the best advice. As my answer to the Saxons was published at Lausanne, and Beza has a copy, how comes it that he did not give it you? You might certainly have had one from here some time ago, but that I believed you must have read it before I could have lighted on a suitable messenger. You will receive Quadrat's letter.² When you have a little leisure to write, do not dissemble how much the asperity and vehemence of my answer offended you. You must, of necessity, mitigate domestic evils by patiently supporting them. Beware above all of stirring up Claude's³ wrath by going too far.

Farewell, most excellent sir and honoured brother. May the Lord continue to govern, protect, and sustain you. Do not fail to salute your brethren and friends.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.*—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107 a.]

¹ (Garamantas.)

² Antony Quadrat, counsellor of Prince George of Wurtemberg.

³ Claude Farel, the brother of the Reformer.

CCCCLXXV.—TO THE CHURCH OF PARIS.¹

Exhortations to peace of mind and patience in persecution—a minister sent to them.

16th September 1557.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

DEARLY BELOVED SEIGNEURS AND BRETHREN,—It is not at all necessary to declare to you at greater length how much the news of your sufferings has painfully and sorrowfully afflicted us; the intimate connection which unites us as well as our common cause will sufficiently explain our distress. If we had it in our power to testify to you by deeds, the desire we have to lessen your affliction, you would feel it more efficaciously. But besides our prayers in your behalf we cannot do much, though other means of coming to your aid are not neglected by us. We know not if they will avail you, but be that as it may, doubt not but God has an eye on you, and that your tears and groanings are listened to by him. For if we do not repose on his providence, the slightest distress will be-

¹ This church was at that time plunged in the deepest distress. The flower of its members, surprised in the nocturnal meeting of the Rue Saint-Jacques, (4th September, 1557,) and abandoned without defence to the attacks of an infuriated multitude, had been thrown into dungeons. "And though," says Beza, "it is contrary to all justice that persons apprehended and in the hands of the magistrates should be thus badly handled and outraged by private individuals, nevertheless no investigation was ever set on foot on that subject. Now if they were maltreated in the streets, they were not better off in the prison of the Chastelet in which they were first confined. For the thieves and robbers were withdrawn from the most infected cells and sinks in order to make room for these. Meat and drink were refused to many of them for a very long time, and strict orders issued to allow no one to visit them. However God, who always takes care of his own, provided that they should not remain without consolations. For in consequence of the great number of prisoners, the jailers had been forced to put several in the same place, so that among them there always chanced to be some one endowed with more fortitude than his companions, to give courage to the others. On all sides then, psalms were sung, and the whole Chastelet resounded with the praises of God, a sufficient proof of the singular confidence they had in their hearts of their own innocence." *Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 120.

come an abyss to swallow us up. We shall be shaken to and fro at every breath of wind: we shall be troubled in our perplexities and led astray in our counsels; in a word, our whole life will be a labyrinth, especially when a loose has been given to Satan and his agents to torment and molest the poor church of God. Truly we must fly to this thought for our stay, that if God cares for all his creatures, he will not forsake those who call upon him. Nay, if there fall not to the ground without his will a single bird, he will never be wanting to his own children.

True it is, the temptation is great and difficult to support, to see so horrible a trouble, one which may draw after it extreme desolation, and which God is slow in raising his arm to remedy. But also it is not without cause that it is said: God desires to try our faith, like gold in the furnace. Though then he stretch not forth his hand to succour us as soon as we could wish, let us never abandon the conviction that the hairs of our head are numbered, and that if he sometimes permits the blood of his people to be shed, yet he fails not to treasure up their precious tears as it were in a phial, according to the expression of David in Psalm lvi. Certain it is he has not permitted what has now happened, except to prepare the way for some great matter which surpasses our comprehension. Heretofore those who have been called to martyrdom have been contemptible according to the world, both in respect to their personal rank, and their numbers, which have not been considerable enough to produce a great movement. How know we on the present occasion, if he has not already prepared such an issue that we shall have double reason to rejoice and glorify his name? But whatever view we take of the case, our true wisdom is to submit ourselves to him, and, though every thing be perplexed, to wait peaceably and in silence for the deliverance which he has promised. In the mean time, my dear brethren, we pray you to practise the lesson that has been taught us by the great Master, to possess our souls in patience. We know how difficult that is for the flesh, but recollect also that then is the moment to strive against ourselves and our passions, when we are assailed by

our enemies. And esteem it not a weak defence, that you are left to suffer, and shew yourselves meek and peaceable as lambs against the rage of the wolves, since you have the promise of that good and faithful Shepherd who has taken us in charge, that he will never fail you, whatever fury and enormity there may be in the cruelty of the enemy. God is powerful enough to repress it by such means as he wills, or even without any visible means. Let it be your study to attempt nothing which is not warranted by his word. In maintaining a meek obedience to his will, we are assured that he will ward off the blow, or at least give us strength and courage to endure it; but if we go beyond the limits he has prescribed to us, let us always fear to receive at last the wages of our temerity. We say not this as being bold at your expense, but because we are well aware that in such terrors one may be urged to many undertakings in which it is difficult to preserve moderation. We give you then the advice by which we ourselves should wish to be moderated and restrained in like circumstances. And indeed better it were that we were all involved in ruin, than that the gospel of God should be exposed to the reproach of arming men to sedition and tumult; for God will always cause the ashes of his servants to fructify, but excesses and violence will bring with them nothing but barrenness. Wherefore, my dear Seigneurs and brethren, shew that you have profited in that school, which requires that we should sacrifice ourselves to him, sparing nothing to maintain his cause, and enduring till he break the arms of his enemies, or bring them under subjection to himself.

For the rest, because you have not received the letters in which we sent you word that our colleague was on his way to you,¹ not to make a permanent stay among you, (which

¹ July 1557, "Monsieur de Saules (Nic. des Gallars) sets out for Paris of his own free will." (*Regist. de la Comp.*) He ran the greatest risks in his journey. Arrested at Dijon, with Nicholas du Rousseau, the inspector of the church of Paris, "he escaped," says Beza, "nothing being found in his portmanteau, whereas du Rousseau, contrary to the advice of his friends, had taken with him books and letters." *Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 137. Du Rousseau died in the dungeons of Dijon, and his body was thrown into the flames, "in order that death, which had surprised him, might not deprive him of the crown of martyrdom."

moreover it was not possible for us to grant,) but only to comfort and aid you for some time; we now entreat you a second time, as we did then, to excuse us if we have not been able fully and in every point to meet your wishes. He offered himself liberally to undertake this journey in order to be of use to you, till you should be provided with another, and there is not one of us who would not wish to bestow his services on you for the same purpose in his turn, did our occupations permit; for we must steal, as it were, a little time to come to your aid, in that rather consulting our wishes to promote your welfare than the interests of the flock entrusted to our care. Now, however, that these troubles have fallen out, we pray you to reflect whether his presence will be more hurtful or profitable to you. St. Augustin has made a prudent reflection, which is, if a flock is assailed without any search being made for its pastor, he who ought to strengthen the others cannot lawfully abandon them; but if an attempt is made to persecute the church in the person of the pastor, the latter will do well to retire for a little, in order to appease the rage of the enemy. He is speaking of those who are settled in a place and ordained to direct a church. Now since our colleague has gone towards you to supply a want which you felt, in the mean time, till it is possible to make a more certain provision and of more permanent duration, consider if it would not be more expedient that such an object which may inflame the fury of your enemies should be removed; for we hear of rumours that are disseminated to aggravate the troubles and vexations which they are endeavouring to excite against you. It is enough to have put you in mind of that, for we think so highly of your prudence as to believe that you will try to obviate these inconveniences, considering that your present necessity should be your counsellor on that point. Nevertheless, let not his departure be the cause¹ of your dispersion, for it is at the present moment more than ever that you should rally yourselves under the banner, knowing your own natural infirmities, knowing also that the craft of Satan aims at no other end but that of scattering you, the more effectually to

¹ Nicholas des Gallars returned this same year to Geneva.

annihilate you. Hold yourselves then conjoined and as it were knit together, invoking with one accord, and with one voice, Him who has promised to be present wherever two or three are gathered together in his name.

Whereupon, beloved Seigneurs and brethren, having commended us to your fervent prayers, we will also on our side supplicate the heavenly Father, to preserve you under the protection of his Son, fortifying you with a constancy not to be overcome, guiding you by his Holy Spirit in all wisdom, uprightness, simplicity, humility, and constancy; and bridling your enemies, till finally he cover them with confusion. From our assembly.

[*Fr. copy.—Registers of the Company of Geneva.*]

CCCCLXXVI.—TO THE WOMEN DETAINED IN PRISON AT PARIS.¹

He exhorts them to persevere even unto death, holding out to them the example of the martyrs of the old and the new church.

GENEVA, September 1557.

I do not wonder, dearly beloved sisters, if you are astounded by these hard assaults, and feel the natural repugnance of the flesh which strives so much the more as God wills to work in

¹Among the followers of the Reformed doctrine surprised in the assembly of the Rue Saint-Jacques, and detained in the dungeons of the Chastelet, were several women of the highest rank. Assaulted during several hours by a ferocious populace, they escaped from death by a miracle, and saw themselves, says Beza, "loaded with all sorts of abuse, and outraged by blows. The articles of their dress were torn in pieces, their bonnets struck off from their heads, their hair pulled out, their faces bedaubed and covered with mud and filth." *Hist. Eccl.*, tom. i. p. 110. One of these unfortunate captives, la dame Phillippe de Lunz, widow of the Seigneur de Graveron, first appeared before the judges, and received with pious intrepidity the sentence of death. Led to execution, on the 27th September, along with Nicholas Clinet and Taurin Gravelle, she ascended courageously the funeral pile, bequeathing to her companions an example of heroic courage and admirable meekness. The dames de Rentigny, d'Ouartis, de Champagne, and de Longemeau, as well as other captives of an humbler rank, still awaited their sentence. It is to these persecuted women, and doubtless to her who was soon to suffer martyrdom, that the letter of the Reformer is addressed.

you by his Holy Spirit. If men are frail and easily troubled, the frailty of your sex is yet greater, by reason indeed of your natural constitution. But God who works in frail vessels, knows well how to display his strength in the infirmity of his followers. Wherefore it is to him it behoves you to have recourse, invoking him continually, and praying him that the incorruptible seed, which he has sown in you, and by which he has adopted you to be in the number of his children, may bring forth its fruits in time of need, and that thereby you may be strengthened to bear up against all anguish and affliction. You know the saying of St. Paul: God has chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and the weak things to cast down the strong; and those things which are despised and of no account to destroy the proud and the lofty. This it is which should give you great encouragement in order that the consideration of your sex cause you not to fail, though it is often lightly esteemed of men. For however haughty and proud they may be, and however out of contempt and disdain they may make a mock of God, and those who serve him, yet are they constrained to hold in admiration, his power and his glory wherever they see them shine forth. And so much the more, when they see that the vessel by which God works is frail, shall they be forced to acknowledge, and be invincibly convinced in their own hearts of the power of God which they cannot gainsay.

You see that the truth of God, wherever it is found, is the object of their hatred; and it is not less detested by them, in men than in women, in the learned than in the ignorant, in the rich than in the poor, in the great than in the little. If they avail themselves of sex or external condition to fall more furiously upon us, (as we see in what derision they hold women and poor artisans, as if these had no right to speak of God and learn the way of their salvation,) know that such conduct is a testimony against them and to their utter confusion. But since it has pleased God to call you as well as men, (for he has no respect either of male or female,) it is needful that you do your duty to give him glory, according to the measure of grace he has dealt out to you as well as the greatest personages

whom he has endowed with knowledge and courage. Since Jesus Christ has died for you, and through him you hope for salvation, having been baptized in his name, you must not shrink from rendering him the honour that belongs to him. Since we have a common salvation in him, it is necessary that all with one accord, men as well as women, should maintain his cause. When he calls us to do battle, and puts us to proof before the enemy, it serves us nothing to allege our weakness as an excuse for abandoning or denying him, except to expose ourselves to be condemned for disloyalty. For he who marshals us to battle, arms and shields us at the same time with the necessary weapons, and gives us dexterity in wielding them. Our sole task then is to accept them and allow ourselves to be governed by him. He has promised to give us a mouth and wisdom, which our enemies will not be able to gainsay. He has promised to give firmness and constancy to those who put their trust in him. He has shed his Spirit on all flesh, and caused to prophesy sons and daughters, as he had foretold by his prophet Joel; which is evidently a sign that he communicates in like manner his other necessary graces, and leaves neither sons nor daughters, men nor women, destitute of the gifts proper for maintaining his glory. We must not be indolent then in asking him for them, nor faint-hearted in receiving and making use of them when he shall have distributed them to us.

Consider what was the courage and constancy of women at the death of our Lord Jesus Christ; when the apostles had forsaken him, how they continued by him with marvellous constancy, and how a woman was the messenger to announce to the apostles his resurrection, which the latter could neither believe nor comprehend. If he then so honoured women, and endowed them with so much courage, think ye he has less power now, or that his purposes are changed? How many thousands of women have there been who have spared neither their blood nor their lives to maintain the name of Jesus Christ, and announce his reign! Has not God caused their martyrdom to fructify? Has their faith not obtained the glory of the world as well as that of martyrs? And with-

out going so far, have we not still before our eyes, examples of how God works daily by their testimony, and confounds his enemies, in such a manner that there is no preaching of such efficacy as the fortitude and perseverance, which they possess in confessing the name of Christ? Do you not see how deeply rooted in their hearts is this saying of our Lord, He who denies me before men, him will I deny before God my Father; and he who confesses me, him also will I confess, and avow before God my Father? They have not feared to quit this perishable life to obtain a better, full of glory and everlasting. Set before you, then, these noble exemplars, both ancient and recent, to strengthen your weakness, and teach you to repose on Him who has performed such great things by weak vessels; and recognize the honour which he has done you, in order that you may suffer yourselves to be led to him, being confident that he is powerful to preserve your life, if he wishes yet to make use of it, or if it is his will to exchange it for a better, you are most blessed in employing this perishable existence for his glory at so high a price, and with the assured hope of living eternally with him. For to that end have we been sent into this world, and illuminated by the grace of God, to glorify him, both in our life and in our death, and be finally fully united to him. May the Lord grant you the grace to meditate attentively on these things, and impress them on your hearts in order that you may conform yourselves wholly to his holy will.—Amen.

[*Printed. Histoire des Martyrs, p. 430.*]

CCCCLXXVII.—TO THE CHURCHES OF LAUSANNE, MOUDON,
AND PAYERNE.¹

Collection in favour of the Brethren of Paris.

GENEVA, *September, 1557.*

MESSEIERS AND WORTHY BRETHREN,—Though all the rest should not suffice to touch the hearts of the brethren to whom application is made, this last extremity will brook no delay. For it will be next to impossible that amid so many tortures the evil spread not from one to another, till at last an infinite number be involved in it. Wherefore the question no longer is how to satisfy the desires of the poor brethren, but if there be one spark of humanity alive in our breasts to succour them in such extremity. Because I trust they themselves will not fail to put forth all their efforts, do you also not fail to send word what you have accomplished in *Swisserland*. For though money is not readily to be found in these parts, I shall assuredly so bestir myself, should I be obliged to pawn my head and feet, that it will be found forthcoming here. I will supplicate the Father of mercies that he direct you in every thing and every where, give you address and strengthen you; in a word, that he will demonstrate to us the care that he takes of his people.

Extract from the letters of Sire Georges of the 11th of September: "you will have heard how more than a hundred

¹ On the back: Lausanne, Moudon, Payerne.

At the sad news of the persecutions which raged with such fury against the Reformed Christians of Paris and the kingdom of France, the Swiss Churches were moved with compassion. A deputation composed of John Budé, Farel, and Theodore Beza, went to solicit the energetic intervention of the Protestant cantons and princes of Germany with King Henry II. The minister Gaspard Carmel, deputy of the Church of Paris, presented to the divines assembled at Worms, a confession of faith the terms of which skilfully chosen seemed fitted to bring about a closer intimacy between the Lutheran and the Reformed churches. Ruchat, tom. vi. pp. 212 to 217. Calvin was the soul of these movements, and, by vehement letters, he urged the Churches of French *Swisserland* to join with these measures, in offering the most precious gifts to these persecuted brethren.

prisoners have been apprehended at Paris, among whom are several notable and excellent personages."

I have copied this little clause in order that it might be better understood and make a more lively impression on you.

[*Fr. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCCLXXVIII.—TO FAREL.

Mission of Budé and Beza to Germany—complaints against the Church of Zurich.

GENEVA, 24th September 1557.

It had happened most providentially that by my request and exhortation our friend Budé undertook the mission, of which no doubt you were informed before the sad tidings were brought us, though it was by no means necessary to exhort too keenly one sufficiently well disposed of his own accord. There was a hope that the ferocity of the king being tamed, some answer might be drawn from him, and to this measure I was urged to have recourse by a man otherwise unknown to me, but whom I perceived to be the interpreter of the common sentiments of all the godly. It is needless to say that I lost not a moment in giving to Budé his instructions as soon as I heard of the anxiety of the brethren. With all the diligence in my power, I also afterwards besought Philip to afford us the protection of his influence with his princes. Beza I had already stimulated with this argument that the present was the best opportunity for appeasing the Zurichers, whose ill-humour we must endure in such a manner that if the thing is possible, they may be appeased by little and little. I am ashamed to say how averse Bullinger is to a conference, and he now compares me to Bucer, whose over activity was hurtful for this very reason, that he never frankly and prudently defended the good cause in the proper manner. My line of conduct however is widely different, since I have it not so much at heart to clear my character from calumnies. I fancied

that we should hear nothing more of your confession,¹ I have been mistaken. Here now is a fresh bickering! But by Beza's arrival, unless I am deceived, all that smoke will have vanished. Would that the whole mission were crowned with success! As soon as any news to be depended on shall be brought us from Paris, I will take care to let you know them. Respecting the state of our own city, I can only inform you that four arbiters have been appointed to settle our disputes. If our neighbours do not acquiesce in their decision, the affair will require to be decided by a formal judicial sentence. A private arrangement would have been highly agreeable to us, and the means seem not at all difficult, did not our neighbours obstinately persist in supporting the cause of those whom we had condemned; what they intend to do will however be known in a short time. I also am astonished at the stupidity of the king.² Till God miraculously awaken him, he will feel nothing. The worthless branches are worthy of lying side by side with their trunk. You will learn all these particulars more fully from the messenger who is to bear my letter, to whom I seem to do a kind of injustice in anticipating his narrative.

Farewell, most worthy brother. May the Lord always stand by you and bless your labours. Amen. My fellow-pastors and friends salute you. Do you in your turn not fail to salute in my name your brethren.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy.—Arch. Eccl. of Berne. Tom. vi. p. 571.*]

¹ See p. 345. The formulary incriminated at Zurich had been drawn up by the joint labours of Beza and Farel.

² See p. 372, Calvin was then preparing the Confession of Faith, which he shortly after presented to Henry II.

CCCCLXXIX.—TO BULLINGER.¹

An account of Beza's mission to Worms. New entreaties to determine the Church of Zurich to take a part in the measures of the Swiss Churches.

GENEVA, 7th October, 1557.

From the letter of Beza, you will learn how well inclined the princes were to send deputies for the sake of interceding, and how liberally they offered their services. There was a little more difficulty among the men of our profession. For the meetings by night were very distasteful to them, and they desired that they might be allowed to choose hours more suitable for the brethren, who were worn out by so intolerable an oppression. A confession of faith was also demanded, in which you will see that our brethren undisguisedly professed their sentiments. At least they did not dissemble that they hold the doctrine from which they seemed to you formerly to have somewhat deviated, and the apprehension that you entertained lest they should be entangled by Brentz, Marbach, and such like persons, has been dissipated.² Nay, these same persons will perceive that there is no harmony of opinion between themselves and almost all the French Churches. Now though they still obstinately cherish their own errors, there are, nevertheless, some who are a little more tractable so that there is a hope that when we shall once have come to a friendly conference they may be influenced. Though I am not led away by this confidence to think that we should come

¹ The deputies of the Churches of France and Switzerland having presented, on the 8th of October, to the Assembly of Worms a confession of faith, drawn up in terms the most proper to procure conciliation, obtained from the German divines a recommendation to the Duke of Wurtemberg. This prince having granted them an audience, manifested the most favourable sentiments with respect to the persecuted brethren, and promised to interpose his good offices with the king, inviting the Swiss Cantons who had a special alliance with this prince to do the same on their side. Ruchat, tom. vi. pp. 217, 218. Hospinian, tom. ii. p. 434.

The names of Brentz and Marbach figure beside that of Melancthon among those who signed the confession of faith presented in the name of the Churches of France and approved of by the German divines. Ruchat, *Ibid.*

to a conference if they invite us, I have other reasons which influence me, and which I have exposed to you. With respect to the objection that you have started, that it is not in your power to do any thing without the consent of the magistracy ; do not think that I am so very rash and void of good breeding as to slight those with whom God has connected us by a sacred and indissoluble tie, to the end that we should strive together for the same object with united zeal. Still, I do not think that we are so servilely bound down, as not to be allowed to discuss familiarly those things which may tend to the common good of the church. What I wrote, I again repeat ; if we recoil, no feasible colour can be put on the matter, but we must stand chargeable, in my opinion, with a dastardly and dishonourable tergiversation. If you think otherwise, it gives me pain to reflect that in a common cause there should be such a discrepancy between our opinions. But, after all, I do not think it probable that your senate will repudiate a conference should it be offered ; nor will it be their fault, that those who desire to see the church at peace should not voluntarily present themselves to remove this unfortunate dissension, and seek for some means of pacification.

Farewell, most accomplished sir, and honoured brother. Salute carefully all your fellow pastors. May the Lord support you all by his power, cover you with his protection, and govern you by his Spirit—yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

Something, I fancy has been done already at Berne about the league.

[*Lat. copy.—Archives of Zurich. Gest. vi, 166. p. 37.*]

CCCCLXXX.—TO THE KING OF FRANCE.

Exposition of the faith of the Reformed Churches in France.

GENEVA, October, 1557.

SIRE, since we are accused and designated to your majesty as forming a sect by ourselves, we desire nothing better than to lay before you an account of our faith, provided you will now be pleased to give a patient hearing to what we briefly present to you in writing, till you find more fitting leisure to examine the contents thereof, and if you think proper communicate them to your council, in order that you may be better able to judge whether it is wrongfully or with reason that we are blamed. In the mean time, Sire, we humbly beg of you two things: first, that you would be pleased to consider how precious a thing is the truth of God, contained in the law, the prophets, and the gospel, considering that not only the salvation of our souls lies therein, but also, that God cannot be duly honoured, revered, and glorified, except by this rule; secondly, that you would also be pleased to reflect how many abuses are, at the present day, prevalent over the world. For it is a thing quite notorious, that the real purity of the church is altogether perverted and corrupted. Now many are nourished in ignorance, being obstinate in refusing to inquire into the will of God. And this is the reason why several people fearing God, will nevertheless, often be con-

¹ On the back in Calvin's handwriting: To the King, the Confession of the Churches of France.

This confession, drawn up by a skilful hand, and in conciliating terms, by the Reformer, was presented to King Henry II, at the time when the Protestant princes of Germany disposed themselves to interpose with this prince in favour of their French brethren in the faith, who were exposed to the most cruel persecution, (November, 1557). The most odious calumnies had been circulated on the subject of the French Protestants, and found an echo even at the Court of France. Beza, tom. i. p. 121. Calvin, in sketching a simple exposition of the faith of the Reformed Churches, proposed to himself to destroy these calumnies, which he had so eloquently refuted, two and twenty years before in his noble preface to the "Institution Chrétienne."

demned for want of being heard. For the rest, Sire, that it may not seem to you that we wish to palliate, or give a false colouring to anything under vain pretences, we have here laid down with simplicity a brief confession of the faith we hold, which we trust you will find in accordance with that of the Catholic church.

In the first place, we believe in one God, of a simple essence, and yet, in which there are three distinct persons, as we are taught in the Holy Scriptures, and as the doctrine has been laid down by ancient councils; and we detest all sects and heresies, which the ancient doctors have combatted.

We believe that man, having been created in purity and integrity, has fallen by his own fault from the grace which he had received, and by this means is alienated from God who is the source of justice and all good; so that his nature has been wholly corrupted, and being blinded in mind, and depraved in heart, he has lost all integrity, nothing whatever remaining of it.

We believe that all the race of Adam is infected with such contagion, and that original sin is a hereditary vice, and not a simple imitation, as the Pelagians would insinuate, a sect whose errors we detest.

We believe also that this vice is truly sin, which is sufficient to condemn the whole human race and is reputed such in the sight of God; that even after baptism it is always sin as to its guilt, though the condemnation of it is abolished, because God of his gratuitous goodness does not impute it.

We believe that it is by the mercy of God alone that the elect are delivered from the general perdition in which all men are plunged. And first of all we believe that Jesus Christ, without whom we are all ruined, has been given us as a Redeemer, to bring to us justice and salvation.

We believe that Jesus Christ, being the eternal wisdom of God, and his only Son, has put on our flesh in order to be both God and man in one person, that is like unto us, excepting only that he was pure from all taint of sin. Holding which belief, we detest all the heresies which anciently troubled the church. We believe also that the end for which he as-

sumed our nature was that he might die, and be raised up again from the dead, and fulfil all righteousness in order to procure for us eternal life.

We believe that by this one sacrifice, which Jesus Christ offered up on the cross, we are reconciled to God so as to be held and reputed just, and that by this means we have liberty to invoke God with full confidence that he is our Father, inasmuch as by adoption we obtain what Jesus Christ has by nature.

We believe that our whole justification is founded on the remission of sins as it is at the same time our sole felicity, according to the expression of David. Wherefore we reject every other species of justification, which men presume they obtain from their virtues or merits, seeing that our trust can fix on nothing else, nor find a resting place except when we are convinced that God, in covering our iniquities, imparts to us, in order to justify and absolve us, the obedience which his Son has rendered to him.

We believe that by faith alone we are made partakers of this righteousness, and also that this faith is kindled in us by the secret grace of the Holy Spirit, which is a gratuitous and peculiar gift, which God communicates to whomsoever he wills, and that not only to introduce them into the right path, but to make them continue in it to the end.

We believe that by this same faith we are regenerated in newness of life, because by nature we are the slaves of sin. Now though this renewing of our nature by which God forms us to do good, is a part of our salvation, nevertheless we confess that the good works which we perform by the power of the Holy Ghost, are not taken into account to justify us before God, nor afford us any claim to be considered the children of God, because we should be always floating in doubt and uncertainty, if our conscience did not repose on the satisfaction by which Jesus Christ has acquitted us.

Strong in this confidence, we invoke God in the name of his Son whom he has given us for Mediator and Advocate, and boldly address to him our prayers, having so good and intimate an access to him; encouraged at the same time by his declara-

tion, that our prayers will be to him a sweet smelling sacrifice, and by his command to have recourse to him by this means.

We believe that the order of the church which Jesus Christ has established on his authority, ought to be held sacred and inviolable; and yet that the church cannot be held together unless there be pastors who have the office of teaching, and these pastors we are bound to honour and listen to with respect, when they are duly called and faithfully discharge their duty, in which belief we detest all those visionaries who would annihilate, as far as in them lies, the preaching of the word of God.

We believe that we ought to observe and keep up the unity of the church, and that all those who separate themselves from it are perverse persons whom we ought to shun as deadly pests. Nevertheless we are of opinion that we ought prudently to discern which is the true church, because several falsely abuse this title. We declare then, that it is the society of the faithful who agree to follow the word of God and that pure religion which depends on it, and who profit therein during the whole course of their lives, increasing and confirming themselves in the fear of God, according as they have need to make progress, and tending always to that which is beyond. Moreover, that, whatever efforts they make, it behoves them incessantly to have recourse to Christ for the remission of their sins.

We believe that the sacraments are conjoined with the word for ampler confirmation, to be the pledges and earnest of the grace of God, and by this means to comfort and aid our faith, because of the infirmity and hard-heartedness which is in us. We hold also that the substance thereof is Jesus Christ, for being separated from him they lose all efficacy.

We believe that baptism is the testimony of our adoption, because thereby we are introduced into the body of Christ to be washed and purified by his blood, and then renewed in holiness of life by his Spirit. Now though baptism is a sacrament of faith and repentance, nevertheless since God receives into his church the children along with the fathers, we affirm that by the authority of Jesus Christ, little children born of believing parents ought to be baptized.

We confess that the holy supper of our Lord is a testimony of the union which we have with Jesus Christ, inasmuch as not only he died and rose from the dead for us, but also truly feeds and nourishes us with his flesh, till we be one with him and his life be common to us. Now though he is in the heavens till he come to judge the world, nevertheless we believe that by the secret and incomprehensible power of his Spirit, he nourishes and vivifies us by the substance of his body and blood. We hold indeed that this is done spiritually, in order not to substitute for a fact and a truth, an imagination or an idea, but also because this mystery transcends in its depth the measure of our capacity and the whole order of nature. In one word, inasmuch as it is celestial, that it can be apprehended only by faith.

We believe, as has already been said, that both in baptism and the Lord's supper, God in reality bestows on us and accomplishes by effects what is there symbolized, and moreover we conjoin with the signs, the real possession and enjoyment of what is there presented to us. And thus it is that those who bring to the sacred table of Jesus Christ a pure faith as it were a vessel, really receive what the symbols represent: that is to say, that the body and blood of Jesus Christ serve not less for food and drink to the soul than bread and wine to the body.¹

We believe that it is the will of God that the world should be governed by laws and policy, in order that there may be some restraints to check the inordinate appetites of men, and that thus he has established kingdoms and principalities and everything which relates to the administration of justice, and desires to be recognized as the author of them, in order that for his sake men may not only endure that superiors bear rule, but that these may be honoured and esteemed with all due reverence, being held for his lieutenants and officers whom he has appointed to exercise a legitimate and holy office. We hold then that we are bound to obey their laws and statutes, pay tribute, taxes, and other imposts, and bear the

¹ On the margin in Calvin's handwriting : " A blank space should be left for the insertion of these two articles, respecting the Lord's supper."

yoke of submission with frank and loyal goodwill, provided always that the sovereign empire of God be preserved inviolable.¹

You have here, Sire, an undisguised and unvarnished summary of our faith. If we have not entered into a minute detail respecting all the points and articles which are laid to our account, most assuredly we cannot be charged with any thing which is not implicitly contained in the statement we have laid before you, and deducible from it. This you will find when you shall be pleased to examine the whole. If we do not adhere to many superstitions which are entirely contrary to what we have here declared, we hope our apology will be admitted by you as reasonable.

We entreat you then, Sire, and ever most humbly, as the indulgent father and humane protector of your obedient subjects, to have compassion on those who seek but to serve God in simplicity, while they loyally acquit themselves of their duty towards you.

[*Fr. orig. corrected by Calvin.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 145.*]

CCCCLXXXI—BULLINGER.

Persecutions in the Valleys of Piedmont and at Paris.

GENEVA, 15th November 1557.

Because our friend, Crispin, hath not yet returned from the fair, who, as I hear from the account of others, is bringing a letter to me from Philip, I dispense with writing to you about several things till the return of the young man by whom you lately sent a letter to me. Only for the present, I wished to inform you of the state of our brethren. The Alpine brethren are again persecuted, not only by the Parliament of Turin

¹On the margin in Calvin's handwriting: *This article should be added at the end.* This passage may be compared with the fine chapter of the Christian Institution, on Civil Government. The French Protestants were represented to the king as rebellious subjects, hostile to all authority, and whose doctrines tended equally to the destruction of religion and of the state.

but also by that of Grenoble, for there are two valleys under the jurisdiction of the latter. Many are dragged to Grenoble, where they are summoned to make a confession of their faith. A day is fixed for all to return to the abominations of Popery. If any one can lay hold of either the ministers of the word or any schoolmasters, he is encouraged by the offered reward of fifty gold crowns for each person arrested. A decree has also been published that they will be apprehended by an armed force unless they submit before the time prefixed.

Eight days ago, three persons were burned at Paris,¹ and though it is probable that the enemies wished by the punishment of a few to strike terror into all, we shall hear ere long, if the others remain unshaken, that all the chiefs of the Reformed party in the city will become the prey of the flames. This thing alone seems to rouse Pharaoh from the consternation into which he was plunged by his defeat in war, that, forsooth, he may wreak his fury more atrociously on the godly.

As it was your desire, in dedicating your commentaries to the exiles of Christ, to give a public token of your affection for us, the foreigners who are here present you their thanks in a common letter, and would desire, should an opportunity occur, to testify by deeds still more fully their gratitude. I, too, thought it my duty to add this word, by way of giving my suffrage to their sentiments.

Farewell, most accomplished sir, and honoured brother, as well as your family and fellow pastors. May the Lord preserve, govern, and continue to bless you all even to the end—yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich. Gallicana Scripta, p. 36.*]

¹ See p. 363.

CCCCLXXXII.—TO THEODORE BEZA.¹

Ecclesiastical crisis in the Pays de Vaud—Inefficiency of the first measures adopted in favour of the French Protestants.

GENEVA, 5th December 1557.

Yesterday morning I dictated a letter to Viret, when an individual who was to take charge of it declared that he would set out immediately after dinner. As he changed his mind, I ordered it to be given to another person. To-day I was surprised to see it still lying on my table. I wished to remind you of this circumstance, because otherwise it might seem absurd that what was written in so great a hurry should come to hand so late. The same reason prevented me from writing to you, which I now do, having found a little more leisure. When you tell me that sycophants had sprung up in that neighbourhood, it is almost as if you were to say that water gushes up from the fountain. I approve, however, of your having freely expostulated with him, and now that sybarite will be compelled at least to swallow whatever disgrace there will be in the affair. It is certainly a detestable and monstrous thing, that these faint-hearted creatures should bluster with so much malevolence, that they would rather a hundred times the church should perish, than they themselves not vent their clamorous officiousness against those who desire to assist it. Meanwhile, the reward of your labours is more certain with God, in proportion as you shall see these labours detested by the Devil; and do not murmur that these perverse animals discharge their violence on you, provided the angels who are in heaven applaud your conduct.

¹ While the Churches of the Palatinate were troubled by the dissensions of their doctors respecting the article about the Lord's Supper, those of the French countries subject to the authority of Berne, were engaged in a struggle, becoming every day more keen, with the magistrates on the subject of excommunication. Viret and Theodore de Beza, placed in the first ranks by the party which claimed the power of excommunicating as a right essential to the church, were also the objects of the most violent attacks. Ruchat, tom. vi. p. 256, and the following.

I know not whether it will be expedient to add a fresh source of grief to those of the wretched brethren¹ who have derived no solace from the embassy. Moreover, you can scarcely imagine how little prudence the members of the deputation displayed. For which reason it would be ridiculous, I suspect, to return them any other thanks for their management, than what is required by the prescribed forms of good breeding. Add to that, that if a common letter of thanks is demanded, three months will elapse before all can come to an agreement among themselves, owing to the distances which separate them. I exhort Stephens, however, to discharge this duty in the name of all. But the king has fixed an Assembly of all the orders before Christmas.² The king of Navarre must in that case be roused up. The task is certainly one which I detest; I shall attempt it nevertheless. Especially as our friend, Colonges, is meditating something very childish, about which, however, he has not deigned to hold any communication with me; but he told Verace, that he had in his hands a certain writing which he wished, after printing it, to send to the princes. As if, forsooth, any one was going to deliver an opinion from a published pamphlet, nay, as they are so much an object of suspicion to one another, it would be fitting rather to whisper secretly advice into their ears, if we wished to do any good. That the deputation by their faint-heartedness and sloth, both deluded us and deserted the brethren, you will learn from the public acts; the rest you may hear from Christopher. You remind me very seasonably of the cause of Viret; it deserves to be examined upon what conditions he is to discharge his functions during the whole course of his life. If he fears giving offence to the good, the majority, unless I am mistaken, will wish some remedy to be applied to such serious evils.

Farewell, most worthy and excellent brother. May the Lord always stand by you and continue to govern you. The

¹The first measures, not very well concerted, of the Cantons and of the Protestant princes in regard to the King of France, produced no results.

² An obscure passage—several words are wanting, or truncated in the text.

messenger who is to carry this letter will not set out before to-morrow. It was written, however, after dinner before the afternoon sermon.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Paris, Coll. Dupuy. Tom. 102, p. 32.*]

CCCCLXXXIII.—TO MADAME DE RENTIGNY.¹

He fortifies her beforehand against the temptations which might turn her aside from courageously confessing her faith.

8th December 1557.

MADAME AND HONOURED SISTER,—I had till now deferred writing to you, not that I had forgotten you, but because I imagined that you had persons among you who would discharge their duty in exhorting you according to your needs.² And at the same time I was informed of the constancy which God had bestowed on you, so that I had occasion rather to give thanks to him than to stir you up. Especially being at such a distance from you, I could not be properly acquainted with your spiritual state, so as to adapt my exhortation to your wants. I therefore refrained from a task which those who were nearer to you could better fulfil, being eye witnesses of the evils which they had to remedy. Nevertheless, as length

¹ To Mademoiselle de Rentigny, prisoner at Paris.

This lady, one of the captives of the Rue St. Jacques, was the daughter of the Seigneur de Rambouillet, and wife of the Chevalier de Rentigny, Standard-bearer of the Duke of Guise. Her husband and her father, zealous catholics, introduced into her dungeon could not shake her faith. The constancy of Mademoiselle de Rentigny, praised by the minister of Paris, was also commended in a letter of Beza to the ministers of Zurich, in which this passage is to be remarked: "Most of the captives hold out very courageously to such a degree indeed that a lady, the most distinguished among all the prisoners for the nobility of her birth, and the wealth of her friends, openly refused the pardon offered her, spurning the tears and prayers both of her father and husband, worthy certainly of being commended to the Lord by name. She is called Mademoiselle de Rentigny. May the Lord grant to her to persevere to the end." (24th November 1557. *Arch. of Zurich.*)

² The ministers of Paris. See the letters of the minister Racham, (or Machar,) to Calvin. (*Library of Geneva, vol. 112.*) The history of the Reformed church of Paris, during two of its most glorious years, (1558-1559) is fully detailed in these precious letters.

of time often brings along with it many occasions of dissatisfaction, and temptations multiply, while at the same time it is one of the devices of Satan and his agents to let the children of God languish in order by slow degrees to damp their courage. I have judged fit no longer to delay in acquitting myself of a part of my duty. Besides I know not if it is the will of God to prove you still further, for it is possible that, in sparing you hitherto, it was his intention to give you leisure to prepare yourself that you might not be taken unawares. For though I doubt not but that you have always been fully furnished for glorifying his name, yet it is more certain that he knows how to proportion the trials of his children, so as not to task too sorely their infirmities.

But however that may be, I take it for granted that you have not been without feeling his manifest assistance. For the alarms in the beginning were not so dreadful as they were to the persons who took the lead and pointed out the way to others, yet most assuredly you would have fainted a hundred times, had you not been supported by his fortitude. Wherefore, having persisted and held out in many struggles and contentions, recognize that he had not forgotten you, and let this experience cause you to hope with confidence, that to the end he will stand by you and perfect his strength in you, whatever be your infirmity.

I think you have heard that it was not our fault that you did not receive some succour on the part of man, but the beginnings were so insufficient that it would seem as if God wished to reserve the whole glory to himself.¹ Though if the second do better than the former, still we shall be forced to acknowledge that they were but the instruments of his grace. In fact I am disposed to conjecture, even though neither their counsels nor their conduct were better than that of the others, that they will obtain more. But however that may be, it is best to be prepared for the worst, for if, on the present occasion, you are to leave the prison without being led to execution, you have matter for deeper reflection for the future than ever, because those who shall not be disposed to emancipate

¹ See p. 379.

themselves from the service of God by forsaking him, will be held in much stricter bondage under the miserable yoke of Satan. Wherefore, Madame, and beloved sister, I entreat you in the name of Him who has ransomed you at so dear a price in order to bear rule over your life and death, to reflect above all how you may finish the rest of your life in his obedience. Be persuaded that your life is precious to me, but it is neither for you nor me to hesitate a moment, in preferring to a hundred lives the honour of Him to whom we are indebted for every thing. I say this, because I have a shrewd presumption that besides the temptations to which you may be openly exposed, there will be more than one instrument of mischief secretly at work to raise others, and at the same time deaden in you the fear of God. If you were not well fortified, on the contrary, against all the assaults which might be levelled at you, you have only to reflect both on the worth of the heavenly inheritance to which we are called, and the inestimable price at which it has been purchased for us, to be steeled with invincible courage; just as in the opposite case we shall speedily be cast down, both great and small of us, if we turn away our eyes from these considerations. Principally those of us who have most stay and support in this world, will be most speedily held back, according as, under colour of the gifts which God has bestowed on us to draw us to himself, Satan strives to turn us away from him. But those who shall rightly esteem the passing value of that treasure, which is offered to us in the gospel, will have wherewithal to abandon every thing which belongs to this world. There is neither prince nor king who can be a Christian, save on this condition to offer his life and death as an oblation to God.

Now since he calls you to bear witness to the doctrine in which lie all your wealth, welfare, and glory, reflect in the first place in what consists your obligation to him; and if the condition of discharging your debt seem to you severe and burdensome, console yourself with this thought, that he requires nothing that does not turn to your advantage. I am aware that several will allege that it would be better to consult one's safety, than to deliver one's self without profit; but

in putting your life into the hands of Him to whom it appertains, leave him to dispose of the issue, as it belongs to him, to cause to fructify whatever proceeds from us, which otherwise would be unproductive. In this, as in all the rest, know that you are called to combat; and since it is the time to do battle, arm yourself as necessity requires, not only in meditating on the promises which should fortify you to the end, but also praying the God of all strength to support you by his Spirit in order to render you completely victorious, and you may rest assured that many will keep you company in this request. And for my own part I supplicate him to have you in his holy keeping, to guide you in all wisdom, uprightness, and constancy, so that his name may be glorified in you, as it is fit that it should be.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

CCCCLXXXIV.—TO THE KING OF NAVARRE.¹

He lays before him the distressing situation of the brethren in France, and begs him to take in hand their cause with the King of France.

14th December 1557.

SIRE, having heard of the grace which God has bestowed on you, in bringing himself nigh to you in a more intimate manner than ever, in order to give you a more direct assurance of the pure truth of the gospel of his Son Jesus Christ, our sovereign King, I have made bold to write to you,² in the

¹ Antony de Bourbon, duke of Vendome, husband of Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre, and father of Henry IV. Of a timid mind and a feeble and irresolute character, this prince, however, ventured to declare for the Reformation, before that his wife, endowed with a masculine genius, and a heroic soul, seemed to incline towards the new doctrines. He caused them to be publicly preached in the chapel of the castle of Nerac in the year 1555, and demanded several ministers of the Church of Geneva. He obtained several distinguished preachers, Francis Le Guay, called the Normand, and de La Pierre, who united their efforts with those of the ancient monk David to confirm the king in the profession of the gospel. Beza, tom. i. p. 162. Attentive to the interests of the Reformation in France, Calvin profited by the departure of these two ministers to address to the king respectful exhortations.

² Calvin had been informed by a letter of the minister, Villeroche, of the favourable dispositions of the King of Navarre. "Yesterday, Simon Bursier (such I believe is his

hope that for the respect and reverence in which you hold the Master whom I serve, you will deign to give a favourable reception to the present, which tendering to you both my person and services for whatever purpose you may be pleased to employ me, will abundantly testify for me, if my talents and means do not permit me to show by deeds, yet, that at least good will is not wanting to me to prove how devoted I am to you. At the same time, because I have heard that you are pleased to entertain a favourable disposition towards me, I have so much the more confidence to have a kind and indulgent access to you. What is more, I hold myself assured that when you shall perceive that I desire nothing else except that God should be glorified in you, that is by your welfare and eternal happiness, you will willingly suffer yourself to be exhorted by me in the name of Him who has entire authority over you. For in proportion to the difficulty of the office which kings and princes have to discharge, so much greater need have they of being put in mind of their duty. And for that reason, also, it is that God has especially commanded them to give more diligent heed than private persons, to study how to profit by his law. For, indeed, just as God, raising them to high dignity, brings them in some sort nearer to himself, so does he oblige them at the same time to put forth all their zeal to acquit themselves of their duty towards him. Nor is it reasonable, that the princes of the earth, who are but his officers and vicegerents, should desire to be obeyed, while he who possesses supreme empire should be defrauded of his rights. Now it is in these days more than ever that great and small should strive that God be served in such a manner as is his due. For everything is, now a days, so corrupted and perverted that for the most part what is called the

name) had a conversation with our king which was prolonged to a late hour of the night. In it they discoursed a great deal on the duty of princes, on eternal life, on the cross of Christ, on religious faith. In this discussion, both the age of the speaker and the admirable sanctity of his life added majesty and authority to his words. In fine, so it is that from this prince, of whom we have hitherto entertained doubts, we now expect more and greater things than heretofore." Nerac, 13th April 1557.

[*Libr. of Geneva.* Vol. 110.]

service of God consists of detestable falsities, forged by the Devil, to do dishonour to the true God. Moreover if people of humble rank, and possessed of no influence, are yet held as much as in them lies, and as their inferior position permits, to use all their endeavours that God should be adored with purity, the obligation must surely be far more binding on those who are in high places to double their diligence, and every one according to the measure of his capacity.

Reflect, Sire, that God, after having chosen you to be a prince of so noble a house, has also drawn you forth from the darkness of the superstitions in which you were plunged, as well as others, and has illumined you with the knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ—a blessing which has not been extended to all—it was not his intention that the faith which you have received should remain shut up within yourself, and hid under a bushel, but rather that you should be a shining lamp to enlighten both great and small. And, in fact, doubt not but many have their eyes fixed on you, and God has turned them upon you that you may be more strongly impelled to put yourself forward, and point out the way to many others.

On the one hand, you must recollect what zeal we should all possess that the honour of God be maintained undiminished according to the expression of the Psalmist: The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up, and the reproaches they have cast on thee, have fallen upon me. Therefore the pure doctrine by which God wishes to be glorified, ought to be so precious in our sight, that when we perceive it to be obscured, nay, even in a manner abolished by errors, abuses, deceits, and illusions of Satan, our zeal should be kindled to oppose them as much as lies in our power, and inasmuch as God has pronounced that he will render honourable those who have honoured him.

On the other hand, Sire, the sighs and groanings of so many true believers, certainly deserve to be listened to by you, and that you should take courage to come to their aid, and procure them relief as far as you shall have it in your power. And at present a more fitting occasion than ever offers itself in this

assembling of the States.¹ For it is probable that in discussing what concerns the public administration, the article of religion will not be forgotten. I am aware how odious it will be considered that you should stir up the quarrel of Jesus Christ. But, Sire, if you, who ought to be the organ of all the children of God, keep your mouth shut, who will be bold enough to open his to pronounce a word? Wait not till God dispatch to you a message from heaven, but take it for granted that in calling you to such an assembly and with such a rank, he produces you as his witness, and the advocate of his cause; so much the more then your natural magnanimity should display itself here. Even should there be reason for apprehensions from the difficulties of the position, inasmuch as it belongs to God to fortify princes when they have recourse to him, with a free and generous spirit, I entreat you to bestir yourself manfully, as now is the time to make a strenuous effort, or it is to be feared that no opportunity will occur for the future. If the circumstances do not yet admit of approving what is good with entire liberty, and condemning what is evil, the least thing you can do is to require that the cause be investigated, and that so many poor people be not condemned without any valid reason. Nay it seems fitting that you should demonstrate by well chosen arguments, that it is not for the tranquillity and advantage of the kingdom to seek these ends by violent executions, inasmuch as the fires of persecution do but increase the number of the persecuted, so that the blood of the martyrs becomes the seed of the church. It seems proper also that without furnishing a pretext to those who cannot relish the gospel, of demeaning themselves with too much violence, you might bring forward some points which would not inspire them with so much horror; as to allege for example: If a man contented himself with praying to God, and held Jesus Christ for his advocate, to put him to death for such an offence is an excess of rigour, and that there might be danger that God

¹ The States General, in point of fact, met at Paris the 6th of January 1558. But the three orders confined themselves to voting the subsidies necessary for continuing the war with Spain, without occupying themselves with the subject of religion. The king of Navarre was not present at this assembly. De Thou. L. XX.

should be irritated against the country, considering that the apostles and disciples of our Lord Jesus, who are the true mirrors and patrons of christianity, never knew what it was to offer up prayers to deceased Saints. There are also other abuses so oppressive and enormous that there is no possibility of dissimulating them; and notwithstanding, the moment any one ventures to make the least remonstrance, he is held for a heretic, without any further enquiry, which is an insupportable excess.

There is also another point to which attention should most certainly be directed. For precisely the more they think to obstruct the course of God's word, and keep up the reigning abuses, many people become profane, godless, and lawless, because many in their hearts boldly hold all papistry in derision, knowing that there is in it nothing but ignorance and folly, and notwithstanding, fearing to expose their lives to danger, they reject all instruction. And in verity, if some remedy is not promptly provided for this evil, people will be astonished to see the kingdom overrun by such an infection. And would to God that those who are most cruel in having poor people put to death, were not such despisers of God and scoffers at all religion! It is to be desired then that the king should be reminded that if they persist in oppressing good simple folks, who out of their worthy zeal and fear of good, do not chime in with the fashionable opinions, it is to be feared that the vermin I have described will spread and occupy the whole country, so that it will be too late to get rid of the evil.

I should wish exceedingly, Sire, that your occupations would leave you leisure to peruse a small treatise which I wrote some twelve years ago,¹ when the States of the Empire were assembled to settle the differences in religion. Nay, I will make bold to beg of you to deign to study it leisurely, that you may be better informed what line of conduct it would be expedient to pursue; not that I presume to lay down

¹ *Supplication and remonstrance on the state of Christendom, and the reformation of the Church, to the Emperor, the Princes and States, now holding an imperial diet at Spire, 1543.* This treatise composed at first in Latin, was translated into French by Calvin in 1554. *Opuscules*, p. 506.

rules for you, but because I am confident that you will not disdain to be instructed, either by me or any other, what is the will of Him, whom you desire to please in every thing and everywhere, in order to cleave to it more firmly.

Sire, having humbly commended me to your favourable indulgence, I pray our heavenly Father to have you in his holy keeping, to direct you by the Spirit of wisdom, uprightness, and constancy, and to cause you to prosper more and more.

[*Fr. orig.*—*Library of Paris, Coll. Dupuy.* Vol. 102.]

CCCCLXXXV.—TO MADEMOISELLE DE LONGEMEAU.¹

He exhorts her to glorify God by her constancy and fidelity.

14th December 1557.

MADemoISELLE AND WORTHY SISTER,—If I have waited so long before writing to you, my reason was that being at so great a distance from you, I was not sufficiently well acquainted with your spiritual state in particular, and with the incidents of every day's occurrence. Wherefore, I have left that duty to those who were on the spot, because they knew better what kind of exhortation was suited to your case, and also because I had no idea that the procedure would have lasted so long. But since God has been pleased in prolonging the term to put your constancy to the proof, and at the same time to give you time and leisure to fortify yourself beforehand, and since I also have had rather more frequent news of you than heretofore, I am unwilling to let slip an occasion of declaring to you, that if the enemies of the truth are vigilant in pursuing your ruin, there are here at least many children of God, who have by no means forgotten you. In the meantime since the means of succouring you are beyond our reach, continue to repose all your trust on Him, in whom you have hitherto experienced so firm a stay, and who has given you an opportu-

¹ To Mademoiselle de Longemeau, prisoner at Paris. See p. 381, Note 1.

nity of founding on him a well grounded hope. The struggles you have to maintain are diverse, and each of them abundantly rude and difficult, but God has not fewer victories in his hand, when you shall do battle valiantly under his standard. Only of this keep up a constant remembrance in what warfare you are engaged, that nothing may cause you to flinch. For whatever deliverance men may promise you, God will not let you off. If you pretend to make any compromise in order to save your life even for three days, it is selling your heavenly inheritance for three days' purchase of this world. If it is his pleasure, as it is also my desire, he will find out a way to make you escape. Only on this point be resolved to hold your life only from him, and in the meantime to be prepared to follow wherever he shall call you, knowing that he will not suffer you to be tempted beyond measure, and also that it ought to suffice you, however he may dispose events, that he will turn every thing to his own glory as well as your salvation.

Whereupon, Mademoiselle, and well beloved sister, having affectionately commended me to you, I supplicate our heavenly Father, to strengthen you with a constancy not to be overcome, to govern you by his Spirit, and keep you under his holy protection.

Your humble brother,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[Fr. copy.—*Library of Paris, Dupuy.* Vol. 102.]

CCCCLXXXVI.—TO THE CHURCH OF PARIS.¹

Christian congratulations—the sending of two ministers.

5th January 1558.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus

¹ To our very dear seigneurs and brethren, the ministers, deacons, and elders, of the Church of Paris. This same letter is found (*Coll. Dupuy, vol. 102, copy*) with this address: "To our very dear seigneurs and the brethren of Longueville.

Seven of the unfortunate prisoners of the rue St. Jacques, had already suffered mar-

Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

MESSEURS AND HONOURED BRETHREN,—Though your vexation and distresses affect us with such affliction as the members of the same body must necessarily feel for their mutual sufferings; nevertheless God has so much the more manifested his power in keeping you from falling, that we have had all of us much more ample cause for rejoicing than if you had not been persecuted and afflicted. Thus be not astonished at your weakness, seeing how the power of the Holy Spirit works in you causing you to take refuge therein, and for that reason strive still more and more, not doubting but the Father of mercies will at last have compassion on you, so as to afford you relief in your oppressions. If several of those who were called to the combat have shewn themselves too faint-hearted, let not their example be to you a stumbling-block to cause you to fall away, when you reflect, that at all times there have been such examples, to stir up the faithful to a more diligent exercise of prayer, and dispose them to humility and fear. Put in practice then so much the more the doctrine of pursuing the path of salvation with trembling, knowing that it is God who bestows on us both to will and to do. On our part, we have thought it right not to fail in our duty towards you, depriving ourselves of our brother, who, as we trust, will arrive among you as soon as the present letter. In fact, we have not considered whom we could send to you with

tyrdom. Others were about to undergo the same fate, when one of the captive ladies presented motives for refusing one of the judges, and thus suspended the course of his cruel proceedings. The intervention of the Reformed cantons of Switzerland and of the German princes, put an end for a time to the punishments. "Several," says Beza, "were sent to monasteries, principally the younger of the scholars, of whom, some not being very narrowly watched, escaped. The greater part were sent before judges to make abjuration and receive the usual absolution. Several dastardly and timid creatures did not care much about obeying that order, others made use of ambiguous confessions. Whatever was the cause, there were great infirmities among many. There were also some who preferred to die amid the stench and sufferings of the prisons, having always constantly persevered." Beza, tom. i. p. 132, 133. The church of Paris still had to lament the fate of thirty of its members who were detained. Informed of these circumstances, Calvin addressed pious exhortations to his afflicted brethren, and announced to them the sending off of two ministers for them from Geneva.

least inconvenience to ourselves, but we have chosen from among our colleagues the fittest for this mission.¹ On his own part, he has displayed so much good will for the undertaking that we doubt not that He who has given him so much zeal and ardour will bless his teaching and make it fructify. This ought also to be a spur to urge you to apply to your use the good which he offers you. As for the other,² I have done all in my power to induce him to go to you, and he himself seemed sufficiently disposed, but the thing was impossible unless he consented to break up all his connections; moreover, I am not sure that it would be expedient for him to go and take up a settled residence among you, because his presence could hardly be concealed, and might too violently inflame the rage of the enemy. For a journey of a very short duration, when there should be an extraordinary call for it, it might be less difficult to induce him. In the mean time, avail yourselves of what God grants you, which is not to be despised—besides, our excellent brother, M. de la Roche, has promised us that he will return in a short time to labour among you as valiantly as ever.³

Whereupon, beloved seigneurs and brethren, having heartily commended ourselves to your prayers, we supplicate the Father of mercies to increase more and more his grace in you and keep you under his protection.⁴

¹ Registers of the society: "The 1st January 1558, our brother, Master John Macar, left our town to go and administer the word of God in the church of Paris, to which he had been chosen, instead of our brother Nicholas des Gallars." He returned to Geneva at the end of the same year, and died in 1560.

² No doubt Francis de Morel. Recalled from Paris, July 1557, he returned there in the month of December 1558, to replace the minister Macar. "At the same time set out from this Master Francis de Morel, to go and preach at Paris, instead of our brother, M. Macar, who had come back here." Registers of the society.

³ Anthony de la Roche Chandieu, a nobleman of Forey, appointed at the age of twenty minister of the church of Paris. He served this church almost uninterruptedly from 1555 to 1572, escaped by miracle the massacre of St. Bartholomew, became almoner of the King of Navarre, and died at Geneva, in 1594. We have several works written by him under the feigned name of Sadeel or Zamariel, (in Hebrew, field of God.) The first in the order of dates is the history of the persecutions and martyrs of the Church of Paris from the year 1557 to the time of Charles IX. Lyons, 1663, in 8vo.

⁴ Here the letter was dated 1556, on the Geneva manuscript: an error of the copyist.

I do not write for the present to M. de Racham, because there is nothing new ; only I beg Mr. Melcar to let me have, if it is possible, and without delay, the memoirs of which he spoke during his last journey. I fancy Pellissier will have no objections to communicate them to him. May God of his infinite goodness always support and protect you.

Your humble brother,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

In the name of the society.

[*Fr. copy, Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

CCCCCLXXXVII.—TO THE CHURCH OF MEAUX.¹

Pious exhortations—the sending of a minister.

5th January 1558.

The love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be always upon you, by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

BELOVED SEIGNEURS AND BRETHREN,—We doubt not but that the example you have lately witnessed among your neighbours² has been a hard assault to shake your faith ; and for this reason we have so much the more cause to praise God, seeing that he has maintained you in such constancy, that you had rather continue in his service, amid threats of the enemy and the troubles and perils which Satan devises against you, than go

¹ The address is wanting. A letter written to a church near Paris, probably Meaux.

Meaux, the cradle of the French reform, received in 1521 under the auspices of Bishop William Briçonnet the missionaries of the new faith, Le Fevre d'Étaples, Gerard Roussel, Farel, and counted numerous martyrs within its walls. The Reformed Church of Meaux established, in 1546, on the model of that of Strasbourg, was definitively organized in 1555, in imitation of that of Paris, and deserved from its constancy amid persecutions, this fine eulogium of Beza: "The little flock of Meaux, composed mostly of artisans, as wool carders, clothiers, etc., has not only served as an example to all the churches of France, but has also begotten to the Lord several other churches, and that too of the greatest. What is more, it may boast of having offered martyrs to God as its first fruits, since this restoration of the gospel." Tom. i. pp. 6, 49, and 101.

² The Church of Paris.

a backsliding to escape from persecution. And indeed the more we see the enemies of the church filled with animosity, the more God gives full scope to their hatred in order to try the faith of his children and teach them humility—so much the more should you prepare yourselves for greater struggles. Therefore, as you have already taken up a resolution, continue to fortify yourselves with the arms which will render you invincible—to wit, to confirm yourselves more and more in the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, exercising yourselves in prayer to our heavenly Father to the end that he may always retain you in the number of his followers. We make no doubt but that such simplicity will be held in derision by many people who forge a God according to their wishes—even though they make pretensions to have tasted of the purity of the gospel. But consider what God has provided, and let his word alone have such authority among all, that nothing shall shake you so as to make you quit what you have already known to be necessary to your salvation. For the rest, seeing the earnest desire you have to be instructed, we have sent to you our brother, the bearer of the present letter, who, having lived intimately among us for some time, has also so conducted himself that we have great hopes that he will be fitted for edifying you, both in sound doctrine and in probity and uprightness of life; it remains for you to give him on your own part such encouragement as will cause him to strive cheerfully to acquit himself of his duty, and that you testify by effects that without dissimulation you desire to obey the great Shepherd, who will watch over you when you shall be docile in following him, whom we fervently pray to be your stay in the midst of trials, to conduct you by his Holy Spirit, to strengthen you in all courage; commending us to your fervent prayers,

Your very humble brother,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

In the name of the society.

[*Fr. copy—Library of Paris, Dupuy. Vol. 102.*]

CCCLXXXVIII.—TO THE CHURCH OF DIEPPE.¹

He exhorts them to perseverance, announcing to them that a minister is sent off to them.

5th January 1558.

BELOVED SEIGNEURS AND BRETHREN,—You will excuse us if we have not satisfied your desire so soon as probably you expected. The delay has arisen from our wish to provide you as well as possible, with a man who should faithfully busy himself about the work of your salvation, and this we have endeavoured to accomplish in sending to you the bearer, who has led such a life among us, that you will be edified by it; and as he fears God, and has shewn, by the present act, the zeal which he has to advance the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ, we doubt not, that having known him, you will have reason to be satisfied. Add to that, that he possesses sound doctrine to shew you the way of salvation in all simplicity. It remains that on your part you take courage, in order to profit by him, and that your kind welcome stir him up still more to acquit himself of his duty, in seeing the fruits of his labour. Whereupon we entreat you in the name of God, hoping that, as you have already begun, you will continue unto the end. And already we have rejoiced exceedingly

¹ Founded in the reign of Henry II., the Church of Dieppe, one of the first of Normandy, after Rouen, had the honour of counting among its ministers the celebrated Scotch Reformer John Knox. We read indeed in a letter of the brethren of Dieppe to Calvin of the 12th April 1559: "May God protect you, dearly beloved and honoured fathers and brethren. All the church of the Lord which is in this place and the ministers thereof salute you, as also John Knox, a Scotchman, and a singular organ of the Holy Spirit, who according to the graces which the Lord has liberally bestowed on him, has faithfully laid himself out to promote by holy preachings the glory of Christ, during the short time that he has had an opportunity of living with us.—*Library of Geneva*, vol. 113. The Church of Dieppe rapidly increased. It had already received in 1558 a minister from Geneva, as is shewn by the Registers of the Society of the 1st January: "The same day we elected Monsieur Séguran to go to Dieppe." Two years afterwards, (1560) this minister had for successor, *Monsieur de Saux*, Francis de St. Paul, who had preached the Reformation at Saintes and at Montelimart. *Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 220.

that your faith has gained strength to surmount the discouragement that had taken possession of you for some time. Now as we have to praise God because he has raised you up again, this experience should at the same time maintain you in greater fear and anxiety for the future, for besides the troubles, threats, and alarms, that Satan devises by his agents against the children of God, the corruptions are so great every where that those who desire to serve God purely and in integrity, have much need to keep themselves on their guard. Wherefore, seeing there is no better means than to assemble yourselves under the banner, exercise yourselves in receiving good instruction by which you shall be so fortified as to remain invincible against all attacks.

Whereupon, beloved seigneurs and brethren, having commended us to your fervent prayers, we will supplicate our heavenly Father to have you in his holy keeping, to strengthen you to a true perseverance in glorifying his holy name, and to increase you in every good.

Your humble brother,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

In the name of the society.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

CCCCLXXXIX.—TO THE MARCHIONESS OF ROTHELIN.¹

He exhorts her to serve God faithfully, in prosperity as well as in affliction.

5th January 1558.

MADAME,—Though it were to be desired that you had leave to serve God with greater liberty, nevertheless because amid

¹ Jacqueline de Rohan, widow of Francis d'Orleans, Marquis of Rothelin, added nobleness of character to the lustre of high birth. Filled with zeal for the Reformation of which she had readily adopted the doctrines, and the propagation of which she favoured in her domains, she kept up a correspondence with Farel and Calvin, and visited the latter several times at Geneva. She died in 1587 at the Chateau de Blandy, near Melun. Frances d'Orleans, her daughter, married in 1563, the Prince of Condé, who had already lost Eleonore de Roye, his first wife.

the obstacles which might turn you aside, he fortifies you with perseverance, he affords you so much the more ample occasion to bless his holy name. For in that also he shews you a better proof of his grace, and of the power of his Spirit, than if you had only to live in a Christian manner, in peace and quietness, and without contradiction. What remains is not only to continue, but to increase, and to prepare yourself for harder struggles when it shall please God to call you to them. In fact, now is the time that the great ones of this world ought to put in practice the saying of St. Paul, not to be ashamed of the gospel, seeing that the high majesty of the sovereign King is now held in such contempt, nay, opprobrium, that few people openly declare themselves on his side. Be that as it may, if you have not yet courage and firmness to acquit yourself of your duty, do not remain benumbed in such weakness, but let it rather urge and stir you up to pray to God, and bestir yourself so much the more. In the meantime I have been overjoyed to learn the excellent inclination that you have to profit in the school of the Son of God, as it is our true wisdom to be taught of him during the whole course of our life. And indeed if we are not diligent to receive, every day, instruction from him, in proportion to the frailty that is in us, the love of all of us will soon wax cold, especially when almost every body is opposed to us. What is more, even if the enemies of the truth should not make open war on us, still we have yet more abundantly to strive against the innumerable temptations that Satan lays in our way. Above all, the world is now a days so corrupted, there is such indulgence shewn to sins, that we must be well on our guard indeed, in order to keep ourselves pure from so many pollutions. You have but too much experience of that in the gulf that is daily opening before your eyes, to need me to dwell longer on this subject. Nevertheless, I entreat you, Madame, not to become faint, but fixing your eyes on that to which we are called, to acquire a relish for, nay, a satisfaction and repose in, the permanent felicity which is promised to us in the heavens, and in the spiritual comforts which already in part we feel, to nourish the hopes that we ought to have of them, until it be given us to have the

full enjoyment of them. And though your domestic afflictions are severe, forced as you are to ransom at so great a price your son,¹ this should but so much the more rouse you to place all your stay and comfort on heaven. For though God has moderated the chastisement which he has been pleased to send you, yet has he sufficiently put you in mind by one stroke, as it were in passing, what are the vicissitudes of this world. Thus I entreat you, Madame, to turn to profit this correction of his rod, that your heart may be more disengaged in passing through this earthly pilgrimage, by which miserable unbelievers are so completely absorbed. Meanwhile recollect that God not only proposes to us our complete felicity in the heavens above, but promises also to keep us under his protection here below. I believe, moreover, that the man whom I have presented to you will be already in your parts. I was unwilling to confide this letter to him for fear of accidents. I have long been acquainted with his prudence and integrity, and can bear testimony to you of them, as also that having a true desire and zeal for the service of God he will employ himself faithfully in the work which you shall require of him, and will confirm his sound doctrine by the excellence of his life. I have selected him not only because he is a staid and peaceable man, but an honourable and highly esteemed nobleman. Till God grant us the satisfaction, then, of seeing you anew, deign to receive and to encourage him to perform for you a service which ought to be above all agreeable to you.

Madame, after having commended me to your indulgent favour, I entreat our heavenly Father to direct you always by his Spirit, to increase you in all good, to have you in his keeping, causing you and your house to prosper.

Your most humble servant,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Paris, Dupuy.* Vol. 102.]

¹ The young Duke of Longueville, taken prisoner by the Spaniards at the battle of St. Quentin. The Marchioness, his mother, was obliged to borrow of the Bernese thirty thousand gold crowns for his ransom.

CCCCXC.—TO FRANCIS OTHMAN.¹

Ecclesiastical affairs of Germany—complaints against Melancthon—renewal of the alliance between Berne and Geneva.

GENEVA, 10th January 1558.

Crispin affirms that he does not know who it can be to whom you delivered your letter. You have done well then not to hesitate to repeat to me the principal points of its contents. Though the Zurichers fear, as much as we desire, a conference, it will not for all that be of less utility. This astonishes me, that it should be made a pretext for avoiding it, that we shall have to do with captious men, since the defence of the truth and of the good cause will at least be open to us. It will rouse the princes and make them more attentive for the future. Nevertheless I am afraid lest Philip should now shrink back, who has lately by his last act sullied whatever renown he had acquired. And assuredly, when in the person of Zwingli he has condemned the Swiss, the desponding feeling is increased which already produced an aversion for conferences. Do you nevertheless persevere as long as any hope of obtaining one remains. And certainly those persons are too little actuated by humane sentiments who can witness the sad dissensions which prevail without being stimulated to seek a remedy. I have no need to write separately to M. Sturm, because I trust you will be my in-

¹ To that most accomplished man Francis Othman, Jurisconsult at Strasbourg, my friend and much esteemed brother, greeting.

Othman belongs to that class of eminent lawyers of the 16th century, who publicly embraced the Reformation or shewed themselves favourable to its doctrines. Born at Paris the 23d of August, 1524, of a family originally from Breslau in Silesia, and which had been honoured with parliamentary functions, he pursued a brilliant course of study, and began a course of lectures on law, at the age of twenty-two, with extraordinary success. Three years later (1549) he withdrew to Geneva, and quitted that city only to fill the chair of humanity at Lausanne, which he exchanged in 1556 for the law chair in the university of Strasbourg. An original writer and a bold thinker, he took an active part in the political controversies which agitated France

terpreter with him, or rather this letter will be common to both of you. After many bickerings, at length a perpetual league with the Bernese was yesterday confirmed by a solemn oath. This, however, will not, I fancy, remove all the grounds of our contention; it is nevertheless an advantage that if any controversies shall still subsist, they will be settled by equitable arbiters. On this occasion, your brother,¹ of whose presence at Lausanne I was not yet aware, paid us a visit. He scarcely spent, however, two full days among us; thus amid so much bustle, he had but twice some conversation with me. I exhorted him, as the opportunity permitted, to a more decided progress, but I shall have a better opportunity if I go to Lausanne. The moderation which his conduct breathed gives me good hopes.

Farewell, distinguished sir, and respected brother; you will present my kindest respects to M. Sturm and the others. May the Lord bless you along with your wife and children. Our friends most affectionately salute you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Paris. Vol. 8586.*]

CCCCXCI.—TO THE DUKE OF WURTEMBERG.²

Persecutions in France—refutation of the calumnies directed against the disciples of the gospel—warm entreaties to decide the German princes to interfere in their favour.

GENEVA, 21st February 1558.

MONSIEUR,—Though on former occasions I did not doubt of the favourable reception my letters met with from you,

during the reigns of Francis II and Charles IX, and terminated at Bâle an existence full of labours and vicissitudes. See Daresté. *Essai sur François Hotman. Paris, 1850.*

¹ Doubtless Anthony Othman, who afterwards became an advocate of the parliament of Paris.

² Christopher, Duke of Wurtemberg, and Count of Montbéliard, successor of Ulrich, who introduced the Reformation into his states, took a part in the League of Smalkalde, and died after a long and troubled reign. The Duke Christopher, his son, shewed himself during his whole reign, (1550-1558,) the zealous supporter of the Reformation.

partly because our Lord Jesus Christ has been pleased to make use of me for the preaching of his gospel, and partly also, because, to the best of my humble capacity, by my Commentaries dedicated and presented to your Seignery, I have publicly professed myself one of your affectionate servants; nevertheless, when the persons who, on the present occasion, are to present you my letters, went formerly to beseech you to intercede with the king in behalf of the poor brethren, I refrained from writing to you, fearing I should seem to attribute to myself too much importance. But I was at the same time so thoroughly convinced of your favourable inclinations to this cause, that any great degree of solicitation I deemed superfluous. Now, however, that for urgent reasons it has been absolutely necessary to undertake a third journey, I beg, Monseigneur, you will be pleased to excuse me if I have taken upon me to declare to you that it is not from frivolity of character, or inconsiderate zeal, that we have so often returned to you; but because it is highly expedient that you, Monseigneur, and the other illustrious princes, should be advertised of the present state of things. For otherwise you might be deluded into the belief that the state of our brethren in the faith is not at all alarming, and thus be prevented from doing what you had resolved, and liberally promised to do. Now, Monseigneur, I can assure you for a truth, that though out of the great number of persons, that were at once committed

He kept up a correspondence with Calvin, who rendered homage to his intelligence and piety, in dedicating to him his Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians, "God by his grace has enabled you to possess a help of which the greater number of the princes of the present time are destitute: that is, that having been in your early youth well instructed in the knowledge of the Latin language, you can spend your leisure time in reading good and pious books. And if ever there was a time in which the consolations derived from holy doctrine were necessary, certainly it is in our days when nothing else is left even to noble and valiant hearts by the present calamity of the church, or to speak with more correctness by several and more extraordinary calamities which seem impending." At the request of Calvin, this prince joined the other Protestant princes of Germany in November 1557, to intercede for the Reformed brethren of Paris, exposed to the most cruel persecution. The following year, he renewed again, but without success, his urgent entreaties to Henry II. See *Hist. des Martyrs*, vii. p. 439, the letter of the Protestant Princes to the King, dated from Frankfort the 19th March 1558.

to prison, only seven¹ have been burnt, the enemies of the gospel have not for that in the least relented. For the king, at the instigation of the Cardinal of Lorraine, has declared that he did not content himself with his court of the Parliament of Paris, and with threats has had his counsellors roundly rated for their indifference and slackness. For the rest, the judges whom he had deputed by the Cardinal's desire, have relaxed their zeal from no other motive than that they did not expect to succeed in their designs by such prompt condemnations to the flames. For they had sentenced two young children,² fully convinced that the weakness incident to their age, would cause them to yield and make a full recantation, and even accuse those whom they style their accomplices. But having seen the courage and constancy which God had bestowed on these children, they have had recourse to craft, and other means to accomplish step by step the ruin of all. For after having examined every one of the prisoners, they have had upwards of thirty of them locked up, women as well as men, holding them for already condemned, and only deferring their execution till the moment arrive most propitious for their projects. Meanwhile these poor people lie rotting in dungeons, only waiting for the hour of their death.³ Moreover it is fit you should know, Monseigneur, their manner of

¹ Here are the names of these Martyrs : Nicholas Clinet, Taurin Gravelle, and the lady de Luns, burned on the 27th September 1557. Nicholas Le Ceno and Peter Gabart, burned on the second of October; in fine, Francis Rebesiers and Frederick d'Anville, students of Paris, burned in the end of October. The punishments suspended for a short time recommenced the following year.

² "Among whom were two young children of singular courage, namely, René du Seau, a native of Saintonge, who in the times of his ignorance, was in such a state of poverty that he made it his business to sing *Salve Regina*, as they commonly call them, in the corners of the streets. * * * The other was called John Almaric, a native of Luc in Provence, who already dangerously ill, and scarcely able to stand, when he was summoned before the commissaries of the Parliament, began to recover his strength, and going off quite resolutely to la Tournelle, spoke with such energy that he was not believed to be ill, and he himself declared that he felt no pain as long as he was there, and yet a short time afterwards he died in his dungeon." Beza, tom. i. p. 133.

³ One of these subterraneous dungeons of the Chatelet reserved for the lingering agony of the prisoners was nicknamed *la poche d' hypocres*. "There it was impossible either to stand, to sit, or even to lie, so very narrow were its dimensions." Francis de Morel to Calvin—*MSS. of Geneva*.

proceeding with all those whom they burn. After pronouncing their sentence, before leading them out to the stake they put them to the rack, to force them to make disclosures, so that the death of each exposes all to danger. And in order to keep up the suspense and perplexity of the persons liable to be suspected, they cause the tongues of those whom they have thus tortured to be cut out, which does not, however, exempt those who are still detained from expiring by protracted sufferings; and if God grants them the grace to hold out, then must each endure exquisite torments in order not to compromise the lives of his brethren. If, on the contrary, overcome by his sufferings any one gives way, then the flames of a great persecution are anew lighted up. Besides those who are thus reserved, the judges have distributed others up and down among the monasteries, in order to force them by violent means to deny Jesus Christ. And, if of these several have escaped, we must impute the cause of their evasion to the monks alone, who apprehensive that they themselves should be converted rather than the courage of their prisoners shaken, and thinking their cloisters might so be desecrated, have consequently neglected to maintain so strict a watch as that none should escape. So that in short not one has been acquitted, or let out of prison, without making a public abjuration, which is blasphemy against God and his truth. Since that time, the king, not satisfied with these measures, has petitioned the Pope to appoint three Cardinals to judge without appeal all cases of heresy as it is styled. Now since full powers have been granted to the Cardinal of Lorraine, who breathes nothing but extermination, I leave you to judge, Monseigneur, the condition of the poor brethren, unless the divine goodness come to their succour.

On the other hand, a new edict has been promulgated by the king,¹ conferring on the Bishops, plenary jurisdiction and cognizance of heresies, empowering them to declare heretics whomsoever they please, and in such a manner that the royal judges, whatever repugnance they may have, shall be bound to order for execution all the persons handed over to them, the

¹ The Edict of Compiègne, published the 24th July 1557.

injunctions laid upon them on this point being strict and formal. And about all these matters, Monseigneur, your enquiries need to be neither long nor tedious, for the details have been printed, and nothing is easier than to procure them. With regard to the term Sacramentarians, it has been craftily mixed up with the cause of the poor brethren in order to render it odious, and deprive them of all aid and succour. It were greatly to be desired that this source of dissension which has kindled so much strife among us were fairly settled. For my own part, I had endeavoured in all my writings with simplicity to aim at such moderation as might be calculated to satisfy all persons of plain good sense. But when I had striven to bring about a good understanding among all the parties, some wrong-headed polemics with their importunity have drawn me on by force to the contest. To my great regret indeed, for even now I had much rather lay myself out to explain with simplicity the truth, in order to come to a holy concord, than be forced to reply to those who seek for nothing but strife and bickerings, and fly at all who are peaceably disposed. And would to God, that learned, equitable, and God-fearing men of the two parties could be once fairly brought together, to clear up without wrangling this question, and seek for some such solution of the pure truth as might give tranquillity to Christendom, a result which I hoped for not long ago. But inasmuch as this conciliatory spirit does not continue, I am afraid that we are further and further removed from it. So much so indeed, that in France they make no distinction of parties, but group under the name of Sacramentarians, all who do not approve of the sacrifice of their mass, which we with one accord confess to be a detestable sacrilege. As indeed, they make no other enquiries respecting a man's faith, beyond exacting of him that he avow this abomination, which destroys, and makes of no effect, the virtue of the death of Jesus Christ. And you will also perceive, Monseigneur, that in this category are comprised all obstinate persons and relapsers, a sure means of putting to death from the greatest to the least, all who persist in the confession of the true faith. Now there is an almost infinite number of excellent people all

over the kingdom, who may well be afraid seeing their lives depending on a thread, unless God take pity on them. And inasmuch as they would rather lose life and goods than renounce the gospel, I make no doubt, Monseigneur, but you and the other most illustrious princes will be moved to compassion and stirred up to devise all means of being able to relieve them; as in fact they have a common cause with all the children of God, nor can you perform an act of greater virtue nor more praiseworthy. To this end I would entreat you with greater importunity, Monseigneur, did I not know that you are thereunto sufficiently inclined, and that according to your prudence, you will forget nothing that will turn out advantageously.

Only this will I say, that it were to be desired that the king understood, once for all, what doctrine he is persecuting. For nothing would be better, nor more calculated to damp his courage than to inform him, that for want of knowing thoroughly the merit of the cause, his wrath is now kindled against the children of God. Not that I dare to request this of you, Monseigneur, but only that you would be pleased to turn it over in your mind.

My Lord, after having most humbly commended myself to your indulgent favour, I will pray our heavenly Father, to keep you in his holy protection, to direct you by his holy Spirit, and give you increase in all prosperity.

[*Fr. copy, Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

CCCCXCII.—TO THE ELECTOR PALATINE.¹

Apology for the French Protestants—urgent appeal addressed to the German princes in their favour.

GENEVA, 21st February 1558.

MOST ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE AND MOST PRUDENT SEIGNEUR,
—When formerly my most excellent brethren, John Budé and

¹ To the most illustrious and most sapient prince, Otho Henry, Elector, Count Palatine of the Holy Empire, my most clement Seigneur.

Theodore Beza, went to wait on your highness; though they undertook that journey at my request, and though by reason of my office they solicited me among others to be their patron in a cause which was common to all pious men; nevertheless I did not dare to give them, what I should so much have desired, one word of recommendation, fearing it might seem overweening in a man hitherto unknown to your highness, to assume the liberty of writing to you as if he possessed authority and influence. But a juster excuse than I could have wished has now been afforded me, for indeed what modesty then forbade, necessity now urges and impels me to do. From the accounts of the men whom I have mentioned, I have been informed that your highness is too much inclined to aid and relieve the unfortunate brethren, to stand in need of any exhortation from me or from any one whatever to be roused to action.

But when they shall have exposed how matters stand in France, and concluded their full and luminous statement, your highness will not only commend their pious zeal manifested in this second expedition, but will also readily allow me to associate myself as a joint labourer along with them. Since so liberally, with such unanimity, and I make no doubt with no less sincere cordiality, you, most illustrious princes, have pledged yourselves to make the cause of the afflicted brethren your own, we are much surprised, and so are the deputies, to conceive what cause has occasioned your delay, in sending the embassy which you had already decreed. We have supposed, nevertheless, in the meantime that you have adopted some other means, with which we are unacquainted, but which to you has seemed better and more expedient. For neither our modesty nor those sentiments of deference which we entertain towards your highness permit us to suppose that, if in these times of trouble you have changed your measures, you have for all that any intention of abandoning to their fate the unfortunate brethren. While we are thus kept in suspense and perplexity, a conjecture not quite unfounded

Though educated by Lutheran doctors, this prince published, 1563, by the title of Catechism of Heidelberg, a Calvinist Confession of Faith.

has struck our minds, viz: that you have been misled by vain rumours, or, to express myself more freely, by the malicious arts of certain individuals. At last we have clearly ascertained, what previously we only suspected, that certain greedy and mercenary hirelings, for the sake of filthy lucre, have as their wont is, circulated false and flattering reports which have damped your alacrity; your highness will pardon me if I unreservedly lay bare the whole matter, for the report that the prisons are now empty, your deputies will find to have been quite unfounded when they proceed thither. It is true that a considerable number of persons were handed over to be detained as prisoners in private custody, from which some of them have escaped. This indulgence however was granted only to young maidens, youths, or others, belonging to illustrious families, and whose relations begged that they should be transferred to convents. But whosoever shewed rather more than usual constancy, even though some of them were in peril of death from severe illness, are still shut up in noisome subterraneous dungeons, and there endure both stench and cold and all sorts of cruel indignities. Should your highness question me respecting their numbers, one eye witness, of whose good faith I have not any doubts, lately wrote to me that there are upwards of thirty; and of these there is not one who is not perfectly convinced that he is doomed to death. Just as it is matter of public notoriety among us that the judges of the court of Paris have been reprimanded for being too inert and remiss. And if these faithful servants of Christ were allowed their option, a speedy death would be more welcome to them than the misery of a life thus protracted. The Piedmontese and the rest of our Alpine brethren are not treated with much more lenity, only their almost inaccessible retreats afford them some protection. When summoned they offer no resistance; because God has bound them together by the sacred and indissoluble tie of piety, no one consults his own safety apart from that of others; but as their enemies are actuated by the most rabid cruelty, whoever can be laid hold of is dragged to prison, as at Turin a minister of the word at the present moment is bound in

fetters, and has already passed two whole months loaded with irons. The parliament of Grenoble also cruelly harasses the inhabitants of a certain valley who are kept in trepidation by continual assaults, and that the king is in no wise mollified is manifest from the edicts recently promulgated. Because the judges were not sufficiently rigorous, whom nevertheless he stimulated to acts of inhumanity by the most atrocious threats, at his request three Cardinals have been appointed by the Roman Antichrist to exercise their jurisdiction according to their good pleasure, or rather their caprice, by the instrumentality of their satellites. The king, by another edict, has restored to the bishops and their creatures full license to commit butcheries, since to them will belong the disposal of life and death. The judges, in the meantime, who have been deprived of the right of taking cognizance of such charges, are destined to play the part of executioners. With what foul contumelies the king slanders the pure doctrine of the gospel, your highness will perceive from his edicts, for that he seems to direct his attacks against the Sacramentarians is a mere pretence, as experience loudly demonstrates. Nor is it doubtful that some artful courtiers insidiously suggest this name in order to deceive the Roman princes, because they believe that it is held in very general detestation. Now I solemnly affirm in presence of God and his angels, that all persons are held to be Sacramentarians who do not profess that Christ is daily offered up as a sacrifice in the Papistical mass. Those then who reject this abominable sacrifice of the mass, are exposed to the infamy of this false and calumnious appellation, as if they thus abrogated the holy supper of our Lord. And yet I do not dissemble that our brethren of France hold the same opinions that are taught by me, for they make use of the catechism of our church. Now in truth do they deserve to be deprived of your highness' protection for this reason? Since they acknowledge that Christ truly affords in his supper what is therein symbolized, and distinctly confess that in the Lord's supper our souls feed on the body and blood of Christ exactly as we feed on bread and wine for the nourishment of our bodies. If their opinions

do not exactly harmonize with yours respecting the mode of that communication, are those persons to be abandoned in their extreme peril, who believe that the secret blessings of the Spirit are in reality communicated to us through the efficacy of Christ, though they do not believe that his flesh fills heaven and earth? For what else is to be sought for but that communicants be grafted on and united to the body of Christ? And if we do not believe that this can be effected otherwise than according to the nature of the flesh, certainly we derogate from the power of God.

I wish that this unfortunate dispute could be appeased under your auspices, and by your prudence and authority; but that in the mean time, the martyrs of Christ, exposed to the executioner, should be left destitute of all succour, your highness will acknowledge to be neither pious nor humane. Moreover, the enemies of the gospel have nothing less in view than to establish any distinction of parties, since they group under the general name of Sacramentarians, all who confess that the single sacrifice of Christ is sufficient for our eternal salvation; for to them it is perfectly indifferent what men believe respecting the communication of Christ's flesh and blood, provided the gains which they derive from the unhallowed sacrilege of the mass remain undiminished. Besides, as the edict adjudges to a like punishment the refractory and those who have relapsed, it is perfectly clear that all are doomed to death who adhere to a sincere and ingenuous confession of Jesus Christ.

I do not perceive that anything further remains for me to say on this subject, except suppliantly, in the name of the French Church, to implore your highness not to hesitate to deprecate the king himself, and also to associate with you in the same work the other illustrious princes, that his majesty may understand that all of you have undertaken this task with deep earnestness. To prescribe any mode of proceeding is neither my business nor that of those who are the bearers of my letter. What, however, were much to be desired, I cannot refrain from pointing out to your highness, that being reminded you may deliberate with yourself whether the best

recommendation to be pressed on the king would not be once for all to make manifest what sort of doctrine he was warring against. If, however, you approve of the project of submitting the faith of those persecuted to some test, there will be in the hands of my brethren, Budé and Beza, a Confession drawn up, to which all of those to a man will subscribe who are at this moment in France, tormented as heretics. But, lest my prolixity should prove tedious to you, I conclude. May the Lord, most illustrious prince, continually protect you, enrich you with every blessing, and continue to direct you by the Spirit of wisdom and invincible fortitude even to the end.

[*Lat. orig.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCCXCIII.—TO BULLINGER.

Dissolution of the conference of Worms—complaints against Melanchthon—sad state of the brethren in France.

GENEVA, 23d February 1558.

At length I have learned from your letter to our friend Beza, most accomplished sir and respected brother, how unworthily you have been deceived by that Englishman to whom you had entrusted your letter, unless perhaps he died on his journey, which is not very probable. Perhaps also to gain your confidence he told you a falsehood, in saying that he was the bearer of letters from John Laski. Now, though I am sorry to have missed the opportunity of reading a letter from you; yet what gives me greater anxiety is the apprehension, lest he be one of those vagabonds, who by giving publicity to our secrets, strive to gain importance among the ill-disposed. The unfortunate issue of the conference at Worms¹ does not

¹ The meeting at Frankfort, taking up this same year the affair compromised by the violence of the Theologians at Worms, proclaimed an ecclesiastical concord to which the different German princes adhered. But the attempt to reconcile the churches of Germany with those of France and Switzerland was abandoned for ever. *Hosp. Hist. Sacram.* lib. ii. p. 437, 440.

so much distress me, as the inconstancy of Philip moves both my anger and detestation. For though I had not forgotten how pliant and weak he has always been, and knew that on the present occasion also he is too timid and indolent, nevertheless he has exceeded himself far beyond what I could ever have suspected. What is more, I did not think that even Brentz would have acted with so much hostility. But whatever may have dropped from them, it is fortunate that our liberty in the defence of sound doctrine is restrained by none of their prejudices. Even if the conflict were to be renewed to-morrow, they are mistaken if they think they have gained an inch of ground; nay, I feel much more ardently disposed to re-demand a conference, that a free discussion may teach them to conduct themselves with greater moderation.

In the mean time I have written to James André, that they have acted neither rightly, nor politely, nor considerately, that they may be made aware that all our churches have been justly offended. Beza and Budé will gain more information at the courts of the princes, for they have been obliged to undertake a third expedition; partly because Michael Dicer informed us that the cause of the brethren had been betrayed among them by a bribed knave, who had insinuated himself into the favour of the Palatine; partly because the implacable rage of the king urges us to look out for some remedy; for if out of a crowd of individuals several were dismissed, that was owing neither to compassion nor clemency, but because seven of the martyrs who had been burned shook to such a degree, by their constancy, the courage of the judges, that these were of opinion that some new plan should be adopted. They made choice then on purpose of two youths, of whom the one had scarcely entered on his sixteenth year, and who they were in hopes would be unequal to the task of resisting. When they were deceived in their expectations, they distributed about a hundred of them among the convents, with the intention that the monks should serve as their daily tormentors. Many of these made their escape, both because it was desirable for the monks that their cloisters should be purged from such pests for fear the contagion might spread wider, and also because it

was burdensome to them to maintain gratis so many needy persons. The more robust of those who were apprehended were shut up in loathsome cells, whence they were dragged forth to execution on the first opportunity. The remissness of the judges was in the meantime reprimanded by many and often repeated insults and threats, as if they had conducted themselves in too effeminate a manner. The king then humbly begged through his ambassador of the Roman Antichrist (for the words of the bull suggest this expression), that he should appoint for this investigation three Cardinals, to whom is granted an unrestrained licence of butchery and destruction. The king himself also promulgated a new edict in which absolute power of life and death is entrusted to the bishops, nor are any other duties left to the royal judges except to serve the bishops as their executioners. These are the magnificent promises with which he inveigled your countrymen. These things I have thought proper to place in their proper light, lest you should suppose that we busy ourselves but lukewarmly in their affairs, when our brethren are every where trembling and terror-struck by menacing edicts.

Farewell, most distinguished sir and venerable brother; be careful to salute in my name M. Peter Martyr and your fellow-pastors. May God preserve you all in safety, direct, and bless you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Arch. of Zurich, Gallicana Scripta. Gest. vi. p. 88.*]

CCCCXCIV—To MERCER.¹

Offer of a professorship of Hebrew at Geneva.

GENEVA, 16th March 1558.

If, relying on your natural politeness, of which I think I have abundant proofs, I now write to you briefly on a serious

¹ John Mercer, born at Uzes, a small town of Languedoc, of a noble family, and first of all destined for the magistracy, was attracted by an irresistible vocation to the

business, I know not whether I ought to offer any apology ; first, because writing from a country village the place itself furnishes an excuse for my rusticity ; add to that an illness of which our brother Racham will give you a further account, but trusting to your good nature, as I said, I shall dispense with all apology. That you may not imagine that the cause of which you are about to hear is negligently pleaded by me, learn that I have been prevented from writing by a pain in my side, that has reached the very acme of suffering. The cause I allude to, as in itself it merits the highest attention, comes at the same time so recommended to me that I would willingly devote to it all my energies. Though where you now are you have a splendid position, accompanied by many advantages which solicit your stay, still I feel persuaded that the habitation which keeps you entangled in so miserable a servitude and such anxiety possesses but few attractions. For that reason, if the choice were offered you, I doubt not but you would prefer living in mediocrity among us to rolling in luxury where you must be in continual trepidation and almost pine away with sorrow. One thing I fear, if you remove at the present moment, it is the sacrifice of your emoluments, the payment of which is generally put off during the wars. But the spectacle I conceive will be the grander, because the Lord has now brought you out on a more celebrated theatre where the fruits of your labours are conspicuous, whereas here in an obscure and unknown corner you cannot hope for the same advantages. But what if God offer you materials that he has laid up in store, and of which the inestimable utility will spread far and wide. A very modest position indeed will be offered you at present, but which is not to be neglected. If it were possible to decide you, not even my bad health would prevent me from assigning to you most excellent reasons why it would be expedient

study of the oriental languages, and succeeded the celebrated Vatable in the Hebrew chair in the college of France. Mercer, like several of his colleagues, secretly professed the Reformed doctrines. He resisted the solicitations of Calvin, who on different occasions made fruitless efforts to draw him to Geneva. He died in 1570, in his native town.

for you to hasten as much as possible your arrival among us. But, that you may answer me with less constraint, I shall now simply propose the matter to you.

Farewell, most accomplished sir and respected brother. May the Lord continue to direct you by his Spirit and power, and grant that I may one day be a fellow worker with you in a labour of all the most desirable to me—Yours,

CHARLES PASSELIUS.¹

[*Lat. copy, Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

CCCCXCV—TO VIRET.²

He urges him to resign his ministerial functions at Lausanne, to come and live at Geneva.

GENEVA, 16th March 1558.

I received your letter without the gates of the city, as I was on my way from my brother's cottage to another village, according to the doctor's prescription who orders me to keep moving about. Satan, as I perceive, drives your adversaries on headlong to deny openly what they might without any risk concede. Certes, I thought they would have been more politic, that by shufflings and delays, they might shift all the odium and infamy of the transaction on others. At present, you have nothing more to do with them. The last act must be gone through with, namely, to call the Bernese to witness, in the most unequivocal manner, that it is not lawful for you to delay any longer. A hard, but necessary struggle! For

¹ Calvin's Latin Pseudonym.

² The ecclesiastical crisis in the Pays de Vaud was drawing to a close. Several ministers, having exercised in their parish the ecclesiastical discipline in spite of the edicts of the Seigneurs of Berne, were deposed and retired to Geneva. Viret vainly protested against the sentence which had been directed against them, and not being able to obtain the right of excommunication, without which the exercise of the ministry seemed to him impossible, he adopted the resolution of voluntarily resigning the functions which he had discharged, for upwards of twenty years, at Lausanne. This decision, taken with sorrow, was not executed till the first months of the following year, and the secession of Viret drew on that of a great number of his colleagues. See Kuchat, tom. vi. p. 256, and the following.

what is to be hoped for hereafter, if you now hesitate to engage in the conflict? I shall assign no reasons why extreme measures should now be tried by you, because you are perfectly aware of, and have long contemplated the occurrences which were to fall out. I am very much deceived if we are not agreed on this point, that in so desperate a state of affairs an example, at least, of manly constancy must be given. Nor must you leave out of your thoughts all consideration for others. For though it behoved all your colleagues to have insisted more courageously along with you for this cause; yet he that is nearest consults too much his own private interests; others, partly from ignorance, partly from indolence, procrastinate. In my opinion the more worthy part of them will follow you as their leader. Anxiety about your flock with reason torments you, but something must be left to the providence of God. If you must abandon your present station, it will be necessary to return to your old one. "The city will not admit of so great a number." You will say, I am confident that the circuit of the walls will be prolonged rather than that the sons of God shall be excluded. "To build will be troublesome and expensive." Let them reflect how much lighter a matter this is than to live for the space of forty years under tents. What if your departure rouse these Cyclopes, who in their intemperance, despise all instruction! What if it strike shame into those good easy brethren who sit idly at home, and who delight in their idleness! In truth, if you believe me, follow cheerfully where necessity calls, or rather drags you, because when we have discharged our duty nothing is better than the testimony of a good conscience.

Farewell, most upright brother and most faithful servant of Christ. May the Lord now stand by you, direct, and enrich you more and more with his gifts. I shall not return to Geneva before to-morrow, and therefore the companions that are in the country along with me send you their kindest wishes—Normandie, Varennes, and our brother and guest Taconot—Truly yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

CCCCXCVI.—TO MADAME DE RENTIGNY.¹

He blames her for her weakness, and exhorts her to shew herself more courageous in the confession of the faith.

10th April 1558.

MADAME AND HONOURED SISTER,—Though you have not shewn, in time of need, such courage and constancy as we hoped from you, as was to be wished for, and as God required of you; still while you feel dissatisfied at your infirmity, you must not lose heart to such a degree as to give up all. True it is you must seek for no excuses to extenuate your fault; but as Satan strives to plunge us in dissipations only to alienate us from God altogether; keep this fact in mind, and in order to defeat his devices, lay it down as a rule of conduct, that you are not to fill up the measure of your offences, by adding others to their number. You have not resisted before the judges as you ought to have done, you have conceded too much to your husband in order to please him. If you still continue to yield and give way, it is to be feared that all the zeal and good inclination which God had put in your heart,

¹ See the letter p. 381. Intimidated by the menaces of her judges, and gained over by the entreaties of her husband, Madame de Rentigny consented to hear mass in her prison, and she appeared to have abjured the faith for which the Dame de Luns had suffered martyrdom. But scarcely had she recovered her liberty, when she blushed for her weakness and solicited a pardon from the ministers of the church of Paris. If we may believe de Thou, she was received into the number of the ladies of honour of Catherine de Medicis, several of whom professed in secret the Reformed religion. A letter of the minister Macar to Calvin of the 12th of April, seems to indicate that she had formed the design of retiring to Geneva, and leaves no doubt respecting her real sentiments: "We have consented that Madame de Rentigny should return to her husband, because he is labouring under a very serious illness, and he made us the most ample promises that he would not interfere with her faith. *Already the horses had been purchased to convey her to your city.* Certainly up to this moment she has borne herself most courageously." (*Library of Geneva*, vol. 112. De Thou l. xix.) In another letter of Macar to Calvin of the 14th July 1558, we remark the following words: "We sent Dampierre to Madame de Rentigny that he might be able to let us know something certain respecting her. She writes . . . that her condition is better than it was formerly; but she has no hopes respecting her husband. In the mean time she commends herself to your prayers."

will become deadened. It is no small offence when you declare to an unbeliever that you are ready to prefer him to God. Seeing then, that from not having adopted a good and firm resolution to follow God in simplicity and straight-forwardness, you have thus gone astray; in groaning over your fall, seek comfort in Him who is able to give you the victory against all temptations. To gain your husband by all lawful means is a thing to be desired, and even should he be unwilling to yield to the obedience of Jesus Christ, not even then would you be justifiable in alienating yourself from him. For the rest, to do him a homage which involves in it a sacrilege, in order to reconcile yourself with him to make a divorce with God, in maintaining a good intelligence in your conjugal state to provoke against you your heavenly Judge, and in favour of an earthly and perishing union to break the everlasting and sacred bond by which we are connected with the Son of God, our Saviour; rather than this, judge if it were not better to die a hundred times. For should you happen to tempt God so far, Satan has terrible snares to catch those who thus cast themselves away. Beware then lest God, who has retained you hitherto and still retains you, do not give you loose reins. What I say to you is dictated by my great anxiety, though I do not say to myself that the Father of Mercies will not continue in you what he has begun. For he has shewn in you such evident marks of his election, that we are entitled to hope that he will cause to fructify the good seed, which he has rooted in your heart. I dare not venture to specify to you how and on what conditions you may consent to return to your husband, because at this distance I am unacquainted with too many of the circumstances, and moreover in your city you have good and faithful advisers to guide you. Only I beg of you in general not to throw yourself with your eyes open into a labyrinth from which you will be unable to escape, but that you remain unshaken in this resolution to obey God in the first place. As it is impossible that you shall not have to support hard trials, invoke Him whose succour will be sufficient to enable you to surmount them, praying him at the same time to give you wisdom and counsel in all your perplexities.

I will pray to him on my side along with you, that in every thing and every where, he may make manifest that he keeps you under his protection and the guidance of his Holy Spirit.

Whereupon, Madame and worthy sister, having commended myself affectionately to you, I will conclude.

Your humble brother,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[Fr. copy.—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

CCCCXCVII.—TO MONSIEUR D'ANDELOT.¹

He congratulates him on his constancy, and engages him to persevere in the confession of the evangelical faith.

10th May 1558.

MONSEIGNEUR,—Though I am well persuaded that long beforehand you have meditated how, in order to ward off the assaults that are directed against you, you ought to be armed and fortified, and also doubt not, that (besides the advantages which you have reaped from his doctrine in the school of Jesus Christ) the persons who are in closer contact with you

¹ To Monsieur d'Andelot, prisoner at Melun.

Francis de Chatillon, Seigneur of Andelot, younger brother of the Amiral de Coligny, and one of the most valiant men of his time. He discharged in the reign of Henry II. the functions of Colonel General of the French Infantry, took an active part in the ranks of the Reformers in the religious wars, and died in 1569 honoured by the regrets both of the Huguenots and the Catholics: "I may say in truth," wrote the Admiral his brother, "that nobody in France surpassed him in the profession of arms, nor have I any doubt but that foreigners render him the same homage, especially those who formerly had experienced his valour; * * * and certainly I have never known a man more equitable, nor who shewed a greater love of piety towards God; * * * and I pray humbly our Lord that I may quit this life with as much piety as I saw him display at his death." *Vie de l'Amiral de Coligny*, Edit. d'Amsterdam, 1643, p. 74. D'Andelot, from the nobleness of his character and the fervour of his faith, was worthy of this eulogium. Summoned before Henry II. for having let the Reformation be freely preached over the vast domains which he possessed in Brittany, he addressed to the irritated monarch these noble words: "I entreat you, Sire, to leave my conscience intact, and to make use of my body and wealth which are entirely at your service." *Beza*, tom. i. p. 144. Imprisoned by order of the king in the castle of Melun, he there received the exhortations of the ministers of the church of Paris and the encouragements of Calvin.

lay themselves out faithfully for your instruction as far as an opportunity is afforded them. Notwithstanding all that, I have been unwilling to fail in acquitting myself of a part of my duty. I am not certain that the present letter will come into your hands; but, whether it will or not, it is some comfort and a kind of relief for me to endeavour, if I can, in any way, aid you in your struggle. We have all in truth to praise God for having disposed you to cast your lot with us, and the circumstance he will turn more to our advantage than we can conceive. And indeed you must consider this as a settled point, that God has led you, as it were by the hand, to be a witness to his truth in a place from which till now it has been banished. But recollect that in bestowing on you so much magnanimity, in the first place, he has so much the more bound you to himself, in order that you might continually persist, so that it would be more inexcusable to draw back than not to have advanced. I perfectly conceive in my own mind a part of the alarms which you have already experienced, and what is more, you have not yet seen the end of them. But were they a hundred times ruder and more cruel, still the Master whom you serve is well worthy of the pains you will take to resist them to the end, without allowing any to cause you to faint. You have heretofore put your life in peril for your earthly prince, and you would be ready to do the like again in case of need, the rather that it is your duty. It is not just, then, that the sovereign King of heaven and earth, to whom the Father has committed all empire, should be less esteemed, and that you should think it a hardship to create enemies in order to maintain his glory, seeing that we belong altogether to him, both by the right of nature and by the inestimable price of his blood, which he spared not for our salvation; and in addition to these considerations, the service which we render him cannot be lost, and all that we must endure for his sake will turn to our profit; as St. Paul, boasting that Christ is gain either in living or dying, well shews by his example that being assured of not fighting at random we have nothing to fear. You have already felt, as I think, that the sharpest and most difficult assault is that of those who under colour of friendship, with insinuating

arts, seek to make you swerve from the right way. Those persons are never unprovided with plausible pretexts and allurements; so much the more then you have need to put in practice the doctrine of the apostle, to take good heed and to steel yourself against flatteries as well as fears. It was the resolution of Moses, who, having it in his power to be great at the court of Egypt, preferred the opprobrium of Christ to all the pomps and perishing delights which would have cost him too dear, had he allowed himself to be detained. Now the apostle shews whence he derived this courage; it was in hardening himself by looking upon God.

Thus, Monseigneur, elevating your thoughts, learn to stop your ears against all the blasts of Satan, which strive only to overthrow your salvation, by shaking the constancy of your faith. Learn to shut your eyes on all distractions that would tend to turn you aside, aware that they are but so many deceits of our mortal enemy. And by whatever wiles they engage you to purchase your safety in breaking the faith pledged to the Son of God, let this saying be deeply stamped on your memory, that he will be confessed of you on pain of your being disavowed and renounced by him. Many indeed, now a days, think they have but to wipe their mouth, after it has denied the truth; but for all that the confession thereof is too precious to God to be so lightly esteemed. And though it seems lost pains to bear witness to the gospel among those who are rebels to it, or even that such witnessing gives rise but to derision and opprobrium; yet, since it is a sacrifice well pleasing to God, let us content ourselves with being approved of by him. One thing is certain, he will cause our simplicity to bring forth more fruit than we imagine, provided only we observe what he commands. And though you should not be agitated by troubles from without, you are not ignorant that we have to struggle against many temptations from within. But whatever infirmity you may feel, it is then that you ought to bestir yourself not to lose courage, inasmuch as his aid will not fail you in time of need, to enable you to gain such a victory as shall cover with confusion Satan and his followers. Commit yourself into the hands of Him to whom your life is precious,

and who has the issues of life and death, waiting for what it shall please him to order for your salvation, for he will shew it at the convenient season. And because perseverance is a singular gift from on high, cease not to call upon this kind Father that he would strengthen you, for which we shall not fail to pray to him along with you, as it is the duty of all the children of God to be anxious on your account.

Whereupon, Monseigneur, having commended me to your kind favour and prayers, I will supplicate our heavenly Father to have you under his protection, to make you feel by effects the value of such a blessing, to guide you by his Spirit, and to arm you with a constancy not to be overcome, in order that you may prevail over all your enemies and glorify his holy name.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

CCCCXCVIII.—TO PETER MARTYR.

Theological labours—troubles of the Italian Church of Geneva.

GENEVA, 22d May 1558.

Within the last few days I received two letters from you, most distinguished sir. By the former I was pleased to learn that the short tract in which I wished to defend the eternal providence of God against the vile calumnies of a driveller, had your approbation. I knew that from your heart you favoured the cause which is common to both of us. I am aware that the cause was not pleaded with that ability and address of which it was susceptible; nay, as I approached it unwillingly, the aversion which I felt for breaking the subject prevented me from doing it full justice. However, I am abundantly satisfied, if it has suffered no wrong at my hands. But, it is much more agreeable to me to learn that your commentaries are now in the press, in which a copious and perspicuous explanation will be given of these matters. When, in fine, will something come out on Genesis and the Prophets?

Why are you not here, that I might wrench from your hands what you so long keep back? Our friend, N., has experienced in a trifling matter how much importance I attach to your testimony and recommendation. It will not be my fault, however, if ere long you do not find me prompt and prepared to render you more important services. Within the last few days there has been some disturbance in the Italian Church.¹ Gribaldi had been scattering some seeds of his errors, of which the principal points come to this: that there is one only God, who is the Father of Jesus Christ, that all power is concentrated in the Father alone,—that Christ is a secondary personage, and, as it were, the first-born among a race of gods. The simple did not well apprehend this, nevertheless being once entangled in false principles, by obstinately defending what they had never understood, they had begun to repudiate things about which there is no controversy among pious men. Already, in the lifetime of our most excellent brother, Martinengo, these dissensions were beginning to spring up. On his death-bed, therefore, he had exhorted me and my colleagues with the greatest earnestness, to direct all our attention to guard against, and to remedy this evil. Calling me especially by name, several times he said: You who have, hitherto, been a father both to me and mine, I charge to take under your faithful direction my flock, now deprived of their pastor, and the better you are acquainted with the distempers, from which the greatest danger threatens us, the more sedulously should you watch, to apply a speedy remedy. After his death, Lactanzio and I had much trouble in pacifying turbulent men, who, under pretence of doubting, imbued others with their foolish errors. When I fancied that all had been settled, it suddenly appeared that there had been many more seduced by their clandestine arts. To remedy this evil, no other method seemed so proper as to propose to them all, to subscribe the formulary of a certain Confession, which being offered them, every one was left at liberty to propose what objections he pleased, if anything in the formulary did not meet with his approbation. I thus removed all scruples, and got

¹ See the letter to Marquis de Vico, 19th July, 1558.

rid of difficulties, so that now I am perfectly confident that the church has again come together in a holy unity. I wished to inform you of these things—that if any rumour should be brought to your ears, you might not feel anxious as about an event yet uncertain.

Farewell, most accomplished sir and honoured brother. May the Lord long preserve you in safety for himself and for his church. May he govern you by his Spirit, and bless you.—
Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 128.]

CCCCXCIX.—TO THE KING OF NAVARRE.¹

He urges him to shew himself the courageous protector of the French Protestants, whose faith he shares.

8th June 1558.

SIRE,—Though it might seem fit that during the troubles that have lately broken out, I ought to spare you, yet I shall not fear, in so urgent a necessity, to beg and implore you, in the name of God, to occupy yourself with what God requires of you; hoping that you will not consider it as an importunity if I plead the cause of the sovereign King, to whom we cannot render the hundredth part of what we owe him,

¹ In spite of the rigour of royal edicts, and the severities of the parliaments, the Reformation made rapid progress at Paris. From playing the part of obscure missionaries, its ministers passed boldly to the public manifestation of their faith. Every day an immense crowd walked about in the *Pré aux Clercs*, singing the psalms of Clement Marot, set to music by Goudimel. One of the most remarkable persons in these bands was the King of Navarre accompanied by the prince of Conde, his brother, and a great number of Seigneurs. The courage of this prince seemed to increase with the perils of the faith which he had embraced. The minister la Roche Chandieu, having been surprised in a secret assembly and conducted to the Chatelet, "this king," says Beza, "went there the following day to claim him as one of his household, and brought him away safe and sound, . . . and would to God he had always had the same courage." *Beza*, tom. i. pp. 140 and 141. All the hopes of the Reformed churches, decimated by persecution, then centered in the king of Navarre. Calvin exhorted him to justify the general expectation by a public profession of his faith before the court.

even if every one should strive with all his faculties to busy himself in his service. True it is that in deliberating whether it would be proper to write to you, I have forborne for some time. But since I can do nothing better, I have at length resolved that my wisest plan would be to address you with that boldness to which you have been pleased by your letters to accustom me; especially because I doubt not that you have need of being encouraged amid the assaults which Satan has directed against you. For it is in such circumstances that our weakness so manifests itself, that were we not fortified from on high the ablest of us would give way. Now, though there is wherewithal to astound, on the first view of it, both great and small, nevertheless, I pray you, Sire, to reflect duly on the opening which God has made to advance the pure truth and his gospel. For on whatever occasion he brings you forward, it is certain that he wishes to prove what affection you bear towards him. And if till now it would have been lawful for you to maintain silence, you see that at present the excuse ceases, when God draws you, as it were, by the hand, requiring that you should bear testimony to him. I am quite aware what important results the confession which you will make may have to disquiet you in your person, royal dignity, states, honours, and property. But whatever come of it, you ought to consider, Sire, how much you are bound and indebted to Him, from whom you hold all which you possess, and from whom you expect what is yet far better, namely, the heavenly inheritance. The high rank in which you are placed, does not exempt you, as you know, from the law and rule which is common to all the faithful, to maintain the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ in which lies all our happiness and our salvation. Nay, in proportion as you are raised above others, Sire, so much the more should you strive to point out the way to so great a people whose eyes are fixed on you, for you know, according as each has received more abundant measures of grace, he will be called on to render an account of it.

Reflect, Sire, how many persons would trample under foot all worldly respect to turn to account the means which God

has bestowed on you. And in fact the constancy of a single man,¹ much inferior to you, inasmuch as he belongs to that middle station which is between you and those of the lower classes, affords a sufficient example to all of what it is their duty to do. The little ones of the earth seeing such a mirror have occasion to take courage. His equals or those who are nearly of the same rank, cannot but be stirred up to keep him company. But you, Sire, who march in the van both of honour and rank, ought to be God's standard bearer, not being ashamed of sharing the opprobrium of the Son of God, since disgrace for his cause is more honourable than all the glories of the world. I take it for granted that you are advised by several to dissemble and keep yourself quiet, on pretence that you can do no good by openly declaring yourself. But if God's commandments, as it is said in the psalm, are your counsellors, hearken rather unto them, Sire, and keep in mind what they teach you on this point, which is to bear witness to the word of God before kings, even when they are unwilling to give ear unto it.

I do not know how far God has drawn you hitherto, but if you have begun in too much weakness, as very often the first strivings do not find us so well disposed as it were to be desired, I pray you now, Sire, to take courage. For the rest, put your confidence in Him, whose cause you defend, assured that he will give a good issue to your magnanimity, as it is certain that the enemies of God assume much more audacity, and harden themselves in their pride, when they imagine that they have weakened you by inspiring you with fear.

I mean not by that, Sire, to induce you to build your hopes on the credit of the world, or to arm yourself with it; but only to exhort you in the name of God, that committing all your trust to him, leaning on his strength, relying on his aid, and hiding yourself under his protection, you should offer to him, at the same time, the sacrifice of the authority he has bestowed on you, employing and dedicating it to his service. When you shall proceed then with this straightforwardness,

¹ D'Andelot, then prisoner in the castle of Melun.

doubt not, Sire, but he will take his own cause in hand, either by softening the king's heart to the obedience of God, or in moderating it, so that the confession which you shall make will serve as a buckler to protect an infinite number of the poor brethren, who count upon you, and who will be astonished if you deceive their expectations.

As for the king and those who stir him up against the true religion,¹ you cannot, whatever face you put on, avoid their suspecting you of thinking more than you dare venture to express. For which reason it would comport much better with your royal dignity to proceed in the matter frankly, especially as they force you to do so. But, though according to the world it should seem neither useful nor expedient to confess the truth of God, yet you have to consider, Sire, what He demands of you, who is entitled to be obeyed without contradiction. Knowing then that for this present time he has put you to trial, both to maintain the doctrine of his gospel, and to relieve the afflicted members of his body with whom he has strictly joined you, advise how to shut your eyes on all obstacles which might retard you, in accomplishing such a duty as may cause all the children of God to rejoice and glorify his holy name.

Sire, having most humbly commended myself to your kind favour, I will supplicate the King of kings to make you prosper, to increase you in all good, to govern you by his Holy Spirit, and to preserve you in his holy keeping.

[*Fr. copy—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

¹ The Cardinals of Tournon and Lorraine.

D.—TO FAREL.¹

Matrimonial informations.

GENEVA, 1st July 1558.

I could mention some young ladies of honourable parents, and modestly brought up; but as they are rather poor, I did not venture to propose them; indeed, there does not occur to me any young woman who is both beautiful and virtuous, and at the same time possessed of a good dowry. I mentioned three only in my letter. Time will, perhaps, suggest others to me. I will do all in my power that the young man may be suitably provided for. There are two young neighbours of ours of great personal beauty, and liberally educated, the one a daughter of Dommartin's, the other of St. Laurent, who, though their dowry is not very ample, will, nevertheless, have something. If I should hear of anything else, I will let you know. If you would take a ride as far as this, you might make the necessary inquiries more conveniently yourself.

Respecting the state of the church of Paris, Gaspar,² I trust, will give you information. Another person will also arrive within two days, who has been living with the Marchioness,³ from whom you will obtain more ample details respecting our affairs.

Farewell, best and most worthy brother. May the Lord always stand by you, direct, and bless you. Salute kindly all the brethren.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.*—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107 a.]

¹ The curious information here given by Calvin, has evidently no connection with the marriage of Farel himself, which two months afterwards, excited in so keen a manner the complaints and the regrets of the Reformers.

² Gaspar Cormel, p. 367. Note 1.

³ The minister Provost, Almoner of the Marchioness of Rothelin.

DI.—TO NICHOLAS ZERKINDEN.¹

He complains affectionately of Zerkinden's hostile attitude towards him, and defends the line of conduct he has pursued at Geneva.

GENEVA, 4th July 1558.

Your letter was at length delivered to me by a lawyer, a friend of our neighbour Montanus, as he said on the thirteenth day after it had been entrusted to him. I see what it contains; with what intentions you wrote it I cannot make out. I prefer, too, to suspend my judgment rather than create to myself vain trouble, by falsely guessing your meaning. If your intention was to prop up our friendship, which seemed to you to be tottering, I should deserve that you called me unkind and barbarous, if this attention on your part were not gratifying to me. And, indeed I prefer to put this interpretation on it rather than entertain any unfavourable suspicions, which it would give me pain to believe; you will pardon me, however, most accomplished sir, if you do not convince me that those are friends to me, who, by aiding my enemies, study openly to injure me. I will not mention the injury that I thought I had privately received at your hands in the cause of my brother. If from hatred of my name he was unjustly oppressed, I do not ascribe it to you. You had a right, indeed, to remain a passive spectator of what you wrote to me

¹ Though sincerely attached to Calvin, whose genius he admired, and whose virtues he honoured, Zerkinden sometimes blamed the acts of the Reformer, as bearing the marks of too severe and rigorous a spirit. Thus he had deplored the condemnation of Servetus, and the banishment of several of the innovators, who had disturbed Geneva by controversies relating to the dogmas of predestination and the Trinity. Orthodox in his sentiments, he blamed the employment of force for the maintenance or propagation of the faith. He advised moderation in those cases, where energetic means seemed to Calvin imperiously called for by the circumstances: "In what concerns us you have seemed to me (a thing I have never dissembled) too harsh and rigid. I appear to you, perhaps, too lenient and patient, and I prefer to err on that side, rather than on the contrary. For our age and the example of Christ counsel moderation of mind. To strain and whet the laws, which it is sometimes preferable to mitigate, has often proved pernicious." (13th June 1558.) These frank counsels caused no alteration in the friendship which did not cease to unite Zerkinden to the Reformer.

was then going on. But when it was more than sufficiently disagreeable to me, that my brother should be despoiled of certain rights, what need was there to add the reproaches with which you so unkindly assailed me? Ye are wont, I think, to say that the affair was properly judged, and the appeal from the judgment was wrong. That you might let a stupid man feel more keenly the point of your weapon, in both expressions you made use of the superlative degree. I did not, for that reason, cease to love you, though I did not think such conduct the duty of a friend. Thus, when a short time afterwards, one told me that you are my best friend, smiling, I replied: I preferred on the score of that opinion to trust to experience. And yet, of this matter I should never have mentioned a syllable if your letter had not goaded me. Nay, when hitherto I have always forgiven the gravest injuries, and those which professed enemies have offered me, why should I not easily pardon a friend, and a man of tried virtue, if he had slightly failed in his duty towards me? Add that I can with reason boast, however much ungodly men call me inexorable, that I have never become the enemy of one human being on the grounds of personal injuries. I confess that I am irritable, and though this vice displeases me, I have not succeeded in curing myself of it as much as I could wish. But, though many persons have unjustly attacked me an innocent, and, what is more, well deserving man, have perfidiously plotted all kinds of mischief against me, and most cruelly harassed me, I can defy any one to point out a single person to whom I have studied to return the like, even though the means and the opportunity were in my power.

I shall not quote the bitter words with which you have lately censured me. While you are indulgent to yourself, you represent me as by far too rigid; and yet if you fancy that the easy good nature which you aim at is commended by all, you are greatly mistaken. For there are grave and moderate men, who complain that you are weak and remiss, and are indignant that your other remarkable virtues should be tarnished by this blot. You grant, too, that since the natural temper of all is not alike, it is just that we should promote friendship by

mutual forbearance. But here you furnish me with a just reason for expostulating with you, for whatever persons accuse my severity are sure without exception to gain their cause with you as if they were unblamable; and even though you perceive that the fault is on their side, yet am I without any distinction deprived of the advantages of your good word. You mention only three individuals, as if indeed there were not in your territory numberless enraged dogs, who cease not by all the ways in their power to snap at me. I am aware that sometimes you have refuted their calumnies, but you have always contrived to leave along with your refutation the sting of some unfavourable remark behind. Lo, for example, George presents himself before you.¹ The accusation of an unknown man lays a new crime to my charge. Inquire a little more carefully. You will find with what equity your credulity takes the alarm. If you boast that you are lenient and good natured, in rashly condemning my zeal, which I call God to witness has ever been just and pious, seek elsewhere for some one whom you may persuade. That madman, when he had annoyed me a whole year, did not offend me so deeply by his impious ravings from which I endeavoured to recall him, as by his perfidy, which though I have always abhorred I did not for all that abstain from admitting him to private conferences. Many hours, and on more than one occasion, indeed I have spent in trying to appease him; and not only by my conversation, but by my writings I studied to instruct him. Because he furtively distilled his venom among his countrymen, he became at length intolerable to the pastor and the company of elders. Then also I interposed, and bore to such an extent his frowardness, that I even pardoned his wicked slander of which he was openly convicted in presence of the whole Italian congregation. I know that my indulgence was displeasing to my colleagues and to almost all the Italians. But though I had exhorted him to remain quiet without any inquietude, and even solemnly pledged my word that I should make it my business that his tranquillity should not be disturbed, never-

¹ The physician George Blandrata, one of the antitrinitarians of the Church of Geneva.

theless, his evil conscience did not cease to torment him until he rushed headlong to his own ruin. One of the Syndics, a jurisconsult, whom you have perhaps seen at Berne, had come to a lecture and had brought, as he was wont, his beadle along with him. I know not what suspicion seized the man, and induced him immediately to take to flight. Before God, I protest there was no reason for his distrust, unless that inward tormentor deprived of all reason a man conscious of his own misdeeds. With regard to Gribaldi, the following is an exact account: In the council house he reproached me with my stateliness, saying that he had been politely received by emperors and kings, (for such was the futility of the vain-glorious man,) whereas to his astonishment he had been disdainfully refused an interview with me. To this remark I briefly replied, that I, who am in the habit of listening to the meanest and most despised of the common people, had refused this mark of politeness to a jurisconsult whom I had discovered to be treacherously hatching plots. For had he frankly avowed himself a follower of Servetus, I should have lent him my attention, but as his dissimulation had been already detected, I refused to have any thing to do with him. Afterwards I consented to confront the perverseness and impudence of the man in the presence of witnesses. Because at our first meeting I refused to hold out my hand to him, but remarked that in so grave a matter it was preposterous to begin with unmeaning ceremonies, (calmly excusing myself for not complying with such usages,) murmuring with indignation, and gnashing his teeth, he hurried off. All these vile wretches gain this by their treacherous accusations, not only that I am considered a blood-thirsty man, but that you undertake without making any distinction their defence, whatever be the nature of their cause. It is your wish to spare them. How greatly I fear that God will not spare you in whose eyes the safety of his church is precious, which you know very well is impaired by these virulent animals! Should any thief pillage your house, you would be unwilling most likely to send him about his business with impunity. The glory of God is trampled under foot, his truth is corrupted, the unity of the faith is broken,

the concord of the church is rent asunder, peace is troubled. And in such a state of things shall you see me folding my hands to sleep? No; I have learned to listen to a Master who commands a very different conduct.¹

Why you dissent from me respecting the eternal predestination of God,² (if I may frankly avow the truth,) I see no other reason, except that postponing the authority of Scripture you acquiesce too fondly in your own judgment. If I drew some subtle device from the intricate and obscure passages of Scripture, it would be an instance of excessive rigour on my part to seek to compel the assent of men to it; but when the authority of Scripture is unassailable, it is not lawful to swerve from it, whatever conceits those whom the Apostle styles sounding brass may devise; and certainly a respect for heavenly doctrine should have greater influence over us, than to leave us each to be directed by his own private opinions; and yet to our shame this I see is but too generally the practice in our days. The others (with whom I would by no means compare you) have almost all, from aversion to one individual, determined petulantly to impugn this article of doctrine. Formerly it was controverted by no one. But what is more, certain persons who now load me with odium, eagerly make a parade of some harsh forms of expression which I attempted to soften down. And among these persons, I may name Zebedee. Even among you there is an unreasonable mention made of predestination in the administration of baptism; to such a pitch at the very name of Calvin has the rage of certain persons broke out, who think it more plausible to crush a man by denominating him a heretic, than as formerly, when they stigmatized him as a thief, a church-robber, an adulterer, and a gambler. Let this pretext fail, they will forthwith dis-

¹ We read in Zerkinden's answer to Calvin, the following words respecting Gribaldi: "I made it my object to preserve the man, not his cause." (*Library of Geneva*, vol. 114.)

² "The other is that dogma respecting predestination, which I, from want of skill, can neither confute by arguments, nor would, if I could, so great a horror have I of assailing men otherwise well deserving of the Church of Christ; nevertheless, I am unwilling to feign that I am pleased with what really displeases me." *Zerkinden Calvinio. Ibidem.*

cover another, nay, they will every day invent new ones. Such as the one respecting the fears of Jesus Christ; for because I say that he not only dreaded death, but the wrath of God, inasmuch as he had to stand arraigned at the terrible tribunal of God, you know that thence a strife was stirred up. I shewed in the presence of the council that the poor drivelling creature with whom I had to contend had, by undermining this doctrine, uprooted the first elements of piety. My defence was held for nothing. Now as often as any learned and virtuous man is called to the ministry of the church, on passing his examination, if he is found to entertain the same opinions as I, he is sure to be rejected. When four months ago a most excellent brother, incensed at so worthless a conduct, made some opposition, he was for that reason with menaces dragged to Berne; and though he was acquitted by the sentence of the consistory, nevertheless, by the intrigues of those who, having thrown aside the cowl, keep up in their hearts, a hundred monkish feelings, it came to pass that the prefect, who has for some time borne him a grudge, again brought an accusation against him. There is an excellent subject for your clemency furnished by God himself, in which you may display your horror of cruelty, if you succour an innocent man. Indeed I am ashamed that I feel so anxious lest he should be oppressed in so good a cause. Even to recommend him, goes in a certain manner against my inclination, because he does not deserve to be condemned to reside any longer among such a sordid scum. For even those who are reckoned the best among the ministers whose colleague he has hitherto been, by their sluggishness and servile dissimulation, betray the spirit of hirelings. I shall therefore add not a word more unless to entreat you, according to your piety, equity, and prudence, to guide him by your counsel, assist him with your means, and console him by your favour as far as you shall deem it expedient. If any in their praises of me surpass due bounds, I shall willingly permit you to be my censor, provided you too shew a certain moderation in the castigation of my faults. But weigh in your own mind whether it be very good natured of you to lash me with cut-

ting sarcasms instead of grazing me with a little playful banter, because compelled by the frowardness of numbers I confute with some vehemence the enemies of the truth; nor should you be surprised that it is difficult for a heart filled with bitterness to exhale sweets, as if it altogether lacked gall. Though after all in the harshness of my language, which I declare has been wrung from me against my will, I am not so very morose as to feel offended, because people do not applaud me. I fancy too I may claim some indulgence if, forced to assert the doctrine of piety, I inveigh against froward men whom not even prophets and apostles as I see have spared. What excuse shall I make for not having taken a larger part in public affairs? That hitherto I have not done much good by that. But those who are acquainted with the state of my health, and one half of my labours, know at the same time that I have not much remaining leisure. As far, however, as the nature of my function permits, and necessity requires, I shall have no scruple to give right and salutary counsel. Nor do I repent that by my exertions it has hitherto come to pass that serious and pernicious disturbances have not broken out. For that the slightest strife has ever been engendered through me, no one can say with a shadow of truth. But if you are more inclined to lend an ear to secret accusers, I have not a word to say.¹

Farewell, most accomplished sir, and very honoured and well beloved brother. May the Lord always stand by you, govern you by his Spirit, support you by his power, and bless you along with your wife and family.

Let this be a token of my friendly feeling that, confidently relying on your integrity, I do not hesitate to unburden myself of whatever weighs on my mind, and confide it to your bosom.

[*Lat. orig.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

¹ The 9th of July following, Zerkinden addressed to Calvin a letter containing explanations and fraternal excuses, terminating with these words: "Be mindful, venerable brother, of the humility of our Lord Jesus Christ, and always look back to the ancient manner of life which we followed from the beginning of the knowledge of Christ, and spare an importunate, perhaps, but friendly monitor."

DII.—TO THE COUNT OF WURTEMBERG.¹

He pleads with this prince, the cause of the ministers persecuted as heretics in his states.

GENEVA, 12th July 1558.

MOST ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE,—Because the due discharge of my functions compels me to entreat your indulgence for the unhappy brother who is now detained in prison in your dominions, though I make no long apology, your highness will allow me to take upon me that task. If I should venture to ask any thing beyond what, trusting to your clemency and equity, I am persuaded it is easy to obtain, I might be taxed with temerity. But I conceive I do not overstep the bounds of modesty, if I only beg of your highness, not to hesitate to bestow two hours on the examination of so important a question. I am well aware that princes, absorbed by continual and very serious concerns, have not so much leisure at their disposal as to be disturbed on every trivial occasion. Nor, indeed, if the interests of but a single person were at stake, should I dare to exhort your highness to put yourself to this trouble. But since already, during the space of three years, your churches have been troubled by dissensions, their pastors, one after another, displaced, and there appears no end to these evils, some indulgence is due to my zeal if, desirous of a remedy, I appeal to your good faith: Your highness, indeed, has given in presence of the world such proofs of rare piety and singular constancy, that I am not permitted to doubt, that while you consult peace you also earnestly desire order properly and piously established. Nay, unless I were clearly convinced that the glory of God, the reign of Christ, and the public welfare of the church were things dearer

¹ George of Wurtemberg, misled by the counsels of some intolerant theologians, was on the point of publishing an edict, by which he interdicted in the county of Montbeliard, the preaching of the Zuinglian doctrine, and condemned to exile the ministers who professed it. This example was followed by Christopher, Duke of Wurtemberg, in his states. *Ruchat*, tom. vi. p. 242.

to you than all worldly advantages, I should not think of making application to you, nor even of taking one step in this matter. But I am under great apprehensions, and not without reason, that Peter Toussain has laid hold of deceitful pretexts for oppressing his brethren, and concealing from your highness his own malignant purposes. I do not wish, however, that he should be condemned without a hearing, nor till this cause being duly examined, it may be permitted to pronounce an opinion respecting the probity of each one. I at one time loved the man, and performed for him those little offices of kindness which he could desire of a brother, and though I do not willingly reproach him with ingratitude, yet not to mention other things, when on more than one occasion he made a request to have ministers from here, and knew that with the best intentions such ones were sent by us, as after examination had given proofs of their piety, he shewed a want of good feeling; for some bickerings arising among them he never gave me a hint on the subject, in order that I might have interposed to appease those who would perhaps have listened to my advice. I pronounce no judgment respecting matters unknown, but however things stand, the most suitable remedy for calming disturbances, was to try what influence my exhortation might have on those who had been received by my recommendations. Even if the evil had been irremediable, it should not have been kept a secret from me, if for no other reason, at least for the sake of making an apology for it; nor do I see what prevented that, unless wishing the heretics to be spared, as in a letter he avowed to me, he desired voluntarily to estrange himself from me. He can never feign any cause why I should be suspected. Still I do the man no injury, if I desire a more active enquiry to be set on foot about the perverse arts, by which he has attempted to circumvent all who he thought did not belong to his faction. If your highness recognizes that this demand is quite equitable, that the sources of all the evils may be disclosed, you see that I no longer implore your indulgence for a single individual; nevertheless in suppliantly appealing to your sense of justice, that an audience be granted to our captive brother, and by

the means of a faithful interpreter that permission be afforded him to expose freely, not only the things necessary for the settlement of this question, but also for delivering the churches of your dominions from deadly evils, I conceive that I am consulting the interests of your highness' good name. If the glory of Christ, and the public safety and tranquillity be intimately connected with these things, I am confident that my entreaties will be listened to, and that a legitimate investigation will shut the door on all private heart-burnings, and on the secret lawless caprice and violent actions of certain individuals. Thus I will pray God, most illustrious prince, to defend your highness by his protection, to support you by his power, and govern you to the end, by the Spirit of prudence and invincible fortitude.

Your highness' most devoted,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy—Library of St. Gall.* Tom. viii. p. 194.]

DIII.—TO MONSIEUR D'ANDELOT.¹

New exhortations, calculated to support and strengthen him during his captivity.

12th July 1558.

MONSEIGNEUR,—Since I received your letters, I have also learned sad news of what they are plotting against you, a

¹ See note p. 418.

Almost immediately after his arrival at the castle of Melun, D'Anselot had to contend with the ardent entreaties of his wife, Claude de Rieux, and of his brother, the Cardinal Adet de Chatillon, who urged him to soften by an act of submission the anger of the king. He supported, without yielding, all these assaults:—"I have news," wrote he to the church of Paris, "it is, to-morrow is to arrive the doctor they wish to send to me. I pray God that he will put in my mouth wherewith to answer always for the increase of his glory. . . . Christ will be magnified in my body, either by life or death, for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain, by means of whose grace I hope to make known to those who shall ask an account of my faith, that I fear God and honour my king, as I have been commanded. . . . As to the things of the soul, and which concern the peace of my conscience, I shall give an account of them as well as I can to Him who alone can dispose of them. (1st July, 1558. *Library of Geneva.*) The same sentiments break out in a letter of D'Anselot's to the king:—"If

thing I had already with fear expected for a long time. I was even surprised how your enemies had delayed so long in preparing for you some subject of alarm, to tempt anew the constancy of your faith, or rather to destroy it. But, however that may be, we have wherewithal to console ourselves in glorifying God, in that he continues to strengthen your hands. And indeed, since he has set you up as an example to so many people, I confidently trust that he will not suffer you ever to swerve from the right path, whatever may happen; as I am convinced, also, that you would never have persevered till the present time, had he not well prepared you, and given you grace carefully to premeditate on the temptations which you have overcome. True it is, I could have wished very much that you had escaped before the wicked design which is preparing were put in execution on you, and it is possible that the God of compassion, after having made use of you a second time to confess his truth and bear faithful witness to it, will afford you leisure and a way of escape, when things shall have come to an extremity. It is also my conviction, since he disposes of every thing by his admirable counsel, (as you will do well to consider,) that he has detained you for some purpose till you had accomplished the task to which he had called you, and discharged your duty, in order that, having answered for your faith, if you now consult your safety which you have a right to do, men may not impute your conduct to inconstancy and distrust. For the rest, if it be the will of our merciful Father that you be prevented from realizing this hope, knowing that he wants to prove your long suffering, believe that the power of his Holy Spirit will not fail you

I have done anything which displeases you, Sire, I entreat you, with all humbleness, to pardon me, and to believe that, the case of the obedience which I owe to God and my conscience excepted, you shall never command me to do anything wherein I shall not promptly and faithfully expose my wealth, my body, and my life. And what I ask of you, Sire, is not, thank God, from fear of death, and still less from a desire of recovering my liberty, for I hold nothing so dear that I would not willingly abandon it for the salvation of my soul and the glory of my God; but nevertheless, the perplexity in which I am, in wishing to satisfy you, and perform the service which I owe you, and not to be able to do that with a safe conscience, oppresses my heart so that to ease my mind I have been forced to address to you this humble petition." July 1558.

till you have surmounted every difficulty. For we must be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, not only in death, but also in burial, in order to enjoy tranquillity, even should we languish and remain for a long season as it were underground. Meanwhile, doubt not but God, whose soldier you are, will give an issue to your affliction, and will mitigate it till the fitting time come round for your deliverance. It is enough that he approve of your cause, and you may protest before him and before the world, that in rendering to the sovereign King of the heavens the honour which is his due, you have not offended your earthly king; as in that you have the example of the companions of Daniel, who, having refused obedience to an order to adore the idol, nevertheless, frankly declare that they had in no one point been wanting in their duty to the king. And the Holy Spirit recognizes the reasonableness of this answer, for it is not just that the obedience which we pay to a creature should bring prejudice to the rights of Him under whom all grandeur should be brought down, in order to do him homage. Wherefore, if men murmur against you, it is quite enough that you be absolved from on high. On the other hand you ought to recollect how sharply God reproves the people of Israel by the mouth of his prophet Hosea, because they obeyed the edict of the king. It was indeed a virtue in appearance, to do what was commanded by royal authority; but because the point at issue was to corrupt the service of God by idolatry, not without cause their compliance was reputed an enormous crime, inasmuch as it was giving a preference to man over God. Thus, Monseigneur, whatever ensue, as you have already begun, so continue, and stop your ears against those who shall endeavour to turn you aside from the simplicity of Jesus Christ, persons whom St. Paul classes with seducers, to inspire us with horror for their deceits and allurements. You know, that though the confession of our faith may seem to be useless in the eyes of men, it is not the less for that well pleasing and precious in those of God. It remains for you to offer to him this complete sacrifice, since it has pleased him to consecrate you to his service.

Whereupon, Monseigneur, having humbly commended me to your kind favour, I will pray the Father of mercies . . .

[*Fr. copy—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

DIV.—TO THE MARQUIS DE VICO.¹

Wishes for the success of this nobleman's journey to Italy—news of Geneva and France—divers salutations.

19th July 1558.

SEIGNEUR,—I believe that in your prudence you are well convinced that had I entertained any hopes of my letters soon reaching you I should not have grudged my pains in writing them. But because till we should be informed of your arrival at Venice, we were in doubt whether you would finish your journey, that circumstance stayed my hand. Not that I altogether excuse my indolence, but what with waiting for news from you it seemed to me that my term was not yet come round. Since then I have written to you but once, my

¹ As title, in the hand writing of Jonvillers : To Mousigneur the Marquis of Vico in Italy.

Galeas Caraccioli, Marquis de Vico, one of the most illustrious members of the nobility of Naples, converted to the doctrines of the Reformation by the preaching of Peter Martyr, retired, in 1551, to Geneva, in order to profess there in liberty the faith which he had embraced. Calvin commended him in the highest terms in his preface to the Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, dedicated at first to M. de Falais :—"A man of an ancient house and noble parentage, flourishing in honours and wealth, having a wife noble and chaste, a fine family of children, peace and concord in his house ; in a word, happy in everything that concerns the condition of this life, to pass under the banner of Christ, has voluntarily abandoned the place of his birth, has not hesitated one moment to forsake his lordly state, a fertile and pleasant country, a grand and rich patrimony, has quitted father, wife, relations, and friends, and after having abandoned all the allurements of the world, contenting himself with our humble condition, lives frugally and in the manner of the common people, neither more nor less than one of ourselves." After this voluntary expatriation, the Marquis de Vico returned several times to Italy, and not being able to obtain from his wife, the daughter of the Duke of Nocera, her consent to follow him to Geneva, he contracted, in 1556, a second union which was approved of by the Reformed divines. He died in 1586, surrounded, in the country of his adoption, by public esteem and consideration. See de Thou, l. xxxi ; Giannone, *Storia di Napoli*, l. xxxii. c. 5 ; and especially the curious work of the minister Balbani, *Storia della vita de Galeazzo Caraccioli. Geneva, 1587.*

zeal being damped by my uncertainty respecting your state, for otherwise I had much to communicate. Reflecting, however, how long my letters would be on the road, I know not how it has happened that I have been so lazy in acquitting myself of my duty, preferring to reserve for your arrival what might miscarry by the way. But it is better to avow my fault in one word than to waste paper, together with the writer's pains, in excuses, that are after all not very solid. I hope the present may find you at Venice, counting that before the end of June your lady must have arrived at Lésena,¹ and would not have felt much inclined to make a long stay there for the first time. And in fact, if she is well disposed, I had rather she returned speedily, to make all her preparations in order to avoid suspicions, which might throw obstacles in the way of her liberty.² It is, indeed one of my most anxious desires for the moment, to know how she stands affected. Nevertheless, I am in hopes, though she should be unwilling to come over to us, that this journey will yet have been useful to pave the way for that purpose. May God of his infinite goodness be pleased so to direct everything, that we may have reason to bless his name. I am persuaded that on your part you will take what it shall please him to send with a resigned mind, knowing that there is nothing better than to conform to his will; for you have been already long accustomed to prefer that will to your own affections, however virtuous they may be.

I have been delivered by your last letters from great perplexity, on learning that the journey you had undertaken to Vico³ was broken off, for you had previously put us all in great trouble and anxiety. And, in fact, had I been by you

¹ A small town situated on the island of that name on the coast of Dalmatia. It was there that the rendezvous had been fixed between the Marquis de Vico and his family.

² The end of this last journey, undertaken in the month of March 1558, by the Marquis de Vico, was to decide his wife to follow him to Geneva. But she refused, from attachment to the Catholic faith, to share the exile of her husband in a city of the Reformation, and the Marquis de Vico resumed his journey to Switzerland alone after having bidden a last adieu to his family.

³ In the kingdom of Naples.

I should not have hesitated to break in pieces your effects, to compel you to stay if it had been in my power. But God has shewn himself friendly to you in diverting you from such a design.

As to the political state of the city, nothing has taken place, since your departure, worth being communicated to you, except that our neighbours, having found a fresh opportunity for vexing us, set about the task, according to their custom, with their whole might.¹ In the mean time we cannot obtain justice in consequence of the subterfuges which they devise, though I trust that, between this and your arrival, God will have provided some good remedy.

To your countrymen, your absence has been the cause of much prejudice, because you would have been useful in preventing many troubles that have arisen one after another, and which are not yet over.² We were obliged, some time ago, after having tried all the other means in our power, to call before the consistory Mr. Georges, Mr. Sylvestre, and Mr. John Paulo. Nevertheless, though their conduct was highly reprehensible, they were dismissed with a very mild exhortation. Soon after that poor hairbrained physician,³ haunted by his evil conscience, because he saw an officer present himself at the lecture, took it into his head to fancy that they wanted to apprehend him, and forthwith took to flight. Then several things were brought to light to which it was necessary to apply a remedy. And inasmuch as to heal or mitigate the hidden evil, it was necessary to bring it clearly to light, I was of opinion that a pure and simple confession would be an ex-

¹ Allusion to the Bernese.

² At this time grave differences broke out on the subject of the dogma of the Trinity, in the Italian congregation. A confession of faith was drawn up by Calvin himself; but it excited the most stormy discussions in the bosom of the church, for which it was destined:—there were some who would not sign the said confession, among others John Paul, de la Motte; Francis, of Padua; Philip, a physician; Nicolo Gallo, a Sardinian; Valentine, a native of Calabria; and Hyppolite de Carignan, a Piedmontese, who yielded to no remonstrances. *Registers of the Council*, (19th May, 1558.)

³ George Blandrata, a celebrated physician and antitrinitarian. Born in the Marquisate of Salluces in 1520; he withdrew by flight from the pursuits of the inquisition of Pavia; went to seek refuge at Geneva; and quitted this town to betake himself to Poland, where he propagated his errors. He died in 1590; assassinated it is said by his own nephew, who seized upon his treasures.

cellent and useful proof to make every one declare who he was. I suppose your friends have sent you a copy of the proceedings, as I begged them to do.

One day after the lecture, by the authority of the seignery, the church was assembled without much noise or scandal. The confession was read, and it was briefly declared with many remonstrances, that not without urgent necessity recourse had been had to this expedient; it was permitted to every one to object what he might think suitable, or allege his scruples. And this was done with such excessive license, that you will be horrified, on your arrival here, to learn what we then suffered from Mr. John Paulo. At last, however, all consented to subscribe,¹ even one, Valentin Gentilis,² who had not appeared at the assembly on account of an alleged illness. As to Mr. John Paulo, having disgorged his venom, he forthwith decamped. Now we believed that tranquillity was fairly established, inasmuch as every one had declared and protested on pain of being held perjured and infamous, that he would adhere to the confession. But this did not last long, for Valentin, who is now in prison as false and disloyal, has kept in secret a kind of school for the propagation of his errors, which are on one point as detestable as those of Servetus, as, in fact, there is scarcely any difference between them. Since he has been handed over to justice, he has sufficiently demonstrated

¹ In the *Opuscles* of Calvin, p. 1937, may be read the Confession of Faith, of the Italians, covered with the following signatures:—I, Sylvestre Tellie, approve of the above written confession, and detest everything that is contrary to it.—I, Francis Porcelin, admit and approve everything which the above mentioned confession contains.—I, Valentine Gentil, admit as the aforesaid.—I, Hyppolite de Cariguan, admit as the aforesaid.—I, Nicholas Gall, of Sardinia, admit as the aforesaid.

² Valentin Gentilis, a native of Cosenza, in the kingdom of Naples. An ardent, restless spirit, disposed to dogmatize continually, in an age inflexible towards any differences of opinion in matters of faith, he refused to subscribe the Formulary of the Italian Church. Imprisoned for some rather too free expressions against the Trinity, he boldly maintained his opinion, then retracted, and was not the less condemned as a blasphemer, to capital punishment. (15th August, 1558.) His punishment being commuted into a simple penance, he fled from Geneva; wandered a long time in France, Germany, Poland, and reappeared in Switzerland after the death of Calvin, hoping to find more liberty for his opinions. In 1566, brought before the magistrates of Berne, he was condemned to death a second time, and perished a martyr to an opinion which counted numerous disciples in the Churches of Poland and Moravia.

to all of us, that for pride, malice, hypocrisy, and obstinate impudence, he has his full share of them. At least he has not spared me, nor ceased to cover me with as many scurrilous outrages, as a man in despair can vomit forth; and that too, in writing. I know not what will be the issue of it, but the commencement greatly annoys me.¹

There is also the young Sardinian,² who is not such as Gentilis, inasmuch as he disavows the absurd opinions which discredited him. But because he stubbornly persists in denying the faults of which he was convicted, I know not what will be the result. If it had been possible to induce him to make a frank avowal, I had already obtained pardon for him. But God permits it not. Though some of the nation are suspected, yet I do not perceive that he has many accomplices, even those who might formerly have favoured him must now be thoroughly disgusted with him, since they have seen with what extravagance he pleads his cause, for they have been called in as witnesses in the affair. So that for other concealed evils of the church, also, I am very desirous of your speedy return. For I see that from day to day, they become more bitter against one another. When you shall be among us, I trust that God by your aid will bring about a more favourable termination. If you delay, I shall endeavour, as far as I shall have it in my power, to appease matters.

On the side of France, there happened about two months ago an affray at Paris, because, on a public place called the *Pré au Clercs*, several people in a numerous assembly began and continued to sing psalms.³ The king of Navarre, with such a suite as you can imagine, had joined the party. Seve-

¹ See the papers relating to the first process of Valentin Gentilis. *Opuscules*, p. 1921, and the following.

² Nicholas Gallo already named.

³ Thus then from day to day, the assembly at Paris multiplied where it came to pass that certain persons being at the *Pré aux Clercs*, began to sing psalms, which being heard, a great number of those who were walking and exercising themselves in different pastimes, joined in with this music; some from the love of novelty, others to sing along with those who had begun. In the mean time the adversaries of our doctrine, thinking that it was all over with them, ran towards the King and gave him to understand that the Lutherans had stirred up a sedition in the town of Paris, etc. Beza, tom. i. p. 141, 142. *Histoire des Martyrs*, l. vii. p. 439.

ral persons were arrested on this occasion. So many edicts have been published, accompanied by severe threats, that the affair has dropped. In the mean time, the king having called Mr. D'Andelot before him for the purpose of intimidating him, the latter frankly made a confession of his faith in the royal presence. Thereupon, the king enraged, sent him escorted by ten archers to the town of Meaux, whence he has been transported to the Castle of Melun.¹ Now Monseigneur, you could scarcely believe how powerfully God has wrought in him. He was solicited on all hands to give in his submission. His wife, in an advanced state of pregnancy, called his attention to her position to move him to compassion for the fruit of her womb;² his brother the cardinal,³ and also many suborned messengers urged him. All they requested of him was only to confess before the king his fault, in having spoken inconsiderately, and with too much audacity. You will be astonished when you shall be more fully informed here of the affair, at the strength of mind with which he resisted all these assaults. The details we have learned, not by hearsay, but from his own letters. Whatever be the result, he has so well learned the lesson of renouncing everything which might turn him aside from the right path; that all his relations and even his wife have given over tormenting him; despairing of gaining any thing by their importunities. Now, that the threats have been redoubled, and he has been informed by his friends that a decision has been fully come to of having him shut up during the rest of his life, you will see by his letters what a befitting frame of mind God has bestowed on him, both with regard to this act and all the previous procedure. I will say nothing further on that subject, because I am well

¹ See the letter, p. 437.

² The child that was born during the captivity of D'Andelot, (it was a girl,) was baptized in the Reformed Church of Paris. "I supplicate our heavenly Father, that first of all he would be pleased to give his blessing to the creature of his of which he has made me father, that her beginning and end may be dedicated to his glory; and to us the grace and force constantly to resist his enemies and my own, while I shall fight for the advancement of the reign of his Son Jesus Christ." D'Andelot to the ministers of Paris, 1st July 1558. (MSS. of Geneva.)

³ Odet de Chatillon.

aware that of your own accord you will reflect sufficiently on the utility of this example for our direction. I have wherewithal to spin out my letter to three times its present length, were it not that I prefer to give you a motive for hastening your return. For though you expect to have a share of our vexations, that will not retard your coming, since by it you hope to serve God, which you prize more highly than all the joys of the world.

Whereupon, Monseigneur, having humbly commended me to your favour and fervent prayers, I will supplicate our heavenly Father to have you in his holy keeping, to direct you in every thing and every where, to strengthen you with such constancy as he knows to be needful for you, and to cause his name to be more and more glorified in you.

Your servant and humble brother,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

Monsieur, as you will receive letters from Monsieur de Jonvillers,¹ I shall not send you his salutations. The others have begged me to present you theirs, viz:—Monsieur de Normandie, Monsieur de Varennes,² and his cousin, my brother, as also all my colleagues.

I had forgotten to drop a word about the lady who passed by here last summer: it is, that, thanks be to God in her weakness, she accomplishes some duties and persists in the good course on which she has entered.

Your humble servant, as above signed.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

¹ Charles de Jonvillers, secretary of Calvin.

² William de Trie, Seigneur de Varennes.

DV.—TO THE DUCHESS OF FERRARA.¹

Christian exhortations—answer to a question—news of the Marquis de Vico.

20th July 1558.

MADAME,—I give God thanks that the man whom I presented to you has so well acquitted himself of his duty, as to give you satisfaction. I rejoice at it, and I trust that his labours may in like manner have contributed to advance you in the path of salvation. Now, since God has not permitted him this time to pursue his service any longer, I entreat you, Madame, to continue to be daily taught in the school of Jesus Christ, as in fact you are sufficiently aware, without being reminded by others, of the need you have of that, especially when the devil stirs up all the troubles which he can to turn you aside from it. But as you have to resist every contrivance which this mortal enemy of our salvation hatches against you, call to your remembrance that God makes use of such means to try your faith. If this trial seems to you sharp and bitter, weigh well what St. Paul has said; if a corruptible metal is put into the fire to ascertain whether it is good and genuine, shall not your faith which is more precious also be tried? If you feel in yourself more weakness than is desirable, have recourse to Him who has permitted that those who trust in him shall be like a tree planted by the rivers, having a good and living root, which shall never wither, whatever heats fall out. For it is certain that he will never suffer us to be tempted beyond what we can bear, and if he gives a loose to Satan, he will increase at the same time in us strength to surmount every thing. It is good and useful thoroughly to probe our in-

¹ See p. 187.

Restored to liberty after long domestic persecutions, this princess lived in complete retirement. Settled by turns in the palace of St. Francisco at Ferrara, or in the villa of *Consandre* in the environs of the town, she there received, in secret, the exhortations of Calvin, and the ministers who were sent to her from Geneva.

firmity, not to make us in despair relax our efforts, but to stir us up to seek the remedy. Wherefore, Madame, while you feel confident that the enemy who foams with rage will accomplish nothing, notwithstanding all his endeavours, without the permission of the sovereign Master, yet be not weary in striving against all temptations; and inasmuch as you will have need of arms for that purpose, in having recourse to Him who is sufficient to strengthen you, lend yourself also to holy exhortations, and, as I have already said, do not esteem it a slight advantage to have a man who may daily urge you to your duty, a means of which you have hitherto proved the utility; in which I hope your friends will not fail you, and when it shall please you to send me word to procure you a suitable person, I shall most willingly execute your commission. Only, Madame, take courage, not giving Satan the advantage which he is seeking for, of finding you unprovided; and beware when you think you are only on feigned pretences avoiding the combat, lest such fear give to the enemy the very victory he is striving to obtain. For we ought to know his wiles in order to defeat them. Though the condition of God's children should be a hundred times harder, yet certainly it is not a reason for quitting the good to which God, of his infinite bounty, has been pleased to call us.

I have also heard, Madame, that you are not without your torments in your household. But this evil you must overcome like the others. And there may appear to be danger, that those who are not to be brought over to the right way, but remain obstinate, should you dismiss them, may seek vengeance by backbiting and calumnies, yet it is better at once to run the risk than to go on thus languishing continually. But the main point is to purge your house, as God commands you to do, and for which you have the example of David in Psalm ci. When you have taken pains to dedicate it pure and undefiled to God, trust that he will be the protector of it. True it is, however much you labour to that end, there will always be imperfections; but so much the more it behoves you to bestir yourself, that you may at least accomplish your duty by halves. And in the mean time, we have this privilege

when we aim at the mark, that God accepts the will for the deed.

I have still, Madame, one word to say respecting the scruples you entertain about the presentation to benefices. If you cannot do better, inasmuch as the property is not yours, at least in order not to intermeddle with such a burden, entrust the direction of it to the worthy Abbé, who will be delighted to take it off your shoulders. And to the letters of authority which you shall deliver to him may be appended without inconvenience, the clause, that for the satisfaction of your conscience, and because you do not wish to be mixed up with what concerns the state of the church, you appoint him to that office. For in any way to make a good use of that trust, I see no possibility for you. For the rest, I pray you, Madame, to render yourself callous to censure while doing good, since this is the wages we are promised from on high. As to threats which are rather harder, strive against all weakness, because in giving way to them, instead of advancing you will go backwards. If you find contradictions in yourself, let that not astonish you, for however valiant a champion St. Peter was, yet it is said of him: They will lead thee whither thou wouldst not. In which we have a proof that we can never belong to God without some opposition on our part, inasmuch as our flesh shrinks from the struggle.

The excellent seigneur, of whom I know you will be glad to have news,¹ had crossed the sea at the end of March, and before the middle of June obtained a promise that some galleys should be dispatched to convey his wife, for the passage is not long, and he obtained this favour of the captain, who can gratify him in this matter without trouble or expense. I fancy, however, that he will soon be back, if God does not miraculously change the heart of his wife, who loves him in such sort, as to draw him on, if she could, to perdition. But at all events, it will be enough for him to have discharged his duty in order to be held excused before God and men.

¹ The Marquis de Vico. Charged three years before with a secret mission of the Reformers, this Seigneur had received the most cordial welcome at the court of Ferrara.

Madame, I commend me humbly to your kind favour, after having supplicated our heavenly Father to direct you always by his Spirit, to fortify you by his strength, to have you in his keeping, and increase you in all good.

Your most humble servant,

CHARLES D'ESPEVILLE.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

DVI.—TO MONSIEUR D'ANDELOT.¹

He blames him for his weakness—and exhorts him to repair the scandal caused by his fall.

July 1558.

MONSEIGNEUR,—I should not have delayed so long in writing to you after we received the sad tidings of what had fallen out, contrary to our expectations, but that I feared for want of proper information I might adopt a style of writing unsuitable to the circumstances. Thus I preferred to allow those to act who were at a shorter distance. I would have

¹ After an imprisonment of several months, during which he opposed to the tears of his wife and the instances of his friends a heroic constancy, D'Andelot yielded in a moment of weakness, and consented to write to the king a letter of submission. This sad news, immediately known all over the church of Paris, was announced by the minister, Macar, to Calvin:—"Alas! shall he in whom we triumphed fall off, that God may humble us in every manner?" Letter of the 14th of July, 1558. Here are the contents of that letter, which D'Andelot wrote to the king:—"Sire, I have received singular pleasure from the company of Dr. Ruslé, whom I have detained two days, as well for the satisfaction I felt in being instructed by so good a personage, as in order to have time and means to give him some slight explanation of my faith and religion, which I should be sorry were such as some have perhaps been inclined to believe. I beg, very humbly, your majesty to deign to do me so much favour and kindness as to consent to give him a patient hearing, and I trust in God, that after his report you will not remain dissatisfied with me: for some part of it will give you satisfaction. Having the happiness of being able to hear him, I shall inform your majesty that I will obey you, as God commands me, and the duty of your very humble and obliged servant requires." 7th July 1558. (MSS. of Geneva.)

After his first act of weakness, D'Andelot committed a second. He consented to hear mass: "which, however," says Beza, "he acknowledged to have done from great infirmity; and which act he always condemned even till death, and amended by all the means which it is possible to desire."

answered your letter sooner, however, if the bearer of it had not told me that he was not to return to you, and because he was the most eligible person to charge with such a commission. I am well aware that, in respect of the act which you have committed, the excuses which you adduce have a certain plausibility to extenuate its culpability in part. But when you shall have duly considered the matter with a closer scrutiny, you will scarcely find anything in it to hold you excusable before God. For you know how many poor weak souls have been troubled by such a scandal, and how many people will be able to confirm their wavering by your example. And even if the evil of having ruined what you yourself built up should not follow, yet in itself is it no small or slight offence to have preferred men to God, and, to gratify a mortal creature, to have forgotten Him who made and supports us, who has redeemed us by the death of his only Son, and made us partakers of his kingdom. In a word, God has been defrauded by your too great deference for men, whether from their favour, from fear, or from respect. The capital point is that the enemies of truth have had occasion to triumph not only in having shaken your faith, but in having had their abominations approved of. In your person, they have even imagined that they have vanquished our Lord Jesus Christ, having brought his doctrine into disgrace, for you well know that they have not failed to scoff and disgorge their blasphemies. It appears to you, since one easily sees that you have yielded to force, that the fault was not so very great; but I beg you to think of the numerous martyrs, who during the shadows of the law, chose rather to die than merely to eat the flesh of swine; no doubt in consideration of the consequence, because such an act was an implied testimony that they polluted themselves with the heathen in quitting the God of Israel. You are not ignorant of what those persons pretend, who have wrung from you your consent to be present at their idolatries. It is to make you renounce the confession by which they felt themselves endangered, and efface the praise of courage and constancy which God had conferred on you, or to present it in quite an opposite light as if it had been

a puff of empty wind. And in that you should have better practised the exhortation of St. Paul not to give a handle to those who seek it, and not to open their mouths to despise God. Your fall has thus been very grievous, and you ought to remember it with bitterness of heart.

I have no doubt but what I tell you will at first sight appear harsh to you, but I will say with St. Paul, that I shall not repent of having afflicted you, provided it be for your salvation. Nay, if you desire to be spared of God, it is good and salutary for you not to be spared of those to whom he has given in charge to bring you to repentance. For since those who seek to absolve themselves are the most severely condemned by him, he shews you singular favour in chiding you by his word, in order to render you your own judge. Nevertheless, it is not my intention to grieve you beyond measure, so that you should lose all heart for the future. Only I entreat you to be so offended with yourself for what has been already done amiss, as that to repair it you shall return into that course which you had so well begun, striving to glorify God in purity, and shewing by deeds that if you have once stumbled, you have not strayed entirely from the right path. In a worldly point of view, it is a very hard condition to quit unreservedly things which have so much power to allure and detain us; but there is nothing which should be put in the balance with the honour of God. Nay, if we reflect properly on the shortness of life, it ought not to cost us much to follow our Lord Jesus in his death and burial in order to be partakers of his glory. And this is the end which the remarks I offered you in my letters had in view—that not only we must patiently endure to die with our Head, but also to be buried with him until he fully restore us against his coming. For I made use of this simile, comparing your affliction to a death; but because your trials were not yet over, that you might be better disposed to perseverance, I reminded you of the saying of St Paul, that we must be buried along with him—not to faint though the evil should be prolonged, and we should be obliged to languish longer than we might wish, as he expresses himself in another passage, that we must con-

tinually bear about the dying of Jesus Christ, in order that his life may be manifested in us. In short, this burial consists in our daily more and more forgetting the world. When we shall do this, just as we shall have put off our earthly affections, so much the nearer shall we draw to God to enjoy his presence after our death, as St. Paul says in another passage, Now we walk by faith not by sight, but when we have left this perishing tabernacle we shall be with God, expecting to receive a crown of glory when Jesus Christ shall appear in his majesty. Wherefore, with this confident hope, we have to combat valiantly and not faint, knowing that He who hath promised is faithful. And because experience must have taught you to fear, you cannot follow a better counsel than that which you have taken, to fly the temptations which might again cause to fall, seeing that you cannot seek them nor approach them without manifestly tempting God. Since also the constancy in question is that which overcometh the world, have recourse to God, praying him to strengthen you and not to permit

[*Fr. copy—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

DVII.—TO THE EARL OF ARRAN.¹

Eulogiums on his attachment to the gospel, and on his zeal to spread it.

1st August 1558.

MONSEIGNEUR,—First of all I have to make my excuses for answering your letters so long after the time in which you

¹ James Hamilton, Duke of Chatelleraut, Earl of Arran, eldest son of the nobleman of that name, who was regent of Scotland during the minority of Mary Stuart. The young Earl of Arran passed several years in France as Captain of the Scotch Guards, and contributed by his credit to the formation of the Reformed Church of Chatelleraut, *Beza*, tom. i. p. 198. Imprisoned in the Castle of Vincennes, for having spoken too freely on religious matters, he succeeded in absconding in 1559, and thus escaped the vengeance of the Guises, resolved to strike in him an illustrious victim, in order to arrest the progress of schism. *De Thou*, l. xxiv. The Earl of Arran immediately after his return to Scotland, joined the Prior of St. Andrews, favoured the preaching of Knox, and while he aspired to the hand of Mary Stuart, he constantly opposed the free exercise of the Catholic religion at the court. He became insane a short time

were pleased to write them. Had I received them a month after their date, I should have been ashamed to have received so much honour without acquitting myself earlier of my duty. But I know not how it happened that they came to hand only six weeks ago. Since then till to day I have not had an opportunity of a trust-worthy messenger, to thank you for the trouble which you have kindly taken, in letting me know such good news, which has furnished me an occasion of abundant rejoicing and magnifying the name of God, because of his infinite goodness he has gathered you into his flock. True it is that this privilege is not much prized by the great ones of this world, whose eyes are dazzled by the honours to which they have been raised. But I doubt not, Monseigneur, but you put in practice, what has been said by St. James, that the most noble and the most excellent have to glory in their littleness in order to be classed among the subjects of Jesus Christ who are rejected and despised. And in fact, if we consider well this life so frail and perishing, the riches, poms, and dignities which are but its accessaries will not fix us here below. It is then highly proper that we should prefer the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven to every thing which might turn us aside from it, and that with such constancy as to choose rather to be partakers of the reproach of Jesus Christ and his church, than to be absorbed in the delights of Egypt. All protest indeed that they wish to be Christians, and yet they profane the holy name which they have continually in their mouths. But since God has enlightened you by the pure knowledge of his truth, you can easily judge, Monseigneur, by comparing white with black, how few find the right path. That ought to make you prize still more that inestimable treasure of the gospel, since it is the true key to give us an entrance into the eternal kingdom from which all unbelievers are far removed and shut out. Nay, inasmuch as but few of us are called, we are the more strictly bound to the Father of mercies, who has looked upon

after the second marriage of Mary, but lived long enough however to see in 1579 the disgrace and ruin of the noble family of Hamilton, of which he had become the chief by the death of his father.

us with compassion to confer on us this special privilege, which no more belonged to us than to the vast number of persons who are denied any part in it, except that by his gratuitous bounty, he has been pleased to adopt and elect us. Thus, Monseigneur, let the poor blinded persons whom you see wandering in darkness be to you a mirror, in which to contemplate the inestimable blessing which has been bestowed on you, of being enlightened by the Sun of righteousness, which is our Lord Jesus Christ, to the end that you might arrive at the life which is in heaven. And let this contemplation rouse you to give to him your whole heart as to your alone treasure, and strengthen you in true perseverance, according to the solemn obligation into which you have entered in receiving the holy supper of the Lord, in which our Saviour Jesus Christ bestows himself upon us in such a manner that he desires we should belong to him, body and soul, as indeed he is the Redeemer of both. I am very glad, Monseigneur, that you have Captain Bourdick with you, who, from the fervent zeal which I have ascertained to be in him for advancing the kingdom of God, will serve you as a good example. I am disposed to think also that you have retained him for that end, especially desiring to have about you people who may aid you to serve God, in such sort that he may rule and be honoured both by your followers, and by yourself who are their chief.

I praise God, likewise, Monseigneur, for the care and holy desire which you manifest that the pure doctrine of the gospel should be preached in your nation. To which duty I doubt not but our brother, Master Knox,¹ will willingly dedicate his services, as indeed he has already shewn. But as he has such a charge here, he is not quite at liberty; some means must be skilfully devised to disengage him, when I am confident he will make no difficulty about undertaking the journey. However that may be, we must not, if possible, allow the good beginnings which God has bestowed to fall to the ground, without striving to advance them still further.

¹ He discharged at this time the duties of minister of the English Church at Geneva, and returned to Scotland in the end of this same year.

I have to put you on your guard, Monseigneur, against a certain young man who is a native of ———, named ———,¹ who made some stay at Bâle, and is rambling over the kingdom of France, though for about a year he has fixed his residence at Bourges. I give you this warning, because if he obtained an entrance into your household, I should fear he might infect all with his venom. I am constrained to inform you that he is a serpent filled with pride, duplicity, and malice, and striving by his wiles to destroy and falsify the whole truth of God. Though devoid of instruction, he has an overweening self-conceit, and more than ordinary audacity. I take it for granted, that once acquainted with what he is, you will feel no inclination to maintain such a pest.

Monseigneur, having humbly commended me to your indulgent favour, I will supplicate the Father of mercies to increase you in all his spiritual gifts, to strengthen you by the power of his Spirit, that his name may be more and more glorified in you, and to have you in his holy keeping.

[Fr. copy.—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

DVIII.—TO VIRET.²

Blames the hesitation of Viret—eulogy of the conduct of Theodore Beza.

GENEVA, 28th August 1558.

I had rather spare you by holding my peace, as I have hitherto done, but that I am afraid my silence would offend you more than my importunate frankness. Were you not so wedded to your own opinion, you would shew yourself, I think, more equitable to our friend Beza. First, his integrity is so well known to me that you will never persuade me that he sought some feasible pretext for leaving you civilly.

¹ The names are left in blank in the manuscript.

² See the letter to Viret, of the 16th March 1558. Page 414. In spite of his just subjects of complaint against the Bernese despotism, Viret hesitated to separate from a church which was dear to him, and incurred by his hesitation the keen censures of Calvin.

Next, it is not very good natured on your part to reproach him with not having followed another method, when you yourself dragged him, though against his inclinations, to adopt the one which you now censure. But is it at all fair now to condemn the man whom you compelled by sheer violence, because he humoured your inclination? Beza saw from the beginning what the result now makes evident. Recollect that it was by your entreaties, or authority, or command that he knowingly and voluntarily submitted to the noose in which you now wish to keep him fast bound. Would that he had never yielded, or that by entreating you he had obtained what he so frankly sought! The complaints would cease to day which his facility gave birth to.

But why do I speak of complaints? Because, contrary to the sentiments of his own mind, he yielded to your authority and wishes, that very compliance is now turned against himself. John Cognat told me this circumstance, that the resentment of all was violently kindled against Beza, because he had supported your views, though he had himself a different opinion. Now whose fault is it, pray, when you say that you have been exposed to an armed fury? And yet you now carp at him, and as if he had postponed your counsel to ours. Respecting my colleagues, I have nothing to answer, among whom he never opened his lips on the question. All contention on this score may then drop, unless it was your wish to give a wider application to your sarcasm, lest I should be the only person to smart from its pungency. But I see no reason for your being so much incensed that Beza embraces the counsels of those whom he conceives to be the faithful and sincere servants of Christ, when you desire to be at liberty to repudiate the counsels of those who have nothing at heart so much as to look forward to the most favourable adjustment for yourself. Nor, if you do not admit what is contrary to your own opinion, ought you to be surprised that Beza, too, should subscribe to that of those whom he feels to be more propitious to himself. There are many things about which you might complain, nor do I want in my

turn many things which I might state in reply, though I am not quite so eloquent.

Nobody molests you to make you desert your position, nor if I dissent from your views do I for that reason entertain an unfavourable opinion of you, as if anything else than the fear of God occasioned your reluctance to depart; on the contrary I both think and speak of you as a man guided by zeal for piety, but deceived by a too great propensity to hope for the best. You think otherwise; I forgive and endure your sentiment, provided only you accord me the same liberty. For notwithstanding you call our counsels extreme, though I do not agree with you, yet as far as I am concerned, you shall be allowed to enjoy your own direction of yourself. Enquire whether I ever spoke of you with any degree of asperity, or whether it was not my constant apprehension that your city might not be split into two factions. I have no doubt, moreover, that it was that which Beza wished to guard against; but once more you should look to it lest while you wish to subject to your own will a free brother, you may not be increasing the evil which I shrewdly suspect is spreading among you. Add to this that the religious sentiment of your duty will force you ere long to dissipate the calumnies with which he is unjustly loaded. For I can endure that you should be so much offended with me for having lately abstained from offering any advice, provided you do not expostulate with me as if you had been deserted, and accuse me at the same time of not seeing what was expedient. For in your letter both these charges are brought forward. You compare us to persons in good health, as if we were touched by no feeling of anxiety about your misfortunes, or as if we were so sluggish that it never occurred to us what evils are impending from your departure. But you do not judge rightly in supposing that you alone are assailed from all quarters, since the whole force of the storm will also fall back upon us. May the Lord govern us on both sides by a spirit of forbearance and meekness, and may we press onward in our curriculum with united minds and brotherly love, mutually helping one another even to the end.

Farewell, most excellent sir and highly honoured brother, I entreat you to salute affectionately all your fellow-pastors; kindest wishes to your wife and family——

I shall have more to say in a personal interview when it shall be convenient for you to come here, since it is not possible for me to take a quiet journey among you.

[*Lat. copy, Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

DIX.—TO JOHN GARNIER.¹

Ecclesiastical troubles at Lausanne—the Inquisition at Paris—dispersion of the Church of Montbeliard.

GENEVA, 29th August 1558.

I cannot altogether exculpate myself from the charge of indolence, in not writing oftener to you, yet the principal cause of my silence is the want of fitting messengers, of which the opportunity rarely presents itself. From the distance that separates us too, my news is obsolete before it reaches you, and all its raciness evaporates on the road. The state of our affairs is tolerably quiet just now, except that our neighbours cease not from time to time to torment us. As the proverb says: Relations are not always friends, so we experience that good will is not always cemented by alliances. The Church of Lausanne was lately on the point of being entirely destroyed. Violent menaces were rife against it, and its enemies were only restrained by force. Viret, indeed, is not yet preparing to take his leave. Beza, having sent on his household furniture before, has fixed on being among us within two days. In France, though the enemies of the truth

¹ John Garnier of Avignon, a violent adversary of the Reformation, soon became one of its most active propagators. He succeeded in 1545, in the functions of minister of the French Church of Strasbourg, to Peter Bruly, who suffered martyrdom at Tournay. A zealous partisan of ecclesiastical discipline, he met with numerous difficulties in the exercise of his ministry, and retired of his own accord from Strasbourg, to devote himself to the education of a young prince of Hesse. He became a professor at Strasbourg, preacher to the court at Cassel, returned in 1569 to Strasbourg, and died in 1574.

are venting their rage, yet God has in a miraculous manner preserved his churches under the shadow of his wings. The king relaxes nothing of his rigour, since he is continually urged on by his furious passions. The parliament of Paris is actuated by the desire of sparing innocent blood, rather than the glory of Christ. They would willingly grant impunity to all, provided the doctrines of salvation were renounced. The king, however, looks on all the judges with a suspicious eye. Thus, in the name of the three Cardinals, whom the Pope has set over the inquisition, ten men have been appointed, all of the most merciless disposition, to exercise judicial functions on religious questions, and who, for this purpose, are invested with supreme powers. Andelot, the nephew of the constable, has basely deceived our expectations. After having given proofs of invincible constancy, in a moment of weakness he consented to go to mass, if the king absolutely insisted on his doing so. He declared publicly indeed, that he thus acted against his inclinations; he has nevertheless exposed the gospel to great disgrace. He now implores our forgiveness for this offence. But our decision on that point will depend on the turn that matters will take. This, at least, is praiseworthy in him, that he avoids the court, and openly declares that he had never abandoned his principles. At the request of my brethren, I must also write to you, respecting the sad dispersion of the Church of Montbeliard. We have no hopes of remedying that evil, unless your most illustrious prince, whom common rumour affirms to be destined to be the guardian of your young man, should deign to take upon him the task of looking after it. Should he consent to send you thither, it would not be expedient for you to say a word about all these intestine divisions. For thus you will come among them unfettered by any previous engagement, and free from suspicion. You will then judge on the spot what is best to be done. For what reason Toussain lately employed his influence to have an excellent brother ejected, you will be better able to appreciate from hearing the whole proceedings of the cause. It is impossible to stay that man's appetite for exiles. He would wish most probably to get rid of all his

rivals. Meanwhile he sheds crocodile's tears as if he were seated at a very pleasant spectacle. After having perused the missives that will be sent to you, you will select either of the two which your prudence shall think better or fitter to be acted upon, in order that the office of a pastor may be conferred on you. Or, if you shall not think it advantageous that the prince should have any hand in the remedying of such deadly evils, remember, nevertheless, if it shall be necessary to entreat the prince to confide this task to you, that you must conceal from his knowledge things of which he will be maturely informed, after you have gained a clear insight into them by personal inspection. I prescribe nothing; I only entreat and beseech you to leave untried no means of relieving this afflicted church.

Farewell, distinguished sir and very worthy brother. May the Lord always stand by you, govern you, and increase you with spiritual gifts. I pray for all prosperity to the most illustrious princes, whom, if an occasion presents itself, you will respectfully salute in my name.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

DX.—TO VENCESLAS ZEULEGER.¹

Organization of the Academy of Deux Ponts—letter of Melancthon—progress of the Gospel in France.

That you have been received into the family of the most illustrious prince of Deux Ponts, I congratulate you on your own account and mine, both because you will be nearer us, and because, as I hope, you will have an opportunity and the means of illustrating the glory of God. But as experience will teach you with how many temptations the courts of princes abound, you will have to be sedulously on your guard, not

¹ Zeuleger, a learned scholar and German divine, after having been present at the Conference of Worms, had just been called to be chaplain to the Duke of Deux Ponts. In announcing the news to Calvin in a letter of the 1st August, 1558, he asked of him advice for the organization of the church.

to contract therefrom any contamination. This I am confident you will do, even without being reminded of it. I had already heard something of the prince's pious zeal in establishing a school. Up to this moment I was ignorant that Doctor Marbach had been charged with this duty. I hope the others who are joined with him do not resemble him. For, if he does not entertain different views from you—so much the worse, that without any reason he shews himself so bitter an enemy. I perceive that you are deceived by his false appearance of kindness. He has been accustomed to retain the favour of all by his bland manners, but he afterwards secretly lets out his venom. If I shall hear that any good proceeds from him, I shall reckon it among those advantages that have fallen out contrary to my expectation. If you think that the regulations of our consistory will be of any service to you, I shall make it my business to have an abstract of them written out for you as soon as it shall be convenient. This it has not been in my power to do from want of time, for your letter came to hand only a short time before the departure of our friend Crispin. With regard to the letter of Philip,¹ whom you would like to see approving of our unanimity in regard to the Lord's Supper, I know not if it will be proper that it should pass through the hands of men of whom we are not quite sure, for he has made complaints that those things which he wrote to me in confidence have been spread abroad. You know how timid he is. But, though I see him agitated by vain fears, yet I desire to shew indulgence to his advanced age. It would be a much better method if the prince should ask him how far he agrees with us, for if he suspects no craft he will freely profess his opinion. I am also sorry that among us the Lord's Supper is not administered to the sick. Nor is it my fault, that those who are about to depart from this life should be deprived of this consolation. But as a contrary practice had so long prevailed that a change could not be ef-

¹ "I know," wrote Zeuleger to Calvin, "that you have a letter of Philip's, in which he writes that he openly agrees with you. If it does not seem troublesome to you, I should like a copy of it to be sent me; I shall not make an undue use of it." (MSS. of Geneva.)

fected without much contention, I have preferred to consult peace; especially as I saw that there would be not only dissensions in the city, but we should be forced into a hostile conflict with our neighbours, and a load of infamy would be brought on me as if I attached salvation to an external symbol. Only it has been my wish that an attestation of what I wished on that subject should go down to posterity. We shall see whether it will be possible to gratify the wishes of Michael Peuther. Two things form our principal obstacle, viz., that false rumours are often disseminated, and that almost all men are blind to the remarkable proofs of God's judgment.

God protects in a miraculous manner the little churches which are scattered up and down France; nay, amid the atrocious threats of our enemies, he gives an increase which no one would ever have dared to hope. Our brother Macaire is at Paris, and persists vigorously in the discharge of his duty, nor will he depart thence unless he be expelled by some overpowering force. His three colleagues are animated by the same courage. We have sent another pastor to Bourget, not to succeed Martin, but to take a part of the burden off his shoulders, for one man was already unequal to so great a task. The number of the faithful is every where increasing, and already in very many places secret meetings are held. I am apprehensive, lest ere long you will hear that the fury of the enemy has been more violently kindled, because now in certain towns of Gascony the common people have opened temples for the pure doctrine, but commissaries sent by the parliament of Bordeaux have closed their doors. You know the impetuosity of the Gascon character, and therefore I dread more disturbances from that cause, unless God send down among them a spirit of moderation. It is for us then to implore the King of peace to temper the constancy of his followers with gentleness, to restrain the fury of their enemies, and defeat their obstinate cruelty.

Farewell, most accomplished sir and respected brother. May the Lord always stand by you, govern you by his Spirit, and bless your labours. Our friends salute you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

DXI.—TO EMMANUEL TREMELLI.¹

Proposes to him a professor's chair of the Hebrew language at Geneva.

GENEVA, 29th August 1558.

As our friend Antony put into my hands a month later than he should have done the letter you entrusted to him, and on which depended the execution of our project, I was unwilling, after such a lapse of time, to spend my time to no purpose in writing an answer to it. Besides, I thought you would no longer be disengaged when my letter should reach you. Othman had written that an academy had been founded, and though there was no direct mention of you, yet, as I had learned from other quarters that they were looking out for a successor to you in the task of instructing the children of your most illustrious prince, it was not difficult to conjecture that some other functions had been imposed on you, that, in fine, you were to be a public professor in the new academy. If I had dared to raise in you some expectations of a matter then doubtful, but which is now certain, perhaps the situation might have pleased you. But I could at that time promise nothing except without due consideration. Now, however, I repent, and am grieved that I did not go the length of rashness. I have at last obtained of the senate that professors of three languages should be appointed, not with those ample salaries, it is true, which are given in Germany, but such, however, as are sufficient to maintain me and my colleagues in a modest mediocrity. The emoluments of which I spoke to you would have been added. Thus you should have had a decent competency. The grief for having been unable to secure your services prevents me from fully congratulating you on the subject of the situation which you

¹ At the request of Calvin, three chairs, of Hebrew, of Greek, and of Latin, with a salary of 280 florins, had just been established at Geneva. Theodore Beza and Taugaut filled the two last, Emmanuel Tremelli did not accept the first, which had been proposed to him.

have obtained. And, if even still it should be in your power to come among us, you would have a much wider field here for your labours in promoting the welfare of the church. But in the present uncertain and almost hopeless state of the affair, I dare not entreat you.

Farewell, most accomplished sir and respected brother. Your friends pray for all prosperity to you. May the Lord always protect, govern, and bless both you and your wife. As your successor is also one of our friends, I beg you to salute him in my name.

[*Lat. copy.—Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107 a.]

DXII.—TO THE ADMIRAL DE COLIGNY.¹

Captivity of the Admiral, and congratulations on the constancy which he displays in adversity.

GENEVA, 4th September 1558.

MONSEIGNEUR,—I trust that having read the present letter, inasmuch as it will furnish you with a proof of the extent of the interest I take in your salvation, you will not feel offended that I have written it to you. I would not have delayed so long in discharging this duty, had I had as easy access to you as I have on the present occasion. I shall not make any longer excuses, being convinced that the reverence in which you hold my Master, will cause you to find good whatever

¹ Gaspard de Coligny, Seigneur of Chatillon, and Admiral of France, was born the 16th of February 1516, and died the 24th of August 1572. Having been instructed in letters by Nicholas de Bertaut, in his early youth even, he took a brilliant part in the wars of Italy, and deserved to be counted among the most illustrious captains of his age. Taken prisoner by the Spaniards in the town of St. Quentin, after a heroic defence, (27th August 1557,) and conducted to the fortress of l'Eluse in Flanders, he there fell seriously ill and found consolations only in reading pious books. Thus arose in the heart of the Admiral the faith for which he was destined henceforth to live and to die and of which we find the expression in the memoirs, composed during his captivity: "All the comfort which I have is that which, it seems to me, all Christians ought to take; namely, that such mysteries do not take place without the permission and will of God, which is always good, holy, and reasonable, and which does nothing without just reasons, of which however I know not the cause, and of which also I have no great need to enquire, but rather to humble myself before him in conforming myself to his will." Informed no doubt by D'Andelot of the disposition of the Admiral, Calvin hastened to write to him a first letter of encouragement and consolation.

you shall see proceeding from him, and laid before you in his name. Neither shall I employ any long exhortations to confirm you in patience, because I am of opinion, nay, I have heard, that our heavenly Father has so fortified you by the power of his Spirit, that I have occasion rather to give him praise for his kindness than to urge you to greater efforts. And in fact here it is that true greatness of mind should make itself manifest; viz., in overcoming all our passions, in order not only to gain the victory over them, but to offer a true sacrifice of obedience to God. Now, it is not enough to shew ourselves valiant, and not to faint or lose heart in adversity, unless we keep this in view, to submit ourselves entirely to the will of God, and acquiesce in it peaceably. But since he has already bestowed on you such constancy, I have no occasion, as I have said, to exhort you to it. Only I pray you to let me call your attention to one thing more, which is, that God in sending you this affliction has intended to set you apart, as it were, that you might listen to him more attentively. For you know but too well how difficult a thing it is, in the midst of worldly honours, riches, and power to lend to him an attentive ear, because these things draw our attention too much in different directions, and as it were absorb us, unless he make use of such means as the present of bringing under his wings those whom he has chosen for his own. Not that dignities, high place, and temporal blessings are incompatible with the fear of God, seeing that even in proportion as he exalts men he gives them an opportunity of drawing still closer to him, and of feeling a stronger impulse to honour and serve him: but I believe you have experienced that those who stand highest in worldly rank, are so occupied and as it were held captive by it, that it is with much ado they find leisure to set about in good earnest the principal study, which is that of doing homage to God, dedicating themselves fully to him, and aspiring after the heavenly life. Wherefore, Monseigneur, I entreat you, inasmuch as God has afforded you this opportunity of making progress in his school as if he wished to whisper secretly in your ear, to give good heed so as to savour better than ever, to feel the real worth of his doctrine, how precious

and desirable it ought to seem to us, and to devote your leisure to the reading of his holy word, that you may derive instruction therefrom and become more deeply rooted in faith, so as thereby to be fortified for the rest of your life to struggle against all temptations.

You know what corruptions every where prevail, so much the more should the children of God be ever on their guard not to mingle in them, lest they share in their pollution. True it is that in our days every thing will be tolerated rather than the resolution to honour God in purity, so that you cannot render him faithful service without being forced to endure many murmurs and threats. But for that reason the honour of God should claim from you so peculiar a privilege that every thing else ought to be held vile in comparison, and his favour certainly deserves to merit the preference over that of all his creatures. We have one great advantage, that if we are weak, he has promised to supply of his power what is wanting in us, as indeed our real arms are in every thing to fly to him for refuge, entreating him to be our strength. For the rest, Monseigneur, though the glory of God, and the things appertaining to his reign should always hold the first place in our esteem, trust likewise in the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ that the rest shall be added thereto. Thus doubt not, in giving yourself up to the service of God, but that you shall feel his blessing in every thing, and that he will prove to you what care he takes of his children to bestow on them what is fitting even for this transitory life, just as on the other hand there is no true prosperity without his grace, and even when those who withdraw from him fancy they have gained every thing, they feel in the end that their success has been converted into misfortune. But as these things are not easily admitted by human reason, you have need to exercise yourself by reading, as I fancy you do, and are resolved to continue doing.

Whereupon, Monseigneur, having humbly commended me to your indulgent favour, I supplicate our heavenly Father to have you in his holy keeping, to direct you by his Spirit, to fortify you in all virtue, and deliver you speedily, so that we may have wherewithal to give him thanks.

DXIII.—TO MADAME DE COLIGNY.¹

Utility of the afflictions dealt out to the children of God.

4th September 1558.

MADAME,—If the sorrow which the capture of your husband has caused you has been painful and bitter, I trust nevertheless, that you have in part recognized by the effects which it has produced that God has sent you this affliction only for your good and your spiritual welfare, and this consideration it is which ought to mitigate your distress, and render you patient and submissive to the will of God. For it is consoling to recognize that not only he tries our faith, but also that, in withdrawing us from the allurements and delights of the world which deceive us, he lets us taste his bounty and feel his aid, by gathering us as it were under his wings, that we may say with David that our supreme good is to cleave to him. Indeed, when all goes well with us, it is hard to prevent our minds in their wantonness from going astray; and it is a miracle, which falls out seldom, that those who have long basked in prosperity hold on in the fear of the Lord. And that is the reason why, to keep his children in restraint, he sends them divers afflictions. We see that even David had need of such a medicine, as he confesses that when he was at his ease he had more confidence in himself than was lawful, no longer thinking that all his virtue was to lean upon God. And I make no doubt but for a year past you have

¹ We read in the Prayer Book (*Livre d'heures*) of Louisa de Coligny these words, written by the hand of the admiral, her father:—"The xvth day of October 1547, Gaspard de Coligny, seigneur of Chatillon and since admiral of France, was married at Fontainebleau in first marriage to Charlotte de Laval." Then after the enumeration of the children which sprung from this union, we read the following words:—"The iiii of March 1568, died Madame l'Amirale, their mother, . . . at Orleans." Heroic and pious soul, Charlotte de Laval was worthy of uniting her destiny with that of Coligny. "This lady," says a historian, "had always been much attached to religion, and possessed of the highest constancy in supporting her own afflictions and those of her husband. Among the other virtues and gifts of mind which rendered her recommendable, the care which she took of the poor and the sick, and her alms, were singularly praiseworthy." *Vie de l'Amiral de Coligny*, Amsterdam, 1643.

proved that this chastisement has been more profitable to you than you could have supposed before you experienced it. Doubtless though we feel that, what are called adversities are common to us with unbelievers and profane people entirely given up to the world, nevertheless, God blesses those which we have to suffer, turning them to such account that we have always matter for consolation and rejoicing in our sorrows. You cannot but recognize, also, that he has been pleased to spare you, for you see how much more harshly he deals with many others, who have not for all that any mitigation in their afflictions. And it is that you may more at your ease draw profit from such an admonition in order not to dwell upon any advantages or honours of the world; and even when he shall be pleased to remove you farther from them than he has done hitherto, to beware that your heart be not entangled by them, but that you so use temporal blessings that they be no obstacle to your looking beyond them. And in fact, though everything should turn out to our wishes, without our ever experiencing any vexations, the shortness of our life sufficiently proves to us what a poor resting place we have here below. However that may be, Madame, be not weary in serving so good a Master, and submitting to so good a Father, knowing that all our wisdom consists in suffering ourselves to be governed by him, waiting till he receive us into his eternal rest. And though in our times it is so odious a thing to honour him in purity, choose rather to irritate every one against you, in order to be well pleasing to him alone, than to turn aside from the right path to avoid the animosities and murmurs of the world. And, in fact, it is but just that we should be dedicated to him who has ransomed us at such a price, and according to the love he has borne us, we should esteem his grace more highly than all the favours of the world.

Whereupon, Madame, having humbly commended me to your kind favour, I will supplicate our heavenly Father to have you in his holy keeping, to direct you by his Spirit, to increase you in all spiritual blessings, and to strengthen you with a constancy not to be overcome.

DXIV.—TO THE BRETHREN OF METZ.¹

Measures proper to assure the free exercise of Evangelical worship in their city.

10th September 1558.

DEARLY BELOVED SEIGNEURS AND BRETHREN,—After having heard M. de Dommartin and seen the advertisement which you have sent us in writing, we are of opinion that you could not do better than begin to assemble yourselves in the name of God for the purpose of praying to him, as well as for receiving instruction from his word; for that will be on your part, an act of taking possession, and will give an opening for the succour of which you stand in need, namely, that the Count Palatine and the other princes should interfere; for if you do not give them some feasible pretext by your proceedings on the spot, be assured that their measures will be very languid, however much they may be urged. In the first place, we do not know whether it will be possible to induce the Count Palatine to supplicate the king to grant you such liberty, because that step would be a kind of approval on his part of the usurpation which has taken place in what respects the police. But let us suppose that that point were gained, reflect whether it would not retard rather than advance matters, for a request is soon refused, and a secretary

¹ See Vol. i. p. 381. Note 2.

The 10th of April 1550, an important revolution was accomplished at Metz. The Constable de Montmorency took possession of this town in the name of the king of France, after having guaranteed to its inhabitants the maintenance of their privileges as members of the Empire. The lot of the Protestants of Metz, already deprived of the public exercise of their religion, became then more rigorous. They continued, notwithstanding, to form secret assemblies, "so encouraging one another, that in spite of the great disasters that had befallen their town, they determined not to stir from it, but there to await in patience the favour of God. The number of the Reformed party increased from day to day, and several noblemen of the country, especially the Seigneurs de Dommartin and de Clervant, having joined them, they resolved, in 1558, openly to declare themselves, in having recourse to the intervention of the German princes to obtain from the king of France the free exercise of their worship, such as it had been guaranteed to them, by the stipulation of 1543." *Beza*, tom. iii. p. 436 and the following.

would easily find plausible pretexts for playing fast and loose. In the mean time, the king would get up some intrigues in your town for breaking off the enterprise, so that you would be farther from your object than ever. For which reason it is altogether necessary to enter on possession, in order to obtain aid and protection from the princes. For the rest we are inclined to think that the two things should be done simultaneously; that is, that when you shall begin at home to testify the desire you have to be instructed in the pure doctrine of the gospel, you should have a man to solicit for you of the princes that they would take your cause in hand. We see clearly that the order they have issued, forbidding you to assemble, will be an obstacle against your venturing to begin without being assured of support. But you must get over this temptation if it is possible. For if you do not assume boldness to declare yourselves, you will find no prince disposed to interfere, and at the same time the measures, such as are adopted at present, will stand you in very little stead. For the rest, if they vex or molest you for acting in opposition to the prohibition, your excuse will be that you do not conceive you have given any offence, seeing that you in no wise trouble public order, but only make use of the liberty granted you by the agreement entered into and settled in the year 1543, of which it is your intention to avail yourselves, considering even that what was lately decided and concluded between the states is conformable to it. You may also plead that the king, in right of his protectorate, ought not to bar you from such liberties, and much less the council, since it forms a member of the empire. But, in the meanwhile, also, the best thing in my opinion will be to choose a man who is not a born subject of the king, that they may not dare to put in practice so boldly their threats on him. If it is possible to have Master Peter Alexandre¹ by the good offices of the gentlemen of Strasbourg, you could not apply to a fitter person, because he is a burgher of their town, and would have much greater latitude for finding fault. And be persuaded that there is not one of us who would not be ready to bestow

¹ Minister of the French Church of Strasbourg.

on you his services to the utmost of his ability. If there is a circumstance which prevents us, it is that there are some hair-brained persons of Germany, who, on pretext that we do not acquiesce in their phantasy that the body of Jesus Christ is shut up in the bread of the Lord's Supper, would be more hostile to us than the Papists themselves. Thus inasmuch, as for the present it is better for us not to stir in the matter, we give you the advice which we would take were we in your place. If it is difficult to obtain of the gentlemen of Strasbourg their consent to give to Master Peter Alexandre a leave of absence that he may go and attempt such a solution, it would be necessary in that case to entreat the princes to request it of them and to exhort them to it; for we have no doubt that the former will comply with the princes' demand, being so authorized. You have there the substance of the proceedings which we think the most suitable and expedient. And because the difficulty may cause you to procrastinate, we entreat you to consider, since it is God's work, that you ought not to set about it timidly, and you ought also to put your trust in God that he will work by the efficacy of his power to give to it a better issue than you can imagine, since the two things which he esteems most precious are his honour and the welfare of his church. Doubt not when you shall labour to re-establish his service, and cause him to be worshipped in purity among you, and at the same time that the doctrine of life shall be preached—doubt not, I say, but he will strengthen your hands, and if fear has hitherto prevented you from doing your duty, and has shut the door of your city against the holy truth of God, bestir yourselves so much the more to make up for past faults. On our part, as we can do nothing better, we will strive along with you in prayer, and supplicate God the Father of mercies to have you in his holy keeping, to increase you in all spiritual gifts, to govern you by his Spirit, and to strengthen you with invincible constancy to glorify him.

[Fr. copy—*Library of Geneva.* Vol. 107.]

DXV.—TO THE MINISTERS OF NEUCHATEL.¹

He deplores the marriage of Farel, in recalling to their minds the glorious services which he has rendered to the cause of truth.

GENEVA, 26th September 1558.

BELOVED BRETHERN,—I am in such perplexity that I do not know how to begin my letter to you. It is certain that poor Master William has been for once so ill-advised that we cannot but blush for his weakness. But as the matter stands, I do not see the possibility of applying to the evil such a remedy as, by what I hear, has been contemplated. For since there is no law which forbids such a marriage, to break it off when it is contracted is, I am afraid, beyond our power. Unquestionably, we should thus increase the scandal. Were it a private person, I should be less at a loss for means. As it is, what will the sneerers say, and what will the simple think, but that the preachers wish to have a law for themselves; and that, in favour of their profession, they violate the most indissoluble tie in the world? For though you have another object in view, yet men will believe that you assume a privilege above others, as if you were not subject to the law and the common rule. If people had been informed in time of the fact, it would have been their duty to

¹ To my well beloved brethren, the pastors and ministers of the Church of Neuchatel.—Farel after having lived in a state of celibacy to a very advanced age, was on the point of marrying Mary Torel, daughter of a refugee of Rouen.—“This marriage,” says the author of the unpublished life of Farel, “was deemed very strange and unseasonable by most people, and it seemed to them that since Farel had attained the age of sixty nine years without having thought of marriage, he might easily have dispensed with it now that he was on the brink of the tomb. Farel was even a good deal molested by the censures of his friends and the different rumours of the public. It was the opinion of all, that his intention was to provide against the infirmities of old age, by the means which God himself has ordained.” The bans of this marriage, which the friends of the old Reformer disapproved of so greatly, written by his own hand, still exist in the library of the pastors of Neuchatel. “May God bless the promise of marriage between William Farel and Mary, daughter of the late Alexander Torel, of the town of Rouen. Published the 11th September, the 25th September, and the 2d October. Married on Tuesday 20th December (before Christmas) 1558.

prevent this foolish enterprise, as they would that of a man who had lost his wits ; but to make matters worse, he was so very precipitate that we can by no means obviate the consequences of his fall. Examine deliberately whether it be a suitable remedy to break off a marriage which is already contracted. If it be alleged that such a promise, being contrary to the order and seemliness of nature, ought not to be kept, reflect whether this defect is not to be tolerated like many others which cannot be remedied. Half a year ago our poor brother would have declared that they should have bound like a madman the person who at so advanced an age desired to marry so young a woman. But the deed being accomplished, it is by no means so easy to annul it. For my own part, as I did not see how he could be freed from his engagement, nor any means that we could employ for that purpose, I told him that it was better to terminate the affair promptly, than by delaying it to occasion a great deal more of foolish gossip. If there had been fraud or circumvention on either side, your remedy for it would have been good and suitable; but since the only objection that can be raised is the inequality of their years, I consider this fact as an evil that cannot be cured. It is for that reason that, after having made him sufficiently sharp reproaches, I forbore to say any thing more to him on the subject, for fear of reducing him to despair altogether. And, in fact, I have always feared and conjectured that the consequences which I had anticipated from this affair would occasion his death. If at least he had followed my advice not to quit the spot—a milder and more moderate course might have been adopted towards him. Now his absence is the cause why they have proceeded against him with greater severity and violence ; for which I feel a double compassion for him. But I blush at the same time, inasmuch as it would seem to have been his wish to shut himself out from all remedy. Nevertheless, I cannot help entreating you to remember how he has employed himself, during the space of thirty-six years and more, in serving God and edifying his church, how profitable his labours have been, with what zeal he laboured, and even what advantages you have derived from

him. Let that dispose you to some indulgence, not to approve of the evil, but at least not to proceed with extreme rigour. Meanwhile, as it does not belong to me to point out to you your line of conduct, I shall only pray God to conduct you in the matter with such prudence and discretion that the scandal may be hushed up and produce as little evil as possible, and that our poor brother be not overwhelmed with sorrow.

I beg to be humbly commended to the superiors of your city, to whom I have abstained from writing, because I am dumb with astonishment. Meanwhile, I will again pray our God and Father, that he may have you in his keeping, increase you in every good, strengthen you in every virtue, to the end that his name may be always glorified in you.

Your humble brother,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Fr. copy.—Collection of Colonel Henry Tronchin at Geneva.*]

DXVI—TO FAREL.¹

He makes an excuse for not being able to be present at the marriage of his friend.

GENEVA, *September 1558.*

When I told you to your face that I would come neither to your espousals nor your marriage, both because it was a thing not possible, and because I judged it inexpedient, I am surprised what your new invitation can mean. Had I the greatest desire to comply with your wishes, I am nevertheless prevented by several causes. You know that Macaire is absent. Raymond and another of my colleagues still keep their beds. The rest of us can scarcely meet the additional burden imposed on us. Certainly I cannot absent my-

¹By a letter of the 5th September, Farel had invited Calvin to come to his marriage. This matrimonial missive, of which the terms betrayed a slight embarrassment, concluded with these words:—"Farewell, and aid us with your prayers that God may look upon us with a propitious eye, by whose hand it behoves us to be supported lest we stumble before we reach the mark."

self without causing interruption to our meetings for public worship. In such a perturbation of affairs the senate would never permit me to withdraw to any distance from the city. You see clearly then if I could readily, and without serious losses, undertake a journey. But, should no obstacle stand in my way, yet as my coming would afford an admirable handle for the ungodly and the badly disposed to vent their malice in evil speaking, you neither seem to do prudently in inviting me, nor should I act with due consideration if I complied with your wishes. I wish you had rather followed the plan which you had approved of, which was to hasten your espousals, so that they might have taken place at least immediately after your return. Now, by putting them off, I do not doubt but you have occasioned much clandestine talking, which will break out more freely afterwards. For you are much mistaken in thinking that the affair is quite a secret. When De Collonge lately passed through your neighbourhood, the minister of Bonneville knew it. Know, then, that many who pretend to be ignorant of it are privately whispering about it. I myself, when I thought that the matter was fairly brought to a conclusion, admonished my colleagues to check the scandal as much as lay in their power by their temperate conversation. At the same time I besought them not to give publicity to the fact; and lately, when at my request Jonvillers made enquiries of Cherpon, how people had been affected by what had taken place, I wished to be relieved of a part of my anxiety. He who held the pen for me did not know the drift of my question. But I was under the impression that all the business had been completely gone through. That you should openly busy yourself with the cause of Metz¹ would not be, in my judgment, a very prudent deliberation. I explained to you in a letter my reasons, which I am confident were more fully communicated to you by the counsel. I confess that though I did not think Peter Alexandre a very suitable person, I was obliged to name him. I do not know if the time will be very seasonable now, because the new emperor is said to threaten the Protestants because they do

¹ See the letter, p. 470.

not contribute supplies to aid him in carrying on his war with the Turks. It will be necessary, however, to attempt something, for they will perhaps be excited by his threats to collect their forces.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

[*Lat. copy—Archives of Mr. Tronchin.*]

DXVII.—TO PETER TOUSSAIN.¹

Complaints of the intolerance of Peter Toussain towards some ministers of the country of Montbeliard.

GENEVA, 12th October 1558.

The bearer will present you my excuses for the shortness of this letter. He partly saw how little I was spared between the attacks of a quartan ague and continual headaches, which give me more pain than the fever itself. Thus worn out by want of sleep night after night, I am forced to dictate from my bed the few words I now write to you. It is not my business either to subscribe to, or detract from the public acts by which you wished to prove that the brethren have not, as they complain, been violently and unjustly expelled by you. But as they publicly assert many things of which no mention is made in the acts, so intricate a

¹ See the letter p. 435.

Accused by Calvin of having suggested to this prince intolerant measures, Toussain tried to justify himself by two letters, addressed to the Reformer. In the former he represented himself as having nothing to do with the banishment of the ministers who were expelled by a competent authority, for not having consented to subscribe the religious formulary of the country. In the second he repudiated more directly the reproaches of Calvin :—" I confess you would have had just cause of being offended with me, if those things were true, which I perceive have been related to you by persons ill disposed towards me. But when I never coupled your name with that of Osiander or Zwenefeld, nor ever conspired with any of your enemies against you, nor condemned of folly nor sedition any person exposed to the executioner, nor ever knowingly injured you in anything, but always from my heart wished you well . . . you have had hitherto no cause, in my judgment, for alienating yourself from me." 4th April 1557. A letter of Toussain's to Calvin, of the 22d November, closes with these words :—" I honour you from the heart, and pray that God may long preserve you to spread the kingdom of Christ." *Libr. of Geneva.* Vol. 110.

variety of circumstances keeps me yet in suspense. I have always wished that your controversies had been finished by a free explanation, as the ecclesiastical method of proceeding required. Whosoever belonging to our order recoils from this manner of settling the question, evinces that he aims at more than is permitted to a servant of Christ, and his distrust marks an evil cause and an evil conscience. Certainly when from the beginning you excluded me from your counsels, and in the meantime I saw your contests finished by the exile of the brethren; though I had not an opportunity of thoroughly examining the cause, I might well be justified in entertaining some suspicions. But the evil to which I could bring no remedy I thought was not to be hunted up. For though many urged me, I preferred to remain quiet, rather than by trying vain remedies to increase the troubles.

At length, by reiterated demands, certain pious men wrung from me my consent to write to the prince. And I wish that a legitimate investigation of these matters had but once been set on foot. For I always saw how pernicious a thing it was for ministers of the word to be charged with accusations and reproaches, because thus it was impossible that the authority of doctrine should not be shaken, and experience itself taught me to guard against this danger. Nor, indeed, will you find that I ever by words or writings envenomed your dissensions, and unless you had yourself barred the door against me, I should not have hesitated to interpose my services, and seek some means of appeasing your discords. But you are not ignorant how odious that estrangement of yours was, how you coupled my name with that of Osiander, Zwenefeld, and others; wherefore, I am the more surprised that you should now feign a zeal for being reconciled with me, when you must feel that the tie which connected us was at that time unworthily and unkindly broken asunder by yourself. God will one day be judge. For I ask you, where was the equity to brand with a mark of infamy a man—I do not say deserving well of the church, and faithfully labouring in the defence of truth, but one who had kept up a brotherly union, and even cultivated a private intimacy with you? What made this

still more cruel, was that among you was hostilely impugned an article of doctrine, without which no religion nor any hope of salvation remains. Besides, you not only suffered me to be assailed by your colleague with the foulest calumnies, and detracted from my reputation in the city, but they affirm that a letter exists, in which you exhort the inhabitants of —— to beware of their heretical neighbours, who make God the author of sin. Behold the peace you offer, that plunged in the depths of hell, we should hold our tongues. Nor, did your conduct towards the unfortunate brethren wound me less deeply, inasmuch as you did not spare them, even when they were exposed to be massacred, but at one time declared that their dangers were exaggerated, at another condemned their zeal as the effect of folly, and again loaded them with odium as brands of sedition. These things, I resolved to devour in silence, rather than by noisy proceedings, to afford matter for laughter to my enemies. And yet, in as far as I am concerned, you may obtain a quiet and tranquil situation, in which as you did formerly, and as God gave you opportunity, you may build up the church in the orthodox faith, and the sincere fear of the Lord. Nor, indeed, shall it happen through my fault that the gifts, by no means to be despised, with which God has endowed you for the discharge of the pastoral office should ever lie buried. That you should persuade me that you are my friend, when you conspire with my professed enemies, is a thing scarcely possible, nevertheless I shall not cease to pray God to govern you by his Spirit, preserve you in safety, and bless your labours.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

DXVIII.—TO BULLINGER.¹

Ecclesiastical affairs of Germany—perils of Geneva.

GENEVA, 19th November 1558.

I was prevented by fever from writing to as many persons

¹ The same day on which, exhausted by repeated attacks of fever, Calvin wrote to Bullinger, he addressed at the same time to Lismannini and to Utenhoven, two let-

and as much in detail as Utenhoven desired. I strove, however, more than my strength permitted in order that good men might perceive that I willingly yielded to their wishes, and that I was by no means inattentive to the welfare of Poland. I doubt not, however, most accomplished sir and honoured brother, but you, who enjoyed greater leisure, have fully accomplished your part of the task. For my part I could not obtain of the messenger his consent to accord me one entire and unoccupied day. Of my malady I have nothing to communicate to you, unless that, though it does not handle me quite so roughly as in the beginning, yet it is by no means so diminished as not to debilitate my strength, and also enervate my mind. I am prevented from leaving my bed-room, and forced to dispense with the performance of almost all the duties belonging to my office. To these sources of annoyance add the length of their duration, for the hope of any amelioration is very faint, at least before the winter is over. The new attacks of Westphal carry with them their own refutation. As I perceive that the foolish man considers it no small glory that I should enter the lists with him,—I am determined to treat him with contempt, and already it seems to me I have more than sufficiently refuted his attacks. Some other one will be found, perhaps, to maul him as he deserves. Our friend Philip, fatiguing himself with vain complaints, seeks for no remedy, and does not even admit of the possibility of finding one, perhaps because nobody puts his hand to the work, a circumstance which has always made me, and will always make me, desire to have a conference, on which, however, the door is closed as long as you shrink from it. It does not seem to me a matter of great importance that the most equitable among our adversaries are not remarkable for

ters filled with useful directions for the propagation of the Reformation in Poland, as well as with expressions of sorrow for the new attacks of which he was the object in Germany on the part of Westphal. "You see how the feelings of all parties are envenomed, and to what a pitch of folly the followers of Westphal rush headlong to their ruin, though no one should assail them. Even men of moderate character grant that it is our duty to repel their turbulent attacks. But to renew the wounds which may again inflame half forgotten resentments appears to me contrary to sound policy." Calvinus Utenhovio. (MSS. of Geneva, vol. 107.)

the justness of their opinions; because their masters, unless I am mistaken, would be influenced and would incline to a closer connection with us, and it is by the authority of these that the former are now kept back. Nay, I doubt not but they are prevented by fear from more freely expressing their sentiments, as for example, James André, who, in replying to Staphil, servilely fawns on his friend Brentz, and the others. You are not ignorant of the perils to which we are at present exposed; for peace being concluded between the two kings,¹ while they remain tranquil at home, Savoy, aided by both, will turn his arms against us for his own advantage. He will be actuated by an implacable hatred against this city, by whose means he was driven from his dominions. So that now, more than ever, we stand in need of the prayers of holy men to commend us to the protection of God.

Farewell, most excellent sir and respected brother, my colleagues and friends salute you. I pray you also to salute in my name all your fellow pastors, your wife, and others. May the Lord protect, govern, and bless you.—Yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

Make my excuses, I entreat you, to M. Peter Martyr, because he has not received any letter from me on the present occasion. I am almost worn out with lassitude.

[*Lat. orig.—Archives of Zurich. Gest. vi. 117. p. 393.*]

DXIX.—TO MELANCHTHON.

Malady of Calvin—formidable coalition of the kings of France and Spain against Geneva—exhortations to fraternal union.

GENEVA, 19th November 1558.

I am aware, most distinguished sir and reverend brother, that as you are yourself an indolent correspondent, you very good-naturedly overlook a similar want of punctuality on

¹ The peace of Cateau Cambresis, between France and Spain, was not signed definitively till the following year. By this treaty the Duke of Savoy again entered into possession of the greater part of his states, of which he had been stripped by Francis I.

the part of your friends. I had, therefore, determined to plead the excuse of bad health for not writing to you, but, that it gives me pleasure to pour into your bosom the annoyances, of which the burden weighs me down. As, thank God, I have up to these years never been visited by a quartan ague, it required a fourth attack to cure me of my ignorance of it, and reveal to me what kind of malady I had to deal with. Now, though I am ashamed of this indolence, you will perhaps be inclined to excuse me when you are made aware of what obstacles I had to contend with. At first, when the fit came upon me, as I was asleep or in a dozing mood, it was no difficult thing for it to steal a march on me without my perceiving it, especially as it was accompanied with very troublesome and acute pains, to which I am but too well accustomed from a long familiarity with them. But when the shivering fit once seized me, at supper time, I thought it quite sufficient to rid myself in my usual manner of my dyspepsy by a rigid fasting. The following day as I was lying with my strength quite prostrate, but relieved, however, and almost entirely delivered from the violence of my pain, I came to my fourth attack, still a novice and perfectly ignorant of the enemy I had to grapple with. Nearly six weeks have now elapsed since I became acquainted with the nature of my complaint, during which I have been in the hands of the doctors, who keep me shut up in my bed-room and pretty generally confine me to bed in which I am protected by a double coverlet, while every now and then they keep dinning in my ears the verse of Sophocles, "the belly has become so hard bound that it will not relax unless aided by a clyster," which is a state very alien to my usual habits. They prescribe to me all the best and most digestible kinds of food, none of which flatter my taste, so that my strength gets gradually more and more feeble. I struggle against my illness, nevertheless, and recruit my exhausted stomach with the most insipid of food, nor do I either allow my loathing to get the better of me, nor like most people, do I coax myself into an appetite by employing stimulants that are pernicious to my complaint. Nay, in everything I take care not to deviate one hair-breadth from

the doctor's prescription, except that in my burning thirst I allow myself to drink a little more copiously. And even this excess I impute to their fault, for they most pointedly exact of me to drink Burgundy wine, which I am not allowed to temper with water or any more common beverage. Nay, unless I had obstinately protested, they wanted to kill me outright with the heating fumes of Malmsey and Muscat wine. But as I know that they are men of no common skill in their profession, persons of sound good sense moreover, and experienced from a long practice of their art, I not only from motives of politeness pay implicit attention to their orders, but even willingly permit myself to be guided by such masters. They mix my wine with spleenwort or wormwood. They fortify my stomach by fomenting it with syrups of hyssop, or elecampane, or citron bark, at the same time applying to it a certain pressure, that the novelty of the sensation may give greater energy to the remedy and cause it to act more speedily. They only once attempted to expel the bilious humours from my spleen. But though I seem now to be abusing your leisure moments with too much indifference, and in dictating these details during the heat of the fever, I was not very judiciously consulting my own health; yet, as the issue of my complaint is still doubtful, I wished to assure you that I am now making it the principal subject of my meditation, how at a moment's warning I may be prepared to meet any lot which God intends for me. Meanwhile, that you may not be ignorant of what my dangers are, know that it is currently reported, that peace being concluded between the two kings,¹ the whole brunt of the war will be directed against us, that whatever expiation has been judged necessary may be ratified by our blood. Know also, that we are not better protected, either by the distance of the localities or by fortifications, than if we had to engage in a conflict in the open field. Philip's territories² are only two days' march from our gates. The king is still nearer, whose troops could reach our city in the space of half-

¹ Henry II and Philip II.

² The province of Franche-comté, comprised in the vast possessions of the Spanish monarchy.

an-hour. Whence you may conclude that we have not only exile to fear, but that all the most cruel varieties of death are impending over us, for in the cause of religion they will set no bounds to their barbarity. Wherefore your lot should appear to you less bitter if disciples, who ought to have repaid to your old age what they owed to you, now hostilely attack you, a man who had discharged with the highest fidelity and diligence the functions of a teacher, and also deserved the highest honours from the whole church; when you see that the treatment you experience is common to you with others, and particularly with myself; for it is scarcely to be believed how petulantly and unworthily certain brawlers assail me. The partisans of Westphal, though they hurl their darts from a distance, nevertheless, in their wickedness, take far more impudent liberties with me. I shall not for all that cease to press towards the mark at which I had begun to aim; in the controversy respecting the Lord's Supper, not only your enemies traduce what they calumniously style your weakness, but your best friends also, and those who cherish you with the pious feelings which you deserve, would wish that the flame of your zeal burned more brightly, of which we behold but some feeble sparks, and thus it is that these pigmies strut like giants. Whatever happen, let us cultivate with sincerity a fraternal affection towards each other, of which no wiles of Satan shall ever burst asunder the ties. I confess, indeed, that about six months ago, when I read a letter of your acquaintance, Hubert Languet,¹ I was slightly piqued because he reported you as having spoken in no friendly, or rather in a contemptuous manner of my doctrine. But it was his design to flatter Castalio, and to have his ravings approved of by your suffrage—ravings which are the greatest pest of our times. But by no slight shall my mind ever be alienated from that holy friendship and respect which I have vowed to you.

¹ Hubert Languet, a French diplomatist and political writer, settled at the court of the Elector of Saxony. We have from his pen the celebrated book, "*Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos*," (a defence against tyrants,) published under the feigned name of Marcus Junius, and a correspondence very important for the history of the times.

Farewell, most illustrious light and distinguished doctor of the church. May the Lord always govern you by his Spirit, preserve you long in safety, increase your store of blessings. In your turn, diligently commend to the protection of God, us whom you see exposed to the jaws of the wolf. My colleagues and an innumerable crowd of pious men respectfully salute you. I should have liked exceedingly by a short letter at least to mark my feelings of fraternal affection for your most excellent son-in-law, Gaspar Peucer, not less distinguished for his piety and elegant genius than his skill in the politer letters—and after him for your most faithful and accomplished pastor, M. Paul Eber, both of whom I deservedly honour on account of their virtues.

[*Lat. minute—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107 a.*]

DXX.—TO THE FRENCH CHURCH OF STRASBOURG.¹

Blames the deposition of a minister.

GENEVA, 10th December 1558.

The love of God our Father and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be always upon you by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,—Having heard in the first place of the bickerings and strife which have disturbed your church, and afterwards that you have changed your pastor, while at the same time Master Peter Alexandre has protested to us

¹ Letter, without an address, relating to the deposition of the minister Peter Alexandre. A letter of this minister to Calvin preserved in the Library of Geneva, (vol. 112,) and dated the 12th October, 1555, informs us that he was at that period pastor of the French Church at Strasbourg. He was replaced in that charge in the first months of the year 1559, by William Olbrae, formerly minister of the French congregation of Frankfort. Of a conciliating and moderate disposition, Peter Alexandre had made attempts to disarm at Strasbourg, the intolerance of the Ultra Lutheran party, represented by the minister Marbach. It was the triumph of this party which occasioned the deposition of Alexandre, (December 1558,) and a few years later, (1563,) the temporary suppression of public worship in the parish of which Calvin had been the first pastor. See Moeder, *Hist. de L'Eglise Réformée de Strasbourg*, in 8vo, 1853.

that he knew not why he had been deposed, we have thought proper to send you a word or two of admonition which we trust you will receive with the same spirit with which it is given; that is to say, that as we proceed with Christian zeal, straight-forwardness, and brotherly affection, you too on your side will have patience to give us a hearing, with such mildness and such a spirit of meekness as the gospel recommends. We shall not make use of many arguments to prove that it is a confusion which tends to the ruin of a church, when the civil magistrate puts forth the hand of absolute authority in the election and deposition of a minister. But, inasmuch as he is often forced to put forth this authority, in consequence of the contentions and dissensions which arise and bring along with them so much obstinacy that the usual remedies are ineffectual, experience ought to teach you not to allow your animosities to gain such an ascendancy over you in future as to give rise to the perversion of all order. There is no need to dwell long on this subject, for we doubt not but each of you perceives how great the evil is in itself, and in the consequences which it engenders. Nay, it is not at the present moment, that we are to date the commencement of the dispersion of your church, and thus much more inexcusable are those who have been the criminal cause of it. We, therefore, entreat you in the name of God to be more on your guard for the time to come, in order to defeat the wiles of Satan, who being vanquished by the evident truth and clearness of the gospel, which God has introduced into the world, ceases not to pervert all ecclesiastical discipline, that he may expose us to disgrace and defamation.

With respect to the present act, if it is such as our brother Master Peter Alexandre has represented it to us; then, without any accusation having been brought against him, or without assigning a single reason, has he been debarred from his pulpit. We find this manner of proceeding very extraordinary, as, in fact, it is impossible to excuse it. For all these reasons we have not wished to disguise our opinion on the subject, and our sole object in so doing is that you may deliberate whether there was any fault in the procedure, and if

so, correct it in order to take away all motives for complaint, and thus put an end to scandals. Not that it is our intention to occasion you the least prejudice by this admonition, but merely in order to acquit ourselves of our duty. This is the substance of what we may be permitted to write to you without mixing ourselves up further in a cause with which we are not sufficiently acquainted; not that we entertain any doubts of your integrity, but because we might be taxed with too much inconsiderateness, if we formed a more decided opinion without being informed respecting the fact. We have no wish to be importunate in requesting you to send us word exactly how the matter stands, but we should greatly desire to see it better cleared up to put a stop to many reports. In that, of course, you will consult your own discretion. It is enough for us to have exhorted you in a brotherly manner to apply all your pains and diligence to govern the church which is entrusted to your care, in peace and concord, to prevent that order, which should be maintained inviolable, from being infringed by strife and debates. For you are aware that the spirit of meekness should keep the children of God in doubt and modesty. Whereupon, beloved brethren, we will pray God that having diminished, or rather entirely annihilated the differences which have but too much seduced you, he would maintain you under his guidance and protection, cause you to prosper in all good, and increase in you the gifts of his Spirit, to the end that his name may be glorified.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

DXXI.—TO THE KING OF NAVARRE.¹

Quarrels of two ministers—persecutions in Spain—duties of the king.

GENEVA, 10th December 1558.

SIRE,—I suppose the differences that have taken place be-

¹ On the back, in an unknown hand, "To the king of Navarre, in order that he may not take offence because Master Francis his minister had made opposition to

tween those who make a profession of serving God and re-establishing the pure doctrine of the gospel have troubled and vexed you, for it is a temptation difficult to surmount; I mean for those who are well inclined, not only to walk in the fear of the Lord, but also to maintain his truth. And now-a-days, when the strongest and the most constant find many obstacles in maintaining the combat against open foes, when the evil gains strength and the war is at the same time within ourselves, if we were not fortified by God, our faith would often and very speedily be shaken. And, though I confidently hope that that has neither made you swerve nor cooled your zeal, yet I have to pray you to deign to accept the excuses which I offer to you in favour of a man who has seemed to you too harsh and austere. Though there may have been some excess or some want of due consideration on his part, yet the zeal he has displayed in the service of God deserves to be supported, even if accompanied by these defects. I am convinced, Sire, that you have remarked that we had already long before sent him into your parts to supply the wants of those good persons who were hungering for the bread of life. It was not without having proved, and known long beforehand his sufficiency and discretion. We were of opinion that as he had begun his career well among us, so he was carrying it on among you, striving to serve God. If he has offended you, Sire, in opposing David, and drawing away from him all the persons that he could, I entreat you in the name of God to weigh well his reasons, and in doing so, I am confident

David, that he would suffer the said Francis to remain a minister in his country, and that he would approve of those who withdraw from superstitions, giving an asylum to those who have been persecuted in Spain, and encouraging them to serve God without dissimulation."

Some misunderstandings had arisen in the household of the king of Navarre, between his chaplain Peter David, an ancient Augustine monk secretly bribed by the Cardinals of Bourbon and Lorraine to bring back this prince to the Catholic faith, and the minister Francis Bois-Normand. Respectful towards the king, but incorruptible in the exercise of his ministry, the latter preferred quitting the court and retiring to Geneva to making any compromise with the weaknesses of the monarch, or the guilty practices of his chaplain. Informed of what was passing at the court of Nerac, Calvin addressed frank exhortations to the king of Navarre, inviting him to recall his old minister and to shew himself more resolute in the service of God.

that you will be easily appeased, or at least more favourably disposed towards him. I am forced to declare to you, Sire, that, besides there being no solidity of good doctrine in David, he is full of overweening self-conceit and vanity, and till he have learned better how to humble himself and be less taken up with his own person, he will never be fit for the service of God. For which reason if Master Francis advised those whom he had instructed, and who had confidence in him, to turn away from a man of double mind, shaken with every wind, and whose wish it was to make them halt between two opinions, it is not at all surprising, and I entreat you, Sire, not to think it strange; as indeed I am convinced, that though you are a royal prince and of an illustrious house, you have no intention and would by no means desire, that to please you, people should offend God to whom great and small are bound to be subject. With regard to the objections which he has made to certain ceremonies, I beg of you, Sire, to consider attentively how much reason all true Christians have to hold in detestation the horrible superstitions in which we have been plunged, and you will easily pardon those who abhor everything which tends to bring us back to them, so as to avoid and fly from them as much as possible. I know, Sire, that you are not at liberty to accomplish all that you could wish, but if want of power prevents you from fully acquitting yourself of your duty, I entreat you not to restrict to the same condition as yourself, those to whom God has given greater strength, and not to force their consciences when they have a just reason and grounds for abstaining from things in which they think it unlawful to indulge. True it is, that on their side they ought to proceed with modesty, and while they keep themselves pure before God, not to allow their zeal to hinder them from obeying you, and rendering with all humility that submission which they owe you. Only let them not be constrained to do what is displeasing to God and contrary to his word.

The man with whom you are offended, Sire, is come here among us. We have admonished and exhorted him respecting those things which we conceived to be good. Now inas-

much as he has greatly edified the church of God in your country, and his labours have been profitable, I shall make bold to entreat you in the name of God to deign to permit him to continue there with that moderation, which we are persuaded he will observe. I trust you will not give a refusal to this request, as you know that I have no other end in view in making it than that you should perform an agreeable service to God—as also on the other hand, that it is no slight offence to put obstacles in the way of those who seek to advance the kingdom of God's Son.

The bearer of this letter,¹ Sire, in consequence of some proposals that have already been made to you, has undertaken this journey to ascertain more clearly your favourable disposition; namely, if there is any means of obtaining a place of refuge for the poor people who are said to be persecuted in Spain, in order that they may live under your protection.² As I have been informed that you are already well inclined to grant such a favour, I shall not insist on that point any longer. Only I certify of the present bearer, that he has lived among us here like a Christian and one who desires to serve God. And I have no doubt that wherever he shall sojourn he will persist in well doing. I have thought fit to give this testimony in his favour, considering the malice that is so prevalent almost every where in our times.

For the rest, Sire, as several assaults are daily directed against you, which lead you into many evil temptations—so much the more it behoves you to put forth all your strength. For when the honour and service of God are at stake, there is no excuse for timidity. And for that St. Paul teaches us that to confess openly the truth of Jesus Christ, we have not received a spirit of fear but of boldness. If we have received a

¹ The minister Peter Villeroche.

² The rigours of the inquisition in the Peninsula brought on a considerable emigration among the population bordering on Navarre. The year 1552 saw the voluntary exile of a great many Spanish Lutherans, intimidated by the fires of persecution. Of these were Cassiodore de Reyna, John Perez, Julian Hernandez, and Cyprian de Valera. The first two chose Geneva for their retreat. Geneva saw a Spanish congregation formed in its bosom, with Perez for its pastor. See McCrie, *History of the Reformation in Spain, passim*.

little portion of that spirit, enough to keep us from too much weakness, let us pray our heavenly Father, who is abundantly rich and liberal to supply what is wanting to us. Even in a worldly point of view nothing is more advantageous for you, Sire, than to prepare yourself with the greatest magnanimity, in order to bear yourself with constancy when necessity shall require it. For, however you keep yourself in the background, God will put you forward to maintain his cause. So arm yourself beforehand, I entreat you, Sire, exercising yourself in the word of God, and suffering yourself to be taught thereby so that wealth, honours, high rank, royal dignity, shall not prevent you from bearing the yoke of Jesus Christ, and so aspiring to the kingdom of heaven.

Whereupon, Sire, I will supplicate our heavenly Father, that he would be pleased to display his power in you, and fill you with his Holy Spirit, having you under his protection, and causing you to flourish in all prosperity. Sire, I commend me most humbly to your favour.

[*Fr. copy.—Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]











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Author Calvin, Jean.

Title Letters. Vol. 3.

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