

## Editorial Correspondence.

### GENEVA.

THIS is the oldest, the largest, and the richest town in Switzerland. The population, including the suburbs, is about 75,000—very nearly equally divided betwixt Catholics and Protestants. Geneva is the *Aurelia Allobrogicum* of the Romans, and traces its history back into the centuries before Christ. Its history has been a chequered and stormy one. At the time of the Reformation, it came under the sway of John Calvin, who ruled both the Church and the State. In 1798, it was annexed to France; in 1814, it was happily re-united with the Swiss Confederacy, and has ever since enjoyed unbroken peace and prosperity.

Geneva lies at the foot of Lake Lemán, in a valley 1240 feet above the sea. It is divided by the Rhone, which issues swiftly from the lake, but is soon arrested by a barricade of dams and compelled to work *pro bono publico*. Not only does it supply the city with water for domestic use and for innumerable street fountains, by means of magnificent hydraulic engines, but it also furnishes unlimited motive power for manufacturing purposes. Geneva has many attractions. From early times it became a 'City of Refuge.' Here the Waldenses often sought and found an asylum. Hither Calvin and Knox fled from persecution, and many English families, during the reign of 'bloody Mary.' French and Italian exiles came from time to time to increase the population and enrich the community. Political intriguers and adventurers—communists, socialists and the like—have also resorted to Geneva, yet few cities are to-day so free from internal disturbances. The adjoining country is so fertile and beautiful and the climate so salubrious, many wealthy foreigners have purchased lands and built elegant villas, in which they spend the summer. Gentel families, with limited means, find Geneva one of the cheapest places in the world to live in, while its educational advantages draw students to its schools and colleges from many lands. The town itself is not beautiful. It has been said that "a too stern Calvinism, which could recognize no beauty but 'the beauty of holiness,' has

left indelible marks on the central city of the creed." Be that as it may, the main features of the city are severely plain and rigid. The houses are very high, mostly of the same pattern, and all of a dull gray colour. The old town has undergone but little change during the last half century. It clusters round three or four old churches. In it you find streets as narrow, alleys and closes as dark, stairs as like cork-screws, and 'flats' as numerous and airy as in the old town of Edinburgh. Some of the old streets are fine streets still, but the old names are disappearing. 'Calvin,' 'Farel,' 'Voltaire,' and 'Rousseau' are old streets with new names. Calvin street was formerly the *Rue des Chanoines*—the street of the church dignitaries. 'Hell,' 'Purgatory,' and 'Paradise,' are the original names of streets, so-called still, on three sides of the old Madeleine Church—once the aristocratic quarter of the town. The *Bourg de Four*, by its name, recalls the time when the city bakery was in full blast here, to which every citizen must bring his or her bread to be baked. The *Rue Corps Saint* owes its name to a 16th century 'pious fraud,' feisted on 'the faithful' by unscrupulous priest-craft. Among other old landmarks is the *Tour Cæsar*, standing on the site of a tower built in the time of the Cæsars. The open space in front of it seems to have been another 'Grass-market,' for a slab on the wall bears this inscription:—"To the memory of Philibert Berthelier, citizen of Geneva. He was beheaded at this place for having defended the liberties of his country, in the year 1519." St. Peter's Cathedral, the most imposing edifice in the city, occupies the site of a temple of Apollo in pagan times. Hence the name of the street alongside of it—*Rue de Soleil Levant*—street of the rising sun. The tradition is preserved in the city arms which, in the centre of a sun emitting rays of light, has the mystic letters I. H. S., standing for Jesus Saviour of Men, and the motto '*Post Tenebras Lux*'—'Light after the darkness.' An inscription on the wall tells that the Cathedral was founded in A.D. 1010, but the present edifice, in its old st parts, belongs to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Of its internal decorations, nothing remains but a few carved stalls and monumental stones, the canopy under which John Calvin preached, and his pulpit chair.