

Kuyper on Calvinism.

NO II.

Rome points with her index finger to the divisions of Protestantism. The free thinking Frenchman finds in England sixty religions, and only one saviour. The Pagan Chinaman, when asked to become a Christian, asks, "which kind, Ebisacopalee, Presbyterian, Methodist, or Baptist?" By these, and others, our schisms are pointed out, and are a stone of stumbling.

If we are pointed to the distractions of Protestantism, then sorrowfully the truth is acknowledged. But why? Because Protestantism has abused its liberty, it has given way to a false philosophy, and allowed the false conceptions to gain the supremacy in literature, and even in theology, "under all sorts of names has tried to overthrow our Christian traditions." "Why do we Christians stand so weak in the face of this modernism? Simply because we are devoid of an equal unity of life-conception with Rome of Paganism. This unity is never to be found in a vague conception of Protestantism winding in all kinds of tortuosities, but you find it in that mighty historic process which as Calvinism dug a channel of its own for the powerful stream of its life. By this unity of conception alone we might be enabled to take our stand once more by the side of Romanism, in opposition to modern Pantheism. Without this unity of starting-point and life system we may lose the power to maintain our independent position, and our strength for resistance must ebb away."

Writing freely here, I may give utterance to my own conviction that we must not hesitate to take our stand beside Romanist and Anglican, indeed any body who has spiritual acumen to discern the meaning of clearly specified forms of theological teaching. As far as Roman, or Anglican, or Presbyterian, or Methodist are strenuous in regard to the reality of the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Resurrection, and in short, of the supernatural basis of the Kingdom of Heaven, I am with them. Indeed, I am grateful to some of these sacerdotalists and ritualists, though they be, for their strong clear deliverances in regard to the foundations of the faith. Lectures are delivered to students in the universities which are regarded as the headquarters of Protestantism, subversive of all the Christian holds as basal in his belief; books are in the market written by Professors at Christian Seminaries, to advocate the doing away with the miraculous, setting aside the Birth of Jesus as supernatural, and arguing away the whole meaning of the Resurrection of our Lord. In short, the trend of an influential school is to set aside all miracle, and revert to the ordinary laws of nature, to look at the whole Messianic movement from a merely historical standpoint. Criticism, while doing a great service by bringing us down to facts, and words, and even letters, and putting them in their right places is yet far beyond her bounds, in suggesting a mythical origin for the most sacred of our traditions. Some of us are on the lookout for the new antagonist of all this scepticism—the poison which benumbs and threatens the very life of Christian teachers; and will hail his advent with acclamations. It is for this, that here and there, men are asking, "What have we gained by allowing 'the doctrines,' as our fathers called them, to fall into disuse? Better the five points, in all their grimness, which the old men had down in season and out of season, than this modern, colorless, undefinable something called Christianity." Better have that which is particular, than mere generalities, which may mean anything. Better stick to the old explanations of the selection of individuals, than to fall back upon the vague generality that the body of believers is alone meant. "He calleth his own sheep by name," insisted the old Protestants. Individuals are meant, preached they. But to-day we are authoritatively informed that even the 23rd Psalm want Israel as a people. Then, again, I would prefer an atonement for Christ's own people to an atonement which means nobody in particular, an atonement of blood to an atonement which has a mere moral influence. The soul cries out for something definite—for something efficacious. I am only satisfied by believing that God means me—that he always knew me—that he arranged for my salvation before I was born—that he took sure steps to secure my redemption from the curse of the Law—that at the precise moment in this plan, he called me—made me a new creature—that he has provided a sufficiency of grace to enable me to triumph over all my foes, sin, death, the devil, and that I shall persevere to the entrance gates of everlasting life. . . . Such a belief, at any rate, is articulated holds together as the links in a chain—and seems to an unsophisticated countryman like unto Paul's—"Whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son . . . and whom he predestined, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Set such a statement over against the indefinite statements of the present time, in the religious literature, in the expressions of our people, in religious meetings, and even in the more precise and esteemed efforts of the

preacher, and we will not wonder that there is a harking back to the grand old truths, which hard as they were to understand, and repellent as they must be to human reason, yet after all, were to us a God-given foundation on which to rest our tempest-tossed souls.

D. A. STEELE.

Notes from Rochester.

Does anyone want to know where Rochester is, and what kind of a place it is? Well, he can locate it by the aid of an Atlas, and a gazetteer will give him more reliable information than can the writer. In fact, apart from a few streets near the Seminary, it is still to him largely a *terra incognita*. But it is the Seminary chiefly in which the readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR are interested.

Owing to various causes, chief of which probably is the distances, Rochester has always fallen behind Newton in the number of students from the Maritime Provinces, whether that is a matter for congratulation or commiseration the faculty of the institution might not wish to express an opinion. Still they have never shown a disposition to discourage an increase of the Acadia element, so we may assume that they have no particular fault to find with the men from the Provinces. A list of those who have received their theological training here might be of interest, but space would scarcely permit that were the information at hand. And to name only a few might arouse unpleasant feeling, for they say that even ministers are sometimes sensitive in regard to such things. But one reference may be permitted as it has a personal bearing. In the room occupied by the writer conjointly with another Acadia man, we discovered written in an inconspicuous place, the names of H. F. Waring and W. N. Hutchins. (Of course writing on the wall is forbidden, but even "Theologues" will sometimes break a rule.)

At present Acadia is represented by five men. J. O. Vince, '99 and H. G. Colpitts, '00, leave the Senior class; Rev. F. E. Bishop, '99 serves to ballast the Middle class (being evidently designed by nature for such a purpose); while among the Juniors are Ralph M. Jones and the writer, classmates at Acadia in the class of '01. Mr. Jones, as you may or may not know, is a son of our genial Professor of Classics at Acadia, Dr. R. V. Jones. Before leaving this subject it may also be said that Rev. J. O. Vince in addition to carrying the work of the Seminary course is also pastor of the Baptist church at Hannibal, N. Y., while Rev. F. E. Bishop (whose wife he it known, is a daughter of the veteran Rev. A. B. McDonald), cares for the spiritual condition of the Baptist church at Hamlin.

Of the work of the Seminary there is space for only a few words this time. The new students registered to date number thirty-four. Of these three join the Senior class, four the Middle class, while the Junior class consists of twenty-seven, two of whom take only special studies. Geographically almost all sections of the country are represented from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The composition of the Junior may be taken as representative. Rochester University of course takes precedence having eight men in this one class. Brown comes next with four; University of Michigan, Denison, Wm. Jewel and Acadia send two each; while Grand Island College, Shurtliff, Onachita, Univ. of Penn., McMinnville College (Ore.), the German Dept. of the Seminary, and Kalamazoo, are each represented by one.

At the time of writing the State Convention of the Baptist host is being held at Auburn. Occupying a prominent place on the published programme we noticed the name of Rev. W. B. Wallace (Acadia '90), son of the man whose name is a household word wherever the Baptist faith is held in the Maritime Provinces, Rev. Isaiah Wallace. There is also going on at present a political contest in the state, but elections are proverbially uncertain so no predictions shall be made. This with other matters must be left until another time.

Rochester, Oct. 29.

R. J. C.

Servetus, A Neglected Martyr.

BY S. C. MITCHELL.

Michael Servetus was born in Spain, in 1510, the same year as Calvin. At the age of nineteen he saw the Bible for the first time, at the University of Saragossa, as Luther at the like age had done at Erfurt. The Bible now became his guide. He was present, in 1530, at the coronation of the Emperor Charles V. at Bologna, where he beheld the Pope worshipped by the crowd, kneeling before him in the street—a sight that begot in Servetus a strong anti-papal bent.

HIS BOOKS AND BELIEFS.

When he was twenty-three, he put forth a Latin work on the "Trinity," in which, proceeding from the historical Jesus, he proves that Christ is very God. In 1534 he met Calvin in Paris, where the latter offered to set him right on some doctrines. While Servetus was lecturing in the University of Paris on geography and astronomy, he published a splendid edition of "Ptolemy's Geography,"

containing the statement that Palestine was barren, which Calvin construed as throwing light upon Moses' description of it as a "goodly land." Servetus made the discovery of the circulation of the blood nearly a century before Harvey. In his thirtieth year he was baptized, urging Calvin to do likewise; for, as he states, the promise is given to believers only, and infant have no faith." While practising medicine at Vienne, in France, he annotated the Latin Bible, insisting on the literal and historical sense of Scripture, and rejecting the mystical interpretation, thus anticipating the accepted method of to-day. Rome put his comments on the "Index."

He sent to Calvin a manuscript copy of his great work on the "Restoration of Christianity," which whetted the Genevan's strange and fatal opposition to him. The Spaniard had, of course, all the qualities of an insurgent thinker, both repellent and attractive. On February 13, 1549, Calvin writes his friend Farel: "Servetus lately wrote to me, and coupled with his letter a long volume of delirious fancies. He offers to come hither, if it is agreeable to me. But I am unwilling to pledge my word for his safety; for, if he does come, provided my authority be of any avail, I shall never suffer him to go away alive." This treat was made seven years before its execution.

TWICE CONDEMNED TO DEATH.

On proofs of heresy furnished by Calvin to the Catholic inquisitor in France, Servetus was arrested, thrown into prison, and tried. By a ruse, he made his escape from the jailer. The trial however, continued, and he was condemned to be burned by a slow fire. In attempting to make his way into Italy, Servetus, alone and on foot, entered Geneva. He turned in at the Rose Inn engaging a boat to carry him on the morrow across the lake. But before setting out that Sunday morning he attended church, where Calvin recognized him. That afternoon, as he was on the point of taking the boat, he was arrested. Says Calvin, in his letter to Sulzer: "One of the syndics, at my instigation, ordered him to be led to prison."

While Servetus was denied counsel, Calvin, supreme in Geneva, conducted the prosecution, with the progress of which his satisfaction is attested by a letter to Farel: "I hope that the sentence will be at least a capital one." Servetus' rejection of infant baptism was one of the most dangerous counts against him. He steadfastly refused to recant, unless he was shown from the Bible that he was wrong. From the dungeon he petitions the Genevan rulers: "The ancient church had no notion of making a criminal process for any doctrine of Scripture. He has committed no offence, neither in your territories nor anywhere else. The questions relating to him are difficult, and ought to be put into the hands of learned men. My lords, because he is a stranger, and does not know the customs of this country, he begs of you to grant him an advocate, who may speak for him. August 22, 1553. Michael Servetus in his own cause."

The Genevans even sent to France to get the documents by which Servetus had there been condemned to the stake. In three days the jailer from whom he had escaped came in person to demand the prisoner, exhibiting a copy of the death sentence and bringing the thanks of the Catholic authorities for the intelligence as to the whereabouts of the heretic. But the Genevans contrived not to surrender their game. By the returning officer Servetus sent a paper, declaring that his escape had been without the connivance of the jailer, and generously refused to give the names of his creditors in France, that he might not endanger his friends.

Meanwhile, Servetus from a foul cell petitions again, on September 15th: "Calvin is resolved that I should rot in prison to please him. I am eaten up with lice, my hose are worn to pieces, and I have no change nor another doublet." When the council met on October 26th, to decide the case, the presiding syndic made a last effort in favor of Servetus' acquittal. Seeing, however, that the majority were bent on fixing the death penalty, he, with a few others, left the hall. The decision was unanimous. Calvin's wish to change the sentence from death by fire to death by the sword did not prevail—seemingly the only point at which he was unsuccessful.

THE EXECUTION.

The dire sentence was not made known to Servetus in the prison until the next morning, the very day on which he was to die, ere the clock of St. Peter's sounded the hour of twelve. Though horror-struck at the suddenness of his doom, Servetus' fortitude and Christian spirit were such as to draw forth admiration from many of his enemies. He even sent for Calvin, who has described the scene: "When one asked him what he wished with me, he answered that he desired to beg my forgiveness. I readily answered, and it was strictly the truth, that I had never sought to resent any personal affront. I prayed him to implore the forgiveness of God, whom he had so awfully blasphemed." Servetus was silent.

The condemned man, smiting his breast, continued in prayer, confessing Christ as his Redeemer, and beseeching God to forgive his accusers. On a hillock without the city he was bound to the stake, with his books tied