

Basle than Ecolampadius, moved by the wants of France, besought him to give himself to the work *there*. At the same time the inhabitants of Montbiliard invited him among them, and lastly, the prince of that country gave his assent to the invitation. Concealed in the house of Ecolampadius, little disposed to take the responsible post offered to him, and yet constrained to yield to so manifest an indication of God's will, Farel undertook the task, and Ecolampadius, calling upon the Lord, ordained him, giving him at the same time some wise counsels.

"Farel took his departure for Montbiliard, in company with the knight d'Esch. Thus did Farel find himself occupying an advanced post. Behind him were Basle and Strasburg, assisting him by their advice and by the productions of their printing presses. Before him lay the Provinces of Franche Comte, Burgundy and Lorraine, Lyons and other districts of France, wherein men of God were beginning to stand up against error in the thick darkness. He set himself immediately to preach Christ, exhorting believers not to suffer themselves to be turned aside from the Holy Scriptures, either by threatenings or artifice. Taking the part long afterwards taken by Calvin on a grander scale, Farel, at Montbiliard was like a general stationed on a height, surveying with searching vigilance, the field of battle, cheering those who were actively engaged, rallying those whom the enemy's charge had forced to give way, and by his courage animating those who hung back. Erasmus wrote directly to his Roman Catholic friends, informing them that a Frenchman, escaped out of France, was making a great noise in those regions. The efforts of Farel were not without effect. People wrote to him: 'On all sides seem to multiply men who devote their lives to the extension of Christ's kingdom.' The friends of the gospel gave thanks to God for the daily increasing brilliancy in which the gospel shone in France. Gainsayers were confounded, and Erasmus, writing to the Bishop of Rochester, observed, 'The faction is every day spreading and has penetrated into Savoy, Lorraine and France.'

"The presses of Basle were incessantly employed in printing French works, which were forwarded to Farel, and by him introduced into France. Farel and his friends transmitted the sacred books to certain dealers or colporteurs—poor men of good character for piety, who bearing their precious burden, went through towns and villages—from house to house—in Franche Comte, Burgundy, and the neighbouring districts, knocking at every door.

"The attention which Farel bestowed on France did not cause him to neglect the places where he resided. Arriving at Montbiliard, toward the end of July 1524, he had no sooner sown the seed than to use the language of Ecolampadius, the first fruits of the harvest began to appear. * * * * (DeCoet on arriving from Basle) found all the city in commotion. Several of the nobles in alarm, and casting a look of contempt on Farel, exclaimed, "What can this poor wretch want with us. Would that he had never come among us. He must not remain here, or he will bring ruin upon us, as well as upon himself." These nobles, who had retired to Montbiliard in company with the Duke for shelter, feared lest the stir which every where accompanied the spread of the Reformation should, by drawing upon them the notice of Charles V. and Ferdinand, lead to their being driven from their only remaining asylum. But the ecclesiastics were Farel's bitterest opponents. The superior of the Franciscans at Besancon hastened to Montbiliard and concocted defensive measures with the clergy of that place. The following Sunday Farel had scarcely begun to preach when he was interrupted, and called a liar and a heretic. Immediately the whole assembly was in an uproar. The audience rose and called for silence. The Duke hastened to the spot, put both the superior and Farel under arrest, and insisted that the former should prove his charges, or else retract them. The superior chose the latter course and an official report was published of this transaction.

"This attack only rendered Farel more zealous than before; thence-forward he believed it his duty fearlessly to unmask these interested priests; and, drawing the sword