

Such was the beginning of an Academic Institution, which came to exert a wide influence, and drew students from all parts of the world, and which sent forth from its halls many who became eminent in Letters and Theology. It continued with increasing usefulness until it merged into the University of Geneva, established by the Government in 1867.

As it was Calvin who gave the Reformed Churches of France and Switzerland their first system of doctrine, discipline and government, one would naturally expect to find in Geneva, a model Presbyterian Church; but that you do not find. Geneva was, and still is, too small a community for the development of Calvin's plans. In the neighbouring Canton of Vaud, having a much larger population, and chiefly Protestant, the form of church government more nearly resembles our own, but in Geneva the whole management of the church is vested in the *Consistoire*—an ecclesiastical court composed of six ministers and *twenty-five laymen*. The President of the *Consistoire* is always a layman. There is no test or "subscription" required, either of the ministers or the lay representatives, nor any religious qualification demanded of the electors. The same remark applies to the professors of Theology in the University. They are bound by no creed, and may teach evangelical doctrines, or rankest rationalism, without being called in question. The Confession of Faith of the church of Geneva, was deliberately abolished in 1725, and to this must be ascribed the lifeless formalism which followed, and which led the more serious-minded to exclaim,—"Alas for the poor church of Geneva! *Post Lucem Tenebræ!*"—After Light, Darkness!

Yet things are not quite so bad as this statement may seem to imply. There are, in the National Church, evangelical ministers of the Gospel, and among them some very able men. Touching ordination; when a theologian has completed his curriculum of study and is certified by the Theological Faculty, his name is posted up by the *Consistoire*, as that of one eligible for a "call" in case of a vacancy. When elected by the people, a day is set apart for his "installation." There is no 'ordination,' as we understand it. The new-comer is simply welcomed at a public meeting, open

to all the ministers of the town, the Government being represented by an officer clothed with the power of *veto*, which, however, is seldom if ever exercised. A few pleasant speeches are delivered, followed by hand-shaking. The ceremony is soon over. The appointment is for life; but on a petition by one third of the electors, the minister must submit to *re-election*—a rare occurrence, which has not happened since 1874.

The *Consistoire* meets every week and, *inter alia*, appoints the preachers for the following Sunday, in all the churches, for although each minister has his appointed district for pastoral oversight, the town of Geneva is one parish, and its sixteen ministers must ordinarily preach only where and when the *Consistoire* determine. This arrangement also applies to the Sunday-Schools, which are usually conducted by one of the ministers in rotation. The plan seems to be founded on the primitive apostolic principle that all the Christian people of a given town or district belong to one family, having all things in common. Each sharing the varied gifts and graces, even, of all the ministers within the bounds. How far it answers the purpose of removing local barriers and prejudices, and of promoting public morals without the intervention of that kind of rivalry which sometimes builds up one congregation at the expense of another, is, I suppose, one of the subjects upon which there is room for diversity of opinion. C.

Missionary Cabinet.

MRS. MARY M. ELLIS.

MARY MERCER MOOR was the descendant of a godly Scottish ancestry, her father Alexander Moor, having been born near Perth. Mary was born in London on the 16th of October, 1793. When she was scarcely three months old, her father died and, before she had completed her eighth year, her mother also. The orphan was committed to the care of a pious friend who adopted her into her family. In the house of this lady, who kept a school, Mary was educated and trained as a teacher, which proved of great value to her in after life. Her religious impressions dated from early childhood. She remained