

love the same faith, order, and worship, to pray that God would count them worthy of their calling, that they may fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power; that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in them, and they in him, according to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the causes for sincere congratulation, one of the signs of a noble destiny, is the spirit of union which has been given to our churches. The age of divisiveness among Christ's people, let us hope, is past forever. Another ground for thankfulness is the manner in which other branches of the Christian church are becoming more and more Presbyterian in their system of government. Even the Prelatic churches have to bow to the principle that the people, "the laity," are to be represented in the courts of the church. The Methodist churches are essentially Presbyterian. The Congregationalists are tending powerfully in the same direction. If we, the children of the Presbyterians of 1688, are but true to our principles as our fathers were, what may not our church and our country become in another century! While we remain true to our principles and contend earnestly for them, let us have the saving common sense to follow a large-hearted and liberal policy, suited to the necessities of our country and the world. M.

The Church of Geneva.*

I.

THE DAWN OF THE REFORMATION.

AT THE beginning of the Christian era the inhabitants of Geneva worshipped Apollo, the god of the sun, in whose honour a temple stood on the site of the present cathedral. Christianity seems to have been first introduced in the third century. About twenty years after the death of Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, two missionaries came this way from Vienne, in the south of France, these were Paracodus and Dyonisius, or *Paracode* and *Denys* as they were called in French, who made Geneva the base of their operations. It is thought that this Denys was identical with St. Denis,

the first bishop of Paris, who is supposed to have suffered martyrdom under Decius, about A.D. 249—251. The joint labours of these missionaries would thus seem to have been between A.D. 220 and 230. Nothing is known as to the extent or the results of their work, as it is not until the sixth century that the authentic church history of Geneva commences. St. Peter's cathedral was founded in the tenth century, when Christianity must have been well established. Geneva was, on the whole, fortunate in having honourable, learned, and beneficent prelates for its rulers. But Romanism rose and flourished, declined and became corrupt, there as elsewhere. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, it had forfeited public esteem, and shared in the obloquy attached generally to the clergy of that period. The Church of Rome was then, even more than now, fertile in devices for raising money, that the army of priests might have a good time. Images and relics were regarded with superstitious reverence. The leg-bone of a stag kept in the sacristy of the cathedral, was pawned off as the arm of St. Anthony. The people came from far and near to take oath on the relic, with fear and trembling, for they were told that the hand of every one who swore falsely, on touching this famous relic would become withered for a year! Nor would the devotees retire without paying homage to a piece of pumice-stone, which they believed to be the veritable brain of St. Peter. Under the altar of the church of St. Gervaise lay the remains of several "sacred bodies." These were said to "move" at frequent intervals—"a sign that they wanted to be raised and canonized," which could not be done without a large sum of money. "The faithful" who approached the mysterious place of confinement, could hear the doleful wail of the dead men. The offerings which they presented at the grated opening were immediately seized by an invisible hand and were quickly sold.

The greatest fraud of all was practised at the church of *Notre Dame des Grâces*. There, children who had died unbaptized were brought to life just long enough to have the sacrament administered to them! Weeping mothers came from afar, carrying dead infants which were placed before a richly dressed image of the Virgin, who was reputed to work the miracle. A feather,

* Les Premiers Jours du Christianisme en Suisse, par F. Nœf, Pasteur de l'Eglise de Genève; Les Debuts de la Reformation a Genève, par A. Guillois, pasteur de l'Eglise Nationale.