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THE EDUCATION OF CALVIN

I

CALVIN's collegiate¹ preparation was both prolonged and varied. He had no proper Alma Mater, inasmuch as he studied at several universities. It was on the benches of Paris that he first took his seat, enrolling in the Collège de la Marche at the age of fourteen. Calvin was chiefly indebted to Mathurin Cordier, professor of rhetoric, for the education he received there. Cordier was one of the pioneer leaders in the movement towards educational reform; indeed he has been called the true founder of secondary education. For the dryness and dreichness of the old teachers, with their monotonous and mechanical instruction, he substituted intelligent methods of tuition by means of lessons full of life and interest, special attention being given to the furtherance of classical studies on this plan.² Cordier was the implacable enemy of routine and cut-and-dry rules, recognizing that education meant more than the filling of the memory with facts and words and phrases, being indeed of little value unless it opened up the mind to the spirit distilled into a language and also developed the faculty of perception and the power of independent judgment. That view, a commonplace now, was a novelty then, and the merit of bringing it into the sphere of educational practice largely belongs to Cordier. But for the preparation Calvin received from him, it is doubtful if he would have profited as he did from the famous masters in the higher branches of learning under whom he afterwards studied. Cordier laid a sound foundation for his whole subsequent education. He found serious gaps in the school training Calvin had received and had practically to give him a fresh start. He taught him to think in Latin, while with equal care training him in the correct use of the French language. Calvin felt the liveliest gratitude all his life for what he owed to this remarkable man. Cordier sided with the Reformers, and found refuge ultimately in Geneva beside his old pupil, where he died at the age of 85, having been a professor for sixty years.

¹ Calvin received his schooling proper along with the son of a noble family, in whose house he resided during that time. Through this experience he early acquired a certain fineness and distinction of manners, in striking contrast to those of Luther, and was prepared to play his part worthily with princes and nobles. (*Doumergue*, I, 35.)

² A book of Latin exercises compiled by Cordier was in almost universal use in the parish schools of Scotland up till a century ago. (*Lindsay, Hist. Reform.* II, 93, note.)

From the Collège de la Marche Calvin passed to that of Montaigu, whose atmosphere, unlike that of the former, was strongly ecclesiastical. The celebrated Scotchman, John Major, was one of its professors. Rabelais, who had been a student there, gives it a sinister reputation for the manner of its life, "unsavoury, unhealthy, and inhumane". "If I were king at Paris", he declares, "the devil take me if I would not set fire to it and burn up principal and regents who tolerate such inhumanity before their eyes." The use of French was here strictly prohibited. The régime was hard and exacting, no provision being made for recreation. From four in the morning till eight at night in winter and nine in summer, the mind was kept on the strain without intermission, except for unappetizing and debilitating meals.¹ As a result, Calvin's health was undermined and the train laid of that complication of ailments which so seriously handicapped him in later life and brought him to a premature grave at the age of 55. His stay here provides one of these dramatic historical coincidences in which the mind takes a curious pleasure. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of that Jesuit Order which did so much to stem and reverse the work of the Reformation, entered the College about the time when Calvin left it, and these two arch-antagonists may have sat side by side on its benches.

Whatever other benefit Calvin received at this college, at least his mind was given that sharpness of edge and practised agility which made him the matchless controversialist of after days. Disputation was carried on there incessantly; in the programme of the day, a large part was given to argument and discussion: to these exercises an hour in the morning and another at night were consecrated, but the students far exceeded the provision made by the authorities. They disputed before dinner, during dinner, and after dinner, writes one of them in 1531; they disputed in public, in private, in every place and at all times. If argument did occasionally wax fast and furious over such problems as whether a led pig was held by the string or by the man, other more weighty themes were discussed as eagerly. As Barnard says, the habit of discussion, thus developed, was not a mere weapon for parade, but became one under

¹ Erasmus describes the horrid conditions of life at some of these colleges, the sleeping rooms filthy and swarming with fleas, the food unwholesome, rotten eggs and mouldy wine being often provided. It is not to be wondered at that scarcely any left without carrying the germ of some disease. Brutal whippings, too, were administered frequently.

whose blows the scholasticism, which forged it, at last itself succumbed. Calvin's success in his studies drew attention to him, his prodigious memory and the amazing ease with which he mastered his subjects putting him head and shoulders above all his fellows.

Having completed his course of grammar and philosophy (which included the science of the day), Calvin left Paris in 1527 and matriculated at Orleans. As the result of differences with the clergy of his town, his father had relinquished his original ecclesiastical ambitions for his son, and projected for him instead a legal career, "seeing that it is a better means of arriving at wealth and honours". For Calvin himself, the law had little attraction, but with filial obedience he submitted to his father's will and settled down with his habitual application to legal studies. Orleans boasted of one of the most distinguished lawyers of the day, one who enjoyed a European fame, Pierre de L'Estoile. Students came from all parts to hear him. Unlike Cordier, he was still in bondage to old ways and ideas, and, in spite of the stimulus of the judicial revolution set afoot by his rival Alciati, he lacked courage to break with the past. Towards Reform he was consistently hostile, and helped to draw up the decrees pronounced against heretics by the provincial council of Sens (1528). That however did not hinder Calvin from taking advantage of his rare talent and gratefully acknowledging his debt to him. The university itself as a whole was strongly tinged with sympathy for the new religious tendencies. According to a tradition, it was at Orleans that the assembly gathered in which the Protestants first resolved to celebrate their worship in public, and so it gained the name of "le boulevard de calvinisme". Unlike the College of Montaigu, the University of Orleans was characterized by a gaiety which constituted one of its chief attractions. The manners of its students manifested the emancipation from scholastic ideals and ways which it was amongst the first to assert. Calvin was not impervious to the influence of the place and proved himself capable of indulging in innocent frivolities.

At Orleans Calvin devoted himself specially to the prosecution of legal studies. It is evidence of the respect in which his abilities were held that he was elected "procureur de la nation de Picardie", the attorney who represented in case of need those who hailed from his native province of Picardy. In

that rôle he took a leading part in an action for the assertion of certain rights they claimed. Such an impression did he leave behind that Beza, who studied there some years after, found his memory still green, the recollection of his devotion to work and what was there regarded as his excessive sobriety of life being specially fresh. One of those who can do with scanty sleep, he was always awake at dawn, but remained in bed for some time, conning over what he had studied the night before. Such rapid progress did he make that he soon came to be regarded not as an ordinary scholar but as one of the ordinary Doctors conducting classes in the absence or illness of any of the Professors. His agility and resourcefulness in debate excited the admiration of all his masters. Specially were they surprised that such a sober-sided, one ordinarily so grave and composed, should exhibit such powers of sarcasm, badinage, and fancy as well as such a lofty eloquence. Indeed the Professors unanimously proposed to bestow upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws without examination, but Calvin declined to accept such a flattering distinction. Already he had gained the degree of Licentiate of Laws, and it may be that his native scrupulousness of conscience would not allow him to regard himself as yet worthy of the higher diploma. By his inordinate industry here he aggravated some of the bodily maladies which Montaigne had started.

II

From Orleans Calvin was drawn to Bourges by the fame of Alciati, an Italian jurisconsult, the great rival of L'Estoile. The course of instruction given by him was something very different from that which Calvin had received at Orleans. Alciati was the Cordier of law, repudiating dry-as-dust study, seeking to breathe the spirit of life into its abstractions, treating it as an organism whose origins and relationship of parts he discussed with the aid of philology and archæology. The interest thus infused into the subject was heightened by the elegant and chaste language of which he was master. But the principal influence exerted on Calvin at Bourges proceeded from an entirely different quarter. His heart had all along been in his humanist studies, and he found a teacher exactly to his mind in Melchior Wolmar, a scholar of German birth, a man "adorned with the rarest

virtue, whose firmness was inflexible, . . . and of a calm and equable temper", as Calvin described him when proposing him for a model to a newly appointed professor of law. Aware of his deficiencies in classical culture, he gave himself under Wolmar's direction to their correction with an enthusiasm which had never been inspired by law. A warm friendship sprang up between teacher and pupil, based not only on respect for each other's abilities but also on spiritual affinities and religious sympathies. What Cordier did for his Latin, Wolmar did for his Greek and in part for his Hebrew. It happened that during his stay here, his father died and that event determined him to abandon the study of jurisprudence prosecuted up till then only out of respect to his father's wishes. Henceforth he devoted himself exclusively to the humanist and theological studies that were most congenial to him.

Thanks to his paternal legacy, he now possessed independent means and with their aid he decided to return to Paris, the centre of the humanism of which he was a whole-hearted disciple. But the study of law, irksome and uncongenial though it had been and joyfully forsaken, had been of a value to him which only the future disclosed. Apart from the knowledge which it furnished, it had contributed to give him that force of dialectic and that keenness and quickness of judgment which stood him in such good stead in the incessant controversies of later days.

Francis I had established lectureships in languages in the capital, ambitious to make it the "hearthstone of humanism". Needless to say, those who held them were amongst the most eminent scholars of the day. They also proved to be amongst the most broad-minded, not seeking to dissimulate the sympathy they had with the revolutionary views abroad. Calvin took full advantage of their tuition, and had his mind not only furnished but profoundly influenced. The College of Fortet at Paris then contained a professor worthy of such a pupil in Pierre Danès, a man of encyclopædic learning, of whom it is said that "he embraced at the same time Greek and Latin philology, rhetoric, mathematics, philosophy, medicine and theology, having one of the most profound and powerful minds of that Renaissance which created so many universal geniuses." Under his guidance and inspiration, Calvin pursued his favourite classical studies, receiving at the same time tuition in Hebrew from Vatable. That there is truth in the assertion that Reuchlin,

Erasmus and Lefèvre, princes of humanism, were his models and inspirers rather than Luther and Zwingli, finds support from the nature of his first published volume issued at this period, the Commentary on the two books of Seneca's *De Clementia*. In this work the interest of the philologist is predominant, combined however with that of the political moralist. It embodies a vigorous plea for legislative reform and the correction of administrative disorders. There is nothing to regret in this continual absorption in classical studies. He was perfecting himself in that equipment which made him the authoritative Biblical Commentator of later days and also conduced to the amazing rapidity and volume of his work.

Calvin left Paris for a time, taking perhaps a second course at Orleans and paying a brief visit to his native town. He is back again in the capital within a year, and speedily finds himself embroiled in the affair of Nicolas Cop, the Rector of the University, with whom he had struck up a close friendship. At the Feast of all Saints, it fell to the Rector to pronounce an oration in *L'Église des Mathurins* before the university and the professorial staff. For some reason Cop invited Calvin to compose the speech for him and the result was an unexpected bombshell dropped into the camp of the Sorbonne, the College citadel of Catholic orthodoxy. Calvin had now at last fully wakened up to the condition of things in the religious world, and with a cold fury he made a violent attack on the prevalent abuses which revolted his soul, appealing to those present no longer to support "heresies which were an insult to God". In proportion to the distinguished nature of the occasion and the daring of the attack was the immensity of the scandal caused. The Parlement took up the matter resentfully, and both Cop and Calvin had to fly, the real culprit escaping through a window of his room with the aid of a rope made of his bedclothes.

In the obscure period that follows, Calvin found temporary asylum at Saintonge in Angoulême¹ with his friend Louis du Tillet, curé of Claire. There he passed several months engaged in researches for which he found rich material in a library of

¹ Here and at Poitiers, which he visited later on, he was brought into contact with Roman Catholicism at its worst. The behaviour of the bishops at Angoulême was a public scandal. Poitiers was a perfect museum of relics, and supplied Calvin with rich store of material for his treatise on them, in which he made such a crushing attack on the silly superstitions associated with their worship. This treatise had a wide vogue. Before 1600, it had passed through five or six editions in French, a still larger number in Latin, most of all in German. It was also translated into English and Dutch.

2,000-3,000 volumes and MSS. put at his disposal. His private studies were agreeably and profitably diversified by conferences at a neighbouring village with du Tillet, the prior of Bouteville, and the Abbot of Bassac, whose favourite study was Greek. We are told that Calvin, who took the lead, was accustomed to introduce the subject of discussion with the characteristic words, *Trouvons* (not *cherchons*) *la vérité*. Certainty, assurance, was ever his aim. His interests were now largely theological, and here he did the work of preparation for the writing of the Institutes. It is possible that in Angoulême also he met Rabelais, whose acquaintance he must already have made in Paris, seeing that they frequented the same circles. There was little real sympathy between the future Reformer and the mordant satirist who lashed out so pitilessly at the Roman Catholic Church. Rabelais proved to have little of the true Protestant in him, being more a literary freelance, an irresponsible sniper. Calvin denounced *Pantagruel* as an obscene work, recognizing behind its sarcasms and jests a profane and sacrilegious spirit hostile to all things high and holy. Rabelais was not slow to return the thrust, with the genial frankness of the times speaking of "the demoniacal Calvin, the impostor of Geneva".¹

From Angoulême, Calvin moved to Nérac where he spent some time with Lefèvre d'Étaples, the patriarch of humanists and pioneer of reform, receiving from him, along with much enrichment of mind and stimulus of soul, the parting advice (according to Florimel de Raymond) to take Melanchthon as his model. From one place to another he moved, always in virtue of character and capacity received as the natural leader of whatever company he fell among, storing and developing his mind, and exercising it upon the first theological treatise he published, the *Psychopannychia*. This was designed to refute the Anabaptist belief in the sleep of the soul between death and resurrection, and the eager and intense spirituality of the man glows through in the aversion he manifests to any cessation or disruption of fellowship with Christ. Back again in Paris, the folly of the Protestant placards against the mass, fixed up all over the city and on the very doors of the king's residence, precipitated

¹ *Lefranc, La Jeunesse de Calvin*, p. 119. "Rabelais was curé of Meudon, but was in strong sympathy with Protestantism, though disagreeing with its leaders on many doctrinal points, e.g. original sin (he preached the goodness of human nature) and predestination. He was one of the fathers of 'conditional immortality', holding that there were two sorts of souls, the intellectual and the rest—'the rest', who are not separated from matter, perish with it." (*Schneegans*, quoted by Doumergue, I, p. 612f.)

a second hasty flight. Under the pseudonym of Martianus Lucianus, he took up residence in Basel and plunged again deep into his studies. Here he perfected himself in Hebrew, probably putting himself under the tuition of Sebastian Münster, the best Hebraist of his day, himself a pupil of a converted Jew who was a celebrated Hebraist.¹ The people used to ask curiously about this young stranger wandering solitarily through the street, sunk in meditation. It was no fruitless thought to which Calvin was giving himself. Basel has the honour of being the birthplace of the *Christian Institutes*, which in their first form were completed here on August 23rd, 1535. "That is a capital date in the life of the Reformer," says Lefranc.² "The savant and the humanist have definitely given place to the apostle. With this book begins the great religious mission of the leader of the French Reformation."

III

Calvin's education was not yet complete, recognized as he already was in spite of his youth as a leader among leaders. Leaving Basel, he once more became a wanderer, and amongst other places found welcome shelter in Ferrara with the Duchess Renée, a daughter of Louis XII of France, who had constituted herself protectress of many refugee Protestants. In the stimulating atmosphere of her court, brought into contact with other high and emancipated intellects, Calvin's mind must have had its outlook enlarged, its grasp of principles strengthened, and its perception of the situation sharpened. Seeds that afterwards bore abundant fruit in the psalmody of the Reformed Church were dropped into it by his association with Clement Marot, the poet of the Reformation, a protégée of Renée's at this time.

It was in the course of his flittings from place to place during this period that his dramatic settlement in Geneva took place. His first ministry there, if it left him little time for anything but the organization of the church and the discharge of his pastoral duties, at least initiated him into the sphere of administration, providing him with instruction in its difficulties and with knowledge of the qualities requisite for success. But his education

¹ Doumergue, I, 504f.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 125.

for the position he was destined to occupy left still something to be desired. He lacked the experience and the wisdom only to be gained by work in a settled charge. Nothing better could have happened to him than the exile from Geneva which resulted in his becoming minister of the French congregation in Strassburg. While diligently preaching and faithfully prosecuting his pastoral work as well as delivering lectures on theology, he laid the coping stone of the edifice of his studies by receiving tuition from Martin Bucer and Capito, men of the highest erudition, whose friendship he had formed at Basel. Capito, author of a widely used Hebrew grammar, was the third eminent Hebraist by whom Calvin had been instructed, a fact which inspires confidence in the equipment of thorough scholarship which he brought to the exegesis and elucidation of the Old Testament. Perhaps no one exercised a more profound and lasting influence upon Calvin than Bucer.¹ He frequently expresses his admiration for his old teacher and acknowledges his deep indebtedness, often quoting him as a recognized authority in support of views he is putting forward. Indeed many of the developed views which are identified with the younger man and styled specifically Calvinistic are little more than echoes of those set forth by Bucer. Calvin's doctrinal system had certainly been thought out and crystallized in the first edition of the *Institutes*, but the mode of expression and the greater prominence given to certain of its doctrines which came to bulk so largely in the later editions may be confidently ascribed in no small degree to the influence of this last of his teachers. Spiritually as well as intellectually Calvin received the impress of Bucer, and whatever may be thought of the wholesomeness of the doctrinal influence, Bucer's spiritual influence was of the healthiest. Staunch to his convictions, firm without severity, more concerned to adorn the doctrine of Christ than to impose his views upon all and sundry, he symbolized the spirit of his life and the source of his inspiration in his last dying act, when, exile in England, he pointed his three fingers towards heaven and murmured, "He reigns and guides all."

¹ The leading Strassburg minister and theologian, who played a highly important part in the Reformation. He sought to mediate between and reconcile Lutheranism and Zwinglianism, but without success. Because of the refinements he indulged in, Bossuet called him "the great architect of subtleties". His refusal to sign the Interim proposed by the Emperor led to his accepting Archbishop Cranmer's invitation to England, where he became King's Professor of Divinity at Cambridge. He was a man of great learning and blameless life, bearing himself always with a singular modesty. He died in England in 1551, and was buried in St. Mary's, Cambridge, but his remains were exhumed during Mary's reign and burnt in the market place. (v. Prof. Lang's article in *The Evangelical Quarterly*, 1936.)

But Calvin's education again received its chief addition from the intercourse he had with many other eminent men gathered here. Strassburg provided an asylum for numbers of refugees from France, Germany and Switzerland. One of them in a letter to Calvin calls it "the Antioch of the Reformation", and the French exiles who enjoyed its safe hospitality "considered it a new Jerusalem". Here were to be met many men of light and leading. Many shades of Protestant opinion were represented, from Lutheranism to Brethrenism. Calvin industriously gleaned all the information and instruction they had to give, as we gather from the instance of the Bohemian Brethren, with whose history, ideas, rules, and the terms in which they expressed their faith he made himself familiar.

One somewhat surprising defect in Calvin's education may here be mentioned. Though in more or less constant touch with German-speaking people, either in Germany itself or in Switzerland, he never took the trouble to learn that language. His ignorance of it must have handicapped and embarrassed him considerably at times, and limited his usefulness and opportunities at conferences such as that which took place at Ratisbon during his stay at Strassburg, in which he was invited to co-operate with the German Protestant leaders, Melancthon, Bucer and others. One of the obstacles which prevented his marriage to a German young lady suggested for his consideration was that she knew no French while he knew no German. He had to get translations made of German volumes sent to him for perusal. "As I am unacquainted with the German language", he writes to an author, "I gave your book to a friend of mine to peruse and let me know the contents of it."¹ Bullinger, on the other hand, leader of the Zwinglians, knew as little French. We find Calvin apologizing for sending him a pamphlet in French, telling him that he will no doubt find translators who would explain the principal points to him.² This common unfamiliarity of scholars in those days with any foreign tongue is of course to be explained by the universal use of Latin as the medium of scholarly intercourse, not merely in writing but also in speech. In academic or ministerial circles, at any rate, in which Calvin almost exclusively moved when absent from Geneva, his mastery of the classical tongue would enable him

¹ Letter, August 1st, 1557.

² Letter, October 1st, 1560.

to carry on intercourse with perfect ease and fidelity to his thought.

IV

In the city of Strassburg, too, Calvin was given a useful insight into the working and worth of established civic institutions of a democratic cast. The tradesmen and artisans of the city were divided into corporations or guilds and every burgher had to become a member of one or other of them. Both duties and privileges were attached to membership. Ordinarily it seems that men of letters, pastors, advocates and such as had no trade, chose the corporation of the occupation of their fathers, or that in which they had most friends. Calvin joined himself to that of the tailors, perhaps because their headquarters were near his church. The entry in the records of the corporation runs, "Jean Calvin a acheté le droit de bourgeoisie et sert chez les tailleurs."¹ Every experience of this kind helped to prepare him for the important legislative work which Geneva subsequently entrusted to him.

His pastorate at Strassburg provided him with the necessary field for putting into testing operation his ideas of how congregational services and work should be carried on. He proved the importance of that regular visitation of the flock which afterwards he laid down as essential in the ecclesiastical ordinances of Geneva. He thought out and drew up the methods and forms of worship which seemed to be most conducive to edification. He compiled a Liturgy and became a pioneer in fostering congregational singing, providing both metrical Psalms and tunes for their musical rendering. The liturgy was not intended to be compulsory or for stated and regular use, though Calvin himself was fond of using stereotyped forms of prayer at certain points in the service. He gave every encouragement to extempore prayer, desiring only that it be informed, reverent, sincere, and scriptural. Perhaps most important of all, he gave the sermon the central and large place it has ever since held in Presbyterian churches, because he believed that in the mouth of a true preacher it embodied a message fresh from the heart of God.

Calvin could not have come to a better place to be educated in appreciation of the political conditions of the times. The situation of Strassburg was such as to command a comprehensive

¹ Doumergue, II, p. 350.

view of the march of events and to promote an understanding of the profound meaning of the struggle in which Christendom was so fiercely engaged. Calvin's mind was anything but provincial; like John Wesley, his parish was the world. Those qualities of statesmanship which were afterwards so brilliantly displayed and which would have made him a Foreign Secretary of no mean calibre, must have here received that stimulus and education which equipped them for the large and urgent demands subsequently laid upon them. Strassburg indeed might be said to have completed his education and preparation for the great work of his life.

Here too Calvin won his spurs in the field of controversy, in which he soon proved to be without an equal. It was a redoubtable antagonist with whom he crossed swords, no less than one of the most astute, learned, and estimable Cardinals of the Roman Church. Taking advantage of Calvin's absence from Geneva, Sadoletto addressed an open letter to the inhabitants of Geneva, cunningly contrived to flatter them back into the "one and only true fold". "He contrasted the unity, the inerrancy, the antiquity, and the universality of the Church of which they had been members, with the recent origin, the uncertain doctrine, and the distressingly fragmentary condition of Protestantism, and he closed by picturing the poor appearance which a Protestant as compared with a Catholic would make at the bar of Divine judgment."¹ A copy reached Calvin via Berne. He was disposed to ignore it, in spite of unmistakable, though veiled, depreciatory allusion to himself, but under pressure from Bucer, Capito, and others, he was persuaded to undertake an answer. The result was a literary achievement which he never excelled, written off in a few days and published within a month of his receipt of the copy.² Already he proves himself past-master in the art of controversy. There is a self-control and grave courtesy about the work which is sometimes lacking later. He uses polished weapons and his cuts are clean. He passes swiftly and effectively from defence to attack, evades no point of moment, and without difficulty demolishes all his adversary's

¹ Reyburn, p. 92.

² It is worthy of remark that the French of this work is reckoned to be "harsh and disagreeable"; Calvin was yet in the early stages of that gradual progress towards the mastery of that language which he afterwards attained. Kampschulte, the Roman Catholic biographer, reckons the work to be "one of the most brilliant that came from his pen. In the defence of his faith, Calvin develops a force of speech, a skill in discussion, a wealth of thought, which put in a very sad light the rhetoric, the sentimentality, the emptiness and febleness of the phrases of his opponent."

positions. The answer is notable for the evidence it affords of Calvin's consciousness of leadership. He feels the eyes of the world already upon him, and he does not think it irrelevant or gratuitous to offer an apologia of his own career and position. He professes no false modesty about the abilities he possessed. "If I had wished to consult my own interests", he declares, "I would never have left your party. I do not say the road to preferment would have been easy to me, but I certainly know not a few of my own age who have attained eminence, and there are some of them whom I could have equalled, if not outstripped. But I will say that I would have had no difficulty in reaching the summit of my desires, if these had been for a life of leisure and an honourable position." It is evident that Calvin had reached the stage when he was no longer the pupil or the follower, but the teacher and leader. The days of his preparation were ended, and when the call came soon to his life's work, the man was ready for it as few men have ever been.

We cannot do better than review the course of his education in the words of Doumergue.¹ "Calvin has seen Italy; he has seen Switzerland; he has seen Germany. Progressively, slowly but continually, the little scholar of the Capets at Noyon has become the pupil of Mat. Cordier at the College of La Marche, the student of the great universities, Orleans, Bourges, Paris, the lawyer, the humanist, the theologian, the guest of the court of Ferrara, the colleague of Farel at Geneva, the colleague of Reformers at Strassburg, the intimate friend of Melanchthon, the respected counsellor, desired by conferences, by diets, by princes . . . Vires acquirit eundo!"

V

Of no man could it be more truly said that he illustrated his own doctrines of predestination and providence.² Unconscious of his destiny, fighting against it when first summoned to his appointed task, he followed a course of study and passed through experiences than which nothing could better have prepared him for the future that awaited him. Master of Latin, Greek and Hebrew, his legal mind fully furnished with legal knowledge,

¹ Doumergue, II, p. 71.

² "Whilst my one great object was to live in seclusion without being known, God so led me about through different turnings and changes, that He never permitted me to rest in any place, until, in spite of my natural disposition, he brought me forth to public notice." (Pref. to Psalms.)

profoundly versed in Scripture, with the whole field of patristic literature at his command, saturated with the principles of the Reformation, aware of its conflicting cross-currents, instructed in the views of the many sects and parties to which the spirit of revolt had already given birth, with clear ideas as to pastoral duties and the qualifications requisite for fruitful congregational life, expert in the weapons of controversy, he returned to Geneva to stamp his name thereon indelibly and write it in large characters upon the face of the whole world.

A. MITCHELL HUNTER.

Edinburgh.