

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

THE FOUR HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF ZWINGLE, THE SWISS REFORMER.

The four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Zwingle, the Swiss Reformer, was celebrated in the early part of the year in Switzerland, and in some parts of Germany and France. Coming as it did, so close upon that of Luther, it is not to be wondered at that it created so much less general interest everywhere. Still the occasion will, doubtless, induce many to make or renew an acquaintance with the leading features of his brief career. Two lives of this Reformer have recently been written, one in German, by Morikofler, (1867), and the other in French, by Hoff, (1882). I have been looking over the contents of both volumes, and have taken from them such facts as may give the readers of THE PRESBYTERIAN a fair idea of who Zwingle was, and what part he took in the work of the Reformation of the Church.

ULRIC ZWINGLE

was born on the first day of January, 1484, at Wildhaus, in the Toggenburg, (canton of St. Gall), in a wooden house, which still remains in a fair state of preservation, near the entrance to the town. Zwingle (more correctly Zwingli), was educated at Wesen, at Basle, and at Berne, and spent two years also at the University of Vienna. Through the influence of Thomas de Wyttenbach, one of the earliest church reformers, he was induced to enter the church, and at the age of twenty-two became a *curé* at Glaris, where he remained ten years (1506-1516). At this time he was not only a student of philosophy, and an ardent admirer of the classics, but even cultivated an acquaintance with the muses, writing an allegorical poem (1510) of a highly patriotic character. Patriotism, it may here be said, continued to be a marked trait in his character throughout life. He bitterly opposed the readiness with which his countrymen were in the habit of selling their military services to the highest bidder, irrespective of the cause in which they were to be employed. In 1512 he accompanied as chaplain, the Bishop of Sion, at that time in the service of Pope Julius II., into Italy, where, at the head of an army of 20,000 Swiss, he conquered all Lombardy. During this expedition he witnessed such venality and want of independence on the part of his countrymen as to disgust him still more, and to make him even more determined in his opposition to so disgraceful a practice.

His keen relish for the classics led to a correspondence with Erasmus, the great Dutch scholar, (1514) and afterwards to personal relations for a time. During his stay at

GLARIS

a change was gradually taking place in his convictions regarding the doctrines of his church, though the phases of that change were marked by no violent crises, such as took place in the case of Luther, and which made the German stand out in incomparably greater relief. His character lacked that intensity which shone so conspicuously in the Wittenberg monk. The freedom with which he combated the pretensions of the papacy, soon created great hostility to the young priest of Glaris, and so discouraged him that he left, and shut himself up in the monastery of

EINSIEDLEN,

the Lourdes of Switzerland, where he remained two years (1516-1518). The head of the monastery—Diebold de Geroldseck—sympathized to some extent with the views of the young *curé*, and appointed him to be preacher during his stay. Though he had not yet decided to leave the church, his sermons here were evangelical, and quite opposed to the superstitious practices which he was daily witnessing. The Papal Nuncio, who studied premonitory symptoms, offered him the title of Chaplain to the Pope, with the hope of binding him more closely to Rome. This he accepted in 1518. It did not, however, prevent him from continuing to preach a free Salvation, and the step taken by Luther in 1517 had the effect of making him still stronger, and in hastening his rupture with that church of which he was such an ornament. Still, even when he went to

ZURICH,

he was not completely delivered from the bondage of the Romish Church. And yet in his first sermon (1518) he said: "It was to Christ alone he wished to lead souls, to be nourished by His word," and his

preaching became more and more conformed to the preaching of the Gospel. In the following year, when the plague had carried off a brother and attacked himself, he seems to have gained spiritual freedom. He then commenced a series of expository discourses on the Gospel of St. Matthew, which made quite a change in the views of his hearers—views which were deepened by events which were happening outside. As Germany had been scandalized by a Teizel, so Switzerland was now being scandalized by a Milanese monk named Samson, who had been sent to sell indulgences for the benefit of Rome. True, the Pope, Leo X., to conciliate the Swiss, disavowed him, but it was too late, for Zwingle had already decided on taking the step for which he had long been preparing. In 1520 he definitely refused the pension received from the Pope, and proclaimed himself an

ADHERENT OF LUTHERANISM,

openly opposing tradition and all doctrines not clearly taught in the Scriptures. The opposition of the cantons, which were strongly Romanist, soon began to manifest itself, and in this way the cantons became divided into two hostile camps. With Lucerne marched the four little mountain cantons, Schwytz, Uri, Unterwalden and Zug; while with Zurich were ranged St. Gall, Appenzell, Schaffhausen, Basle and Berne. But while the four cantons never forsook each other, the allies of Zurich often failed her. Indeed the Reformation did not take root at Berne until 1528, and many hesitations—religious and political—marked the conduct of the reforming cantons. Edicts forbidding the clergy to preach anything opposed to the old beliefs, were published, but Zwingle and his friends remained firm, and at a

CONFERENCE AT ZURICH

on the 29th January, 1523, at which 600 persons, representing magistrates, priests, etc., attended, Zwingle presented sixty-seven theses, which he had drawn up for the occasion. Some of these were much more advanced in their character, and more radical than the more celebrated theses of Luther, opposing the authority of the Pope, intercession of saints, the mass, pilgrimages, celibacy of the clergy, divine character of the priesthood, etc. To these the Vicar-General of the Bishop of Constance made a poor reply, and the meeting almost unanimously decided in favour of the theses. The Cantonal Government then issued a decree in favour of the Reformation, and granting permission to the priests to marry. Several priests, availing themselves of the liberty given, took wives, and in April, 1524, Zwingle married Anna Reinhardt—a beautiful woman, the widow of a councillor—by whom he had two sons and two daughters. This, and the breaking into churches by a mob, and the destruction of altars, images, etc., exasperated the Diet of Lucerne, which again issued an edict, calling on all the cantons to remain true to their old faith. Zurich and Schaffhausen were the only ones which stood firm on this occasion. Zwingle, it must be said, did not approve of the action of the peasants, who had revolted, and had taken the law into their own hands. He even approved of the capital sentence pronounced against Felix Mantz, (1527) and of the banishment of Blaurock, and of the condemnation of Jacob Grebal—more political than religious. Hoff says that Zwingle took no part in these acts of severity. Happily for his memory he took but an indirect part in the repression of the Anabaptists, trying rather to refute their doctrines, and to found the new church upon a solid basis. He reformed the chapter of the cathedral, introduced a new liturgy of baptism, and in April, 1526, with the sanction of the cantonal authorities, he suppressed the mass at Zurich, replacing the altars with simple wooden tables, and sold the treasure of the cathedral to found and strengthen a school of theology.

POLITICS

now absorbed much of his time and strength, his schemes being on a rather large scale—although, doubtless, his purpose in all this was to advance the cause of religious reform. There evidently existed in his mind very confused ideas as to the distinction between the civil and ecclesiastical powers. He followed the example set by the Catholic Cantons, which had invoked the aid of Austria in forming alliances with foreign States, and particularly with the Landgrave of Hesse. He even made preparations for war, traced plans of campaigns, etc., which were hardly in accordance with the principles of the Gospel. This great activity in secular affairs did not greatly interfere with

his activity also in religious matters. Zwingle at Zurich, as Calvin at Geneva, wanted to make people holy, and did not hesitate to use compulsion to that end. They both required that the members of the councils of those cities should attend church, and present themselves at the table to communicate. Still, in judging of these acts of intolerance, all the circumstances of time, place, etc., should be taken into consideration.

No doubt there existed at this time a feeling of intense hatred on the part of the Catholic Cantons against those who had taken the side of Reform. At first the people of Zurich were remarkably tolerant, but were at last provoked into acts of hostility almost as bitter as those of their opponents. In May, 1529, a pastor who belonged to a territory dependent at once upon Schwytz and Glaris, was seized by the people of Schwytz, condemned and burned. This decided Zwingle and his friends for

WAR,

though the government of Zurich long opposed extreme measures. At last it consented, an army was raised, and with Zwingle at its head, it marched to meet the enemy at Cappel. Before any blows were struck, however, an attempt was successfully made by deputies from the different cantons to settle the differences between the contending parties. In September of the same year a treaty was signed at Baden, (Arjovie) but it failed to satisfy Zwingle, who demanded religious liberty even in the Catholic Cantons. To this the five cantons would not agree, declaring their resolution to stick to the old faith, and to allow of no interference on the part of the other cantons.

During the next two years Zwingle occupied himself in reforming the mode of worship, in adopting measures for the promotion of morality, for popular and superior education, and for the organization of a Synodical system—very imperfect, it is true, yet still one which contained the germ which bore fruit afterwards in the hands of Calvin. But what chiefly occupied and greatly troubled the last years of Zwingle's life, was the controversy regarding

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

He had expounded his views upon the subject several times between 1523 and 1525, and he had a controversy with Pomeranus. Then Luther appeared upon the scene, and after that there was a constant running fire of attack and defence, of reply and counter-reply, between Luther and his friends on one side, and Zwingle and Ecolompadius on the other. Whichever view of the question at issue one may hold, it must be confessed that, both in the discussions at the conference of Marbourg, (1529) and in all the controversial writings published, the language employed by Zwingle was vastly more moderate than that indulged in by Luther, who was not only haughty, but disdainful, and it is even said that he sometimes refuted what he had not deigned to read, and condemned what he had not patience to listen to. No understanding, of course, took place between the two, either at Marbourg or subsequently, although Bucer and others attempted to reconcile views which were wholly irreconcilable. And the differences which then arose continue to distinguish, to the present day, the German or Lutheran Church, and the French or Calvinistic Church.

WAR DECLARED

Zwingle continued to demand religious liberty, and for this purpose, invaded, it is said, the cantons which were hostile to him, proclaiming his ideas. This brought together the leading men of the five cantons at Brunnen, and after a long discussion war was declared against Zurich, on the 9th October, 1531. Attempts at mediation were again made, but this time without success. The reformers of Zurich became frightened at the threats of their opponents, and were not only disinclined for war, but began to threaten Zwingle for having provoked it. Still a large party rallied round him, and an army of about 2,000 men was in readiness. Zwingle bade an affectionate adieu to Bullinger and his own family, for he had a presentiment of what the issue would be. His biographers say he was urged forward by a strong feeling, which turned out to be incorrect, that the people of the Catholic cantons desired reform, and were ready to receive it. The troops at last marched to meet the enemy, 8,000 strong, again at Cappel. He did not hesitate to accompany them, as the chiefs had need of his counsel, and the men of encouragement and consecration. On the 11th October, the combat began and was carried on with great fury on both sides. The Protestants