

From the Catholic Advocate.

HISTORY

Of the life, works and doctrine of Calvin, by Mr. Audin, Knight of the order of St. Gregory the Great, member of the Academy and literary circle of Lyons, of the Tiberine Academy of Rome, of the Academy of the Catholic Religion of the same city, &c. New edition, revised and corrected. Paris. 1843.

THE APOSTOLIC LADIES.—CONTINUED.

"In the meantime, all this noise of women, preachers, colporteurs, reached even to Paris. The Sorbonne grew angry, and threatened to end this business by a decree. The king who wished to shield the honor of Margaret, his darling, orders her to come to Paris. The Queen arrives, attended by the Lord de Buri, governor of Guyenne, and de Roussel, her almoner; an interview took place; it was stormy. Margaret laments, cries, prays; she desires that de Roussel, Coraud and Berthaud should be heard, for they preached the true doctrine. The king is melted, and consents to listen to the preachers. Roussel, Coraud, and Berthaud, by turns preach before the king and the Sorbonne: Berthaud and Coraud on leaving the church, are arrested and thrown into prison. Berthaud, effects his escape, and in his flight comes across a church, into which he enters, and there he weeps and repents; Coraud goes to Switzerland, there meets with Farel, seduces a young girl and becomes a minister: Roussel saves himself at Nerec, because Lieutenant Morin has received orders to allow him to escape. Roussel took with him his Vicar General, Aimeric, a religious of the order of St. Benedict, who after the death of his bishop, threw off his gown, and married an old woman, who caused him to die of ennui."

When ladies take any matter in hand, they do not give up easily, consequently, the advocates of the mass of seven points labored hard for the conversion of the king.

"They wished to trouble the king's conscience; and lead him gently to doubt; then they would have left him in quiet until doubt threw him into heresy. This was a skillful manœuvre."

They succeeded to involve the king in a correspondence with Melancthon, and even to induce the monarch to give to Luther's bosom friend an invitation to France. Melancthon wrote a long and cautious answer, and seemed rather to delay accepting the invitation, than to refuse it. With this letter he transmitted a treatise in Latin, *de morandis controversiis religionis ad Gallos*, wherein he frankly recognized the Pope's supremacy, and the necessity of a spiritual authority, ever living for the government and discipline of the church.

The ladies had great expectations from the expected visit of Melancthon, and doubted not that with his science, he would soon confound the Catholic Bishops.

"But a red robe, on a sudden, appeared, to break off these contemplated negotiations."

"Cardinal de Tournon, archbishop of Lyons, one day entered into the king's presence with a book under his arm.

"You have a fine book, my Lord," said the prince, casting his eyes on the gilded clasps of the book.

"Sire, you have rightly called it," replied the Archbishop, "it is one of your first Bishops in the church of Lyons.

By good fortune, I have come across this passage, which is in the third book. I now relates, that he heard from St. Paul, that his master St. John, the Apostle, on a time going into the baths, met the heretic Cerinthus, and suddenly he withdrew, saying, "let us fly; for fear we be sullied, and defiled by the water where bathes that enemy of truth."

The monarch understood the application, and countermanded the passport, which the Chancellor was about to expedite to Melancthon.

Then the reformation, baffled in its lady auxiliaries, had recourse to placards and abusive tirades against the most sacred dogmas and mysteries of Catholic faith. These were written with great acrimony, interlarded with frequent extracts from scripture, and replete with the vilest and lowest slang against the ministry, discipline, and observances of the Catholic church.

So many of these were written in 1535, that the year in consequence, was designated and known, as "the year of the placards."

THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS.

"In the month of March, 1536, Tho's. Platter and Balthasar Lasius, concluded at Bale the printing of "The Christian Institutions," undoubtedly the finest book which has come from the hands of Calvin. A poet of that time places it immediately after the Apostolic writings.

* Præter Apostolicas post Christi tempora chartas Hæc peperere libro sæcula nulla parent."

"It is the work, for which the scholar of Noyon began to collect materials at Bourges and Orleans, and at which he laboured, while travelling hither and thither through France. The reformation waited for its appearance with great expectation. Some fragments, read by the author to his friends, had been retained, transcribed and circulated at the court of Margaret. Desperriers, Marot, Roussel, all the boon companions of the Queen, declared that the institutions were destined to change the face of the Catholic world. It was known that Calvin had undertaken this work in order to prove that the reformation had found a theologian and an author. The book first appeared in Latin. In front, Calvin had placed a dedication to Francis the First, which he translated into French, as he did many years later the book itself. The dedication is one of the first monuments

* Florimond de Remond.

† Christiani Religionis Institutio: Joanne Calvino, Noniodunensi autore, Basilee. MDXXXVI. Some pretend that the edition of 1536, was not the first, and that one appeared in 1535. Mr. Audin says that if such edition of 1535 existed, no copy has reached our times.

‡ Paulus Thurlus.

of the language; it wants neither bouldness nor eloquence. When it appeared, the literati declared that "It was a discourse worthy of a great king, a portico worthy of a superb edifice, a composition which might be ranked by the side of De Thou's introduction to his Universal History, or that of Cassaubon, to his Polybius."

In the pages of Protestant writers, we find no more eloquent manifesto, announcing the principle of the reformation, than Christian Institutions. Bossuet, a genius, has not, in one sense, surpassed Calvin. Behold here a work of great study, destined to destroy the change in France the reformation; and to seduce Francis the First from the faith of our fathers, which he had the reputation of so many executed, which has surmounted the wickedness of so many innovators; and in the designs of providence, this very book, is the most terrible which the reformation could have produced, against its own existence. If Calvin, in this oxomologesis, have told the truth, it is necessary to burn the books of the other reformers; if he be the Apostle sent by God, the Protestants of Germany are no more than teachers of falsehood; if the Institutions were written under the inspirations of eternal wisdom, Luthers Captivity of Babylon, Melancthon's Augsburg Confession, the book of Zuinglius *De vera et falsa religione* and the *de sana* of Ecolampadius, should be cast into the fire. For the doctrines taught by Calvin in his institutions are not those taught by the German innovators. The word of the one no more resembles the word of the others, than shade resembles the sun. If God robed with his cloud the Israelites of Noyon, he must have left the doctors of Germany in darkness. Let the reformation itself inform us.

"We say," that it is Calvin who speaks, "we say that the Roman church is not the daughter of Christ, that her popes have profaned her by their impieties, have poisoned her and put her to death." "And I, says Luther, I reply, that the church is with the papists, because they have baptism, and absolution, and the gospel!" "And he adds, in another place, they have the Eucharistic sacrament, the keys of conscience, preaching, the catechism, the Holy Ghost &c."

"The University of Helmstadt, consulted in the 18th century, concerning the marriage of Elizabeth, princess of Brunswick-Wolfenbittel, with the Archduke of Austria, adds—that the Catholics have the foundation and principle of faith, that the Roman Catholic Church is a true Church, which hears the word of God,

and receives the Sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ."

"Calvin continues,—I maintain that the Pope of Rome is the head and prince of the cursed kingdom of Anti-Christ." "And the Augsburg Reformers rise up to defend Anti-Christ, and say: "Such is the Summary of our doctrine, in which it may seem that there is nothing contrary to the Catholic Church, and to the Roman Church."

"So that, when Calvin so grossly insults the See of Rome, behold, the churches of Germany, and its censure of Doctors come forward to defend her boldly against the scholar of Noyon."

"I maintain, says Calvin, that whenever they represent God by means of images, his glory is tarnished and degraded by the impiety of falsehood; that all the statues which they carve for him, and all the pictures which they paint for him, give him infinite displeasure, as so many outrages, and opprobrium." "This same language was, at Wittemberg, addressed by Carlstadt to the image-breakers, when Luther, if you remember, mounts the pulpit, vindicates Catholicity against the foolish rapsodies of the Archdeacon, and causes the statues of the saints to be replaced, amid the applause of all the intelligent of Germany. Calvin invented nothing: he derives all his arguments against the use of images from the books of Carlstadt, which the Saxon monk visited with unsparing ridicule."

"Calvin goes on:—Christian, when they present you bread as a sign of the body of Jesus Christ, do thou make this comparison: as bread sustains the material life of our body, so the body of Christ should be the nourishment of our spiritual life. When they bring you wine, the symbol of blood, think that the blood of Christ should revivify you spiritually, as wine does your material body. Ignorant persons! who add to the text their own conceits, and to show the subtlety of mind, imagine I know not what reality, and what substantiality, and that prodigious transubstantiation, a folly of the brain, if there ever was one."

"The church of Wittemberg cries out, blasphemy! the voice of her apostle is full of wrath."

"Imbecile! that thou art, who hast never understood the scriptures: didst thou understand the Greek, the text would blind thee, it would leap into thy eyes: read, then, simpleton; in virtue of my title of Doctor, I say to thee, that thou art an ass."

"We have beheld Luther at Marbourg, at the colloquy, imagined by Philip of Hesse, refuse to give the kiss of peace to the sacramentarians, whom Calvin represents, and devote them, in leaving Wittemberg, to the wrath of God and men."

"Let the Hungarian Poet then sing the Institutions, as the most splendid gift which heaven has bestowed upon the Christian world since the Apostolic times!"

TO BE CONTINUED.

* Inst. Chret. p. 51.

† Ib.

‡ Christ. Relig. Insti. p. 233.

§ Ib. 240.

|| Luther's Tisch-Reden, or Table-Talk.

¶ Memoirs pour servir a l'Histoire Ecclesiastique pendant le huitieme siecle. T. 1.