

try. Calvin approached this bull who with a movement of his neck might have tossed him back, Luther—can he be appeased, or will he be irritated? Luther is not insensible to this gentleness. Calvin having learned that Luther had said, 'I have read with interest the works of Calvin,' wrote to Luther in 1545, asking for his advice upon a point in question: 'Oh that I could fly towards you to enjoy for a few hours the happiness of your society; but I will enjoy it in heaven. Farewell, most renowned minister of Christ, my father always venerated. The Lord direct and guide you.' Union was not however accomplished after these words. This appeared strange. Calvin had judged it suitable to send his letter through the gentle Melancthon. The timid Melancthon feared to forward the letter of Calvin. Perhaps he thought it would only irritate him the more. He hastened to send it back to Calvin with a note that terminated thus, 'Je ne pense plus qu'à Pexil. Adieu.' Thus, the only letter which Calvin wrote to Luther, Luther never read. Calvin was not irritated. He answered Melancthon, 'When even your Pericles pleases to launch the thunder, we all love him; we will see him always with joy occupying the first place.'

"Calvin never abandoned his idea. But here is a final act as to Luther: It was a Monday in 1545. Luther, on his return from a lecture which he had just given on the first chapter of Genesis, passed before the shop of the bookseller Maurice, recently returned from the celebrated fair of books which was held at Frankfurt. 'Well, Maurice,' asked he of the bookseller, 'what are people saying down at Frankfurt? Are they still speaking always of the monk of Wittemberg?' 'Not much,' answered the bookseller, 'but they speak of Calvin. I have brought from the fair his book on the Lord's Supper.' Luther went in at once with the bookseller, took the book, and sat down, and never quit- ted it till he had read it through. After he had finished it, 'Maurice,' said he, 'this man is pious and wise, and I would have intrusted all the matter to him. If Zwingle and Oecolampadius had spoken thus there could never have been any dispute.' Melancthon made in the articles of the Augsburg Confession a change in the direction of Calvin. This modification was admitted by many; and at this day the most illustrious doctors of Germany profess upon the Lord's Supper a doctrine very similar to that of Calvin.

"I might speak of the action of Calvin upon France, England, Scotland, etc., but I restrain myself. I would, however, speak a few words as to his influence upon England. In 1548, Calvin proposed to Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, named Protector of the kingdom at the death of Henry VIII., a plan for the Reformation of England. Cramer, Archbishop of Canterbury, perceived the happy idea of crowning the work

of concord begun by Calvin. Thinking that the teaching of the gospel, and the harmony of the faith, are the best means of establishing concord, he convokes a pious council to restore and propagate the truth. At this news Calvin answers, 'I would not hesitate to traverse ten seas for the union of evangelical Christians. Convoke, then, an assembly of holy and prudent men united in Christ. It is in the interest of the entire world.'

"These letters indicate the true founders of the Evangelical Alliance. Here is its origin, '*Union in the truth.*' Such was the cry of Calvin. He sought about at the right hand and left; he struggled, suffered, and died in the service of his king on this behalf.

"But here my view is troubled; my imagination trembles. Three centuries have now passed. There down upon that height at Champel, not far from where we are, flames, soldiers, an excited multitude, a victim. O men, what are you doing? It is a heretic, sent to death by the magistrates of Geneva. Unhappy men, what right have you to kill him? The majesty of God has been offended. But when did God charge you to avenge His wrongs? I seem to see Christ standing at the foot of this stake, crying to them 'Foolish men, ye know not what ye do. The Son of Man is not come to destroy men, but to save them.'

"During nearly ten centuries it was believed that human tribunals ought to condemn doctrines contrary to the Scriptures. Men the purest, the most elevated, shared in this error—Melancthon, Luther, Calvin, and many others. Let us deplore, gentlemen, such an error, but let us not make a fanfaronade. Let us not say that we are better than they. If we regret their opinion it is not because we are better, but because we live in another age. Let us not mount upon the stilts of this century to fustigate the giants of the sixteenth. The death of Servetus, it has been said with truth, was a remnant of the Papacy. It is not the less true that Calvin rekindled the torch of the gospel; and propagated its light through the whole world—and this torch is at the same time that of civilisation and of liberty."

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(For the "Monthly Record.")

THE PASSOVER.

Darkness and doom hung o'er the silent land;
God's plagues were heavy for the people's sin;
And the destroying angel stretched his hand—
Shadowing each household Egypt's land within.
The doomed were sleeping—but the chosen stood
Girt, as for travel, round the midnight board
Where lay the lamb whose sacrificial blood
Over the lintel of each house was pour'd.
Strange symbol of defence to human eye!
Yet, precious in His sight who gave the sign;
The dark destroyer passed each dwelling by,
And death profaned not Israel's household shrine.