

Jews, to whom pertained the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, whose were the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came.¹⁾ From the Jews, also, the records of salvation were to come as by divine inspiration, and the Greek of the New Testament was to bear the stamp and imprint of the country where Jesus lived and died, and of that church and people of which New Testament Christianity is, not in form, but as to its spiritual nature, the true continuation, its adherents living by the same faith in the same Savior as Abraham, their father according to the faith.²⁾ And how this Palestinian Greek was eminently qualified to serve the purpose for which it was chosen, and in what manner it was further modified under divine inspiration, we shall endeavor to show in the continuation of this treatise.

A. G.

(To be continued.)

Historical Theology.

CALVIN AND THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION.

In a letter dated March 25, 1557, and directed to Martin Schalling of Ratisbon in reply to an epistle addressed to him by Schalling on February 4 of the same year, Calvin, while he openly and firmly rejects the Lutheran doctrine of the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist, makes the following statement: "*Nor do I repudiate the Augsburg Confession, which in time past I have willingly and cheerfully subscribed according as the author himself has interpreted it.*"³⁾

1) Rom. 9, 4. 5.

2) John 8, 56. Rom. 4, 3. Gal. 3, 6. 7. 29.

3) Nec vero Augustanam confessionem repudio, cui pridem volens ac libens subscripsi, sicuti eam autor ipse interpretatus est. Calvinii opera, ed. Baum, Cunitz, Reuss, vol. XVI, p. 430.

From these words it has been inferred that the Augsburg Confession which Calvin subscribed during his stay at Strassburg had been the *Variata*, in which the article on the Lord's Supper had been changed by Melancthon in a manner to permit its being variously understood or interpreted.¹⁾

That this erroneous assumption has obtained very widespread acceptance among the historians of to-day, until it has crept into our handbooks of ecclesiastical history and theological encyclopedias and is traditionally copied and re-copied and carried forward from one edition to another, is the more remarkable, as the comparison of a few dates must incontrovertibly show its incorrectness.

Calvin, having, after his banishment from Geneva in April 1538, spent several months at Basle, arrived at Strassburg early in September and preached his first sermon to the French refugees in that city on Sunday, the 8th of the month. The organization of a congregation of these people was effected under the auspices and with the sanction of the magistrates; the church of St. Nicholas was thrown open to the foreigners, and a small salary was set aside for their preacher. On May 1, 1539, the School-Board, as appears on their minutes, discussed the feasibility of employing Calvin, "who is said to be a learned and pious fellow and to read theology at times," as a lecturer in the Academy, and voted him a continuation of his allowance of 52 florins for his services as an assistant preacher. On the 12th of the same month he had also been employed under a salary to lecture in theology, and opened his public exposition of St. Paul to the Corinthians. Calvin was settling down in

1) Art. X in the original text of the Augsburg Confession reads: "De coena Domini docent, quod corpus et sanguis Domini vere adsint et distribuuntur vescentibus in coena Domini, et improbant secus docentes." In the *Variata* the article is: "De coena Domini docent, quod cum pane et vino vere exhibeantur corpus et sanguis Christi vescentibus in coena Domini."

Strassburg. A week after his appointment to the lectureship he was contemplating marriage, and in July he purchased the citizenship. It was customary for men of letters to enter their names in the rolls of some one of the regular trades, and Calvin entered his with the tailors, who had their tavern at the junction of the Muenstergasse and the Horsemarket, where in later times the Scheidecker mansion stood, which was destroyed during the siege of 1870.¹⁾

Thus Calvin had in 1539 become a citizen of Strassburg, then a Lutheran city and commonwealth, all of whose ministers and public teachers were held to subscribe the Augsburg Confession of 1530, and it was when he entered upon the performance of his official duties as a minister and public teacher that Calvin "willingly and cheerfully" signed the Augsburg Confession. It was the confession of 1530 which he thus embraced in 1539. When in October of that year Peter Caroli came to Strassburg to make his peace with the Lutherans, Calvin with Capito, Bucer, Hedio, Zell, Bedrotus, and Sturm, placed his signature under the protocol of the conference held with Caroli, and in this document he and the rest of the signers declare: "First, then, he (Caroli) acknowledges as orthodox the confession of *our* princes submitted to the Emperor at Augsburg;"²⁾ and again: "This *our* confession, submitted to the Emperor at the Diet of Augsburg, testifies."³⁾ Here Calvin expressly and over his own signature acknowledges the Confession of 1530 as *his* Confession. And this Con-

1) The records say: "Iohannes Caluinus hatt das Burgrecht kaufft vund dient zun schneidern. Dt. Zinstag den 29. Iulij Anno etc. 39. Heinrich von Dachstein Rentmeister. Io. Beyer prothonot." And: "Uff den 30. tag Iulij Anno 39 ist Iohannes Caluinus vff vnser Herren der statt Straszburg stall erschiinnen vund sich angeben lut der ordnung vund will dienen mit den schnydern."

2) Primum confessionem principum nostrorum Caesaris Augustae oblatam agnoscit orthodoxam. Calv. opp. X b, 375.

3) Testis est nostra confessio Caesaris in Comitibus Augustanis exhibita. Ibid. p. 392.

fession was not the *Variata*, simply because in 1539, when Calvin "willingly and cheerfully" subscribed the Augsburg Confession and affixed his signature to the 12 articles agreed upon in the conference with Caroli, the *Variata* was not yet in existence. The *Variata* first appeared in 1540, and it was, therefore, simply impossible for Calvin or any other man to sign it or refer to it in 1539.

While it is thus evident that Calvin at Strassburg acknowledged as his own confession the Augustana, not of 1540, but of 1530, we must not on that account consider his statement to Schalling as entirely without foundation in the facts of the case. His words *may*, but *must* not, be understood to say that he had signed the *Variata*, and since the statement, if it were intended to say that he had subscribed the altered, and not the unaltered, Confession, would stand as a downright falsehood, charity demands that we should put a different construction upon the passage and take the author to say that he subscribed the Confession, understanding it in the sense in which Melancthon himself then understood and *afterwards* interpreted it. It can not be said that this construction clears Calvin entirely of the charge of duplicity. The words of the Confession of 1530 are clear, and the tenth Article admits of but one understanding. The corresponding Article in the *Variata* is not an interpretation, but an alteration of the original, if interpretation is finding out or exhibiting "the true sense of any form of words."¹⁾ To mention but one point, simply suppressing the words, "et improbant secus docentes," from the X Article is certainly in no sense an interpretation and in every sense an alteration. And the context of the statement in the letter to Schalling shows that it is precisely the X Article which was in Calvin's mind when he made the statement. And Calvin had been and was then among the "*secus docentes.*" In the first edition of his

1) Lieber, Legal and Political Hermeneutics, 3d ed. p. 13.

Institutio, in 1536, he had said: "We thereby say that not the very substance of the body, or the true and natural body of Christ is given there, but all the blessings which Christ bestowed upon us in his body."¹) And when the author of the *Institutio* remembered how extensively and emphatically he had in the first edition of his work argued from the absence of Christ's body against the real presence of that body in the eucharist, he must have known that the substitution of *vere exhibeantur* for *vere adsint et distribuuntur* in the Augustana was not an interpretation, but an alteration. But Calvin had at the time when he acknowledged the Confession of 1530 as his own confession been sufficiently acquainted with Melancthon's changed attitude toward the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's supper to know that the Augustana of 1530 no longer expressed what Melancthon held concerning the eucharist. And still Melancthon was considered a Lutheran, and his evil example might serve as an object-lesson to Calvin and encourage him to pose as a Lutheran side by side with such Lutherans as Bucer and Capito, whom to this day reformed historians class among the "Fathers of the Reformed Church." And this all the more, since Calvin had after 1536 changed his language, if not his sense. In 1537, when the transactions of the Wittenberg conference of 1536 had been reported to the Swiss, a number of theologians, assembled at Berne, adopted a declaration, the closing words of which were: "This is none the less true since our Lord, having been raised up to heaven, has withdrawn from us the local presence of his body, which is by no means here required. For although we are, during our pilgrimage through this mortal life, not included or contained in the same place with him, the efficacy of his spirit is not hemmed in by any limits, so that he might not gather in one what is separated by space.

1) Quo scilicet significamus, non substantiam ipsam corporis, seu verum et naturale Christi corpus illic dari: sed omnia, quae in suo corpore nobis beneficia Christus praestitit. Opp. I, 123.

Hence we recognize his spirit to be the bond of our partaking of him, but so that the *substance* of the Lord's flesh and blood truly feeds us unto immortality. But this communion of his flesh and blood Christ offers and exhibits under the symbols of bread and wine in his holy supper to all who duly celebrate it according to his lawful ordinance.¹⁾ A copy of this declaration was submitted to Bucer and Capito and was sanctioned by them in a note over their signatures, stating: "This opinion of our most excellent brethren and fellow-priests G. Farel, John Calvin, and P. Viret, we do embrace as orthodox cet."²⁾ And in his reply to Sadolet, the Cardinal and bishop of Carpentras, who had in an epistle addressed to them exhorted the senate and people of Geneva to return to the Roman Church, Calvin in 1539 wrote: "Christ's presence, whereby we are ingrafted into him, we by no means exclude from the Supper. Neither do we, indeed, obscure it, guarding only against the assumption of local confinement, against the glorious body of Christ being dragged down into earthly elements, against the fiction of transsubstantiation of the bread into Christ to be thereupon adored in lieu of Christ."³⁾

1) Istis nihil repugnat, quod Dominus noster in coelum sublatus, localem corporis sui praesentiam nobis abstulit, quae hic minime exigitur. Nam utcumque nos in hac mortalitate peregrinantes in eodem loco cum ipso non includimur, aut continemur, nullis tamen finibus limitata est ejus spiritus efficacia, quin vere copulare et in unum colligere possit, quae locorum spatiis sunt disiuncta. Ergo spiritum eius vinculum nostrae cum ipso participationis agnoscimus, sed ita ut nos ille carnis et sanguinis Domini *substantia* vere ad immortalitatem pascat. Hanc autem carnis et sanguinis sui communionem Christus sub panis et vini symbolis in sacrosancta sua coena offert et exhibet omnibus qui eam rite celebrant iuxta legitimum eius institutum. Calvini opp. IX, 711.

2) Hanc sententiam optimorum fratrum et symmystarum nostrorum G. Farelli, Io. Calvini atque P. Vireti, ut orthodoxam amplectimur. *Ibid.* p. 711.

3) Praesentiam Christi, qua nos illi inseramur, a coena minime excludimus. Neque vero ipsam obscuramus, modo absit localis circumscriptio, modo ne gloriosum Christi corpus ad terrena elementa detrahatur, modo ne in Christum fingatur panis transsubstantiari, ut deinde pro Christo adoretur. Calv. opp. V, 400.

It was to this tract¹⁾ that Luther referred in his letter of Oct. 14, 1539, to Bucer, saying: "Give my respectful greetings to John Sturm and John Calvin, whose tracts I have read with singular pleasure."²⁾ Calvin highly appreciated this recognition, and in a letter to Farel of Nov. 20, 1539, remarked: "Crato, one of our printers, lately returned from Wittenberg, bringing a letter from Luther to Bucer in which the following was written: 'Give my respectful greetings to Sturm and Calvin, whose tracts I have read with singular pleasure.'"³⁾ The following words are in the autograph manuscript, but canceled: "And now consider what I there say on the eucharist. Think of Luther's magnanimity. One may without difficulty understand what cause those may have who so persistently refuse to unite with him."⁴⁾ Calvin's inclination toward Luther's doctrine in those days further appears from a letter addressed to a certain Andrew Zebedaeus, a strenuous Zwinglian, who was ill pleased with Bucer's endeavors toward an agreement with Luther, and whose strictures are met by Calvin in words as these: "There is no reason why you should be so much exasperated at Bucer's retractations. Having erred in his deliveries on the use of the sacraments, it was proper that he should retract that point. Oh that Zwingli, whose opinion in this matter was false and per-

1) Not Calvin's treatise on the Lord's Supper, which was not written before 1540, nor his *Institutio*, as has also been erroneously supposed.

2) *Et salutabis D. Johannem Sturmium et Ioh. Calvinum reverenter, quorum libellos cum singulari voluptate legi. . . . Die Calixti (Oct. 14.) 1539. De Wette V, p. 210.*

3) *Crato, unus ex calcographis nostris, Witemberga nuper rediit, qui literas attulit a Luthero ad Bucерum in quibus ita scriptum erat: Saluta mihi Sturmium et Calvinum reverenter, quorum libellos singulari voluptate legi. Calv. Opp. X, b, 432.*

4) *Iam reputa quid illic de eucharistia dicam. Cogita Lutheri ingenuitatem. Facile erit statuere quid causae habeant qui tam pertinaciter ab eo dissident. Ibid.*

nicious, had prevailed upon himself to do the same!"¹⁾ And in an epistle to one Richard Sylvius of the same year he says: "I would have you understand that I am not willing to take issue with those who hold the true communication of the Lord's body and blood in the Supper, but that I assiduously exhort all those with whom, being in good favor or authority, I can exert my influence, to do what is in their power toward its commendation and elucidation. Never, indeed, have I been pleased with the designs of those who, being too much bent upon overthrowing the superstition of the local presence, either extenuated and thus did away with the merit of the real presence, or by passing it over in silence in a manner effaced it from the minds of men. But there is a middle ground which you may occupy, appearing neither to drift away toward those prodigious rantings of the papists, nor dissembling the true manner of partaking of the flesh of Christ."²⁾

But withal, while he thus delivered himself during his abode in Germany, Calvin was not a Lutheran. In the second edition of his *Institutio*, which was published at Strassburg in 1539, the groundwork of his theology is essentially Zwinglian. Christ, he argues, is in heaven, and not on earth, and it is of the nature of a human body, to be

1) Buceri retractationibus non est ut tantopere succenseas. Quia in tradendo sacramentorum usu erraverat, iure eam partem retractavit. Atque utinam idem facere Zwinglius in animum induxisset, cuius et falsa et pernicioiosa fuit de hac re opinio. Opp. X, b, 345 sq.

2) Tibi testatum esse volo, me nolle cum iis litigare, qui veram corporis ac sanguinis Domini communicationem in coena statuunt: quin potius omnes, apud quos vel gratia vel auctoritate valeo, assidue hortor, ut in ea diserte commendanda et illustranda quanto possunt studio elaborarent. Neque vero mihi unquam placuit eorum consilium qui in evertenda localis praesentiae superstitione nimis occupati verae praesentiae virtutem vel elebabant extenuando, vel subticendo ex hominum memoria quodammodo delebant. Sed est aliquid medium quod ita tenere possis, ut neque videaris deflectere ad prodigiosa illa papistarum deliria, neque tamen dissimules veram participandae Christi carnis rationem. Opp. X, 445.

in one certain place.¹⁾ “And as we are with our eyes and hearts raised up into heaven, there to seek Christ in the glory of his kingdom, we are thus fed by his body under the symbol of the bread, and distinctly drink of his blood under the symbol of the wine, that we may enjoy him whole and entire.”²⁾ And in his treatise on the Lord’s Supper, written in French at Strassburg in 1540, he says: “We confess, then, with one mouth, that as we receive the Sacrament *in faith* according to the Lord’s ordinance, we are truly made partakers of the very substance of the body and blood of Christ. . . . On the one part, we should, in order to exclude all carnal fancies, *raise our hearts up to heaven*, not thinking that the Lord Jesus is so far debased as to be enclosed under any corruptible elements. On the other hand, so as not to detract from the efficacy of this holy mystery, we should think that this is done by the secret and miraculous power of God, and that the Spirit of God is the bond of this partaking, wherefor it is called spiritual.”³⁾ In the same tract the author strictures both Luther and Zwingli; he holds that Luther erred on his side, and Oecolampad and Zwingli, on theirs.⁴⁾ Of these he says

1) Ea vero est carnis conditio, ut uno certoque loco . . . constet. Opp. I, 1008.

2) Si oculis quæramus, ita sub panis symbolo pascemur ejus corpore, sub vini symbolo distincte ejus sanguine potabimur, ut demum toto ipso perfruanur. Opp. I, 1009.

3) Nous confessons doncq tous d’une bouche, que en recevant en Foy le Sacrement, selon l’ordonnance du Seigneur, nous sommes vrayment faitz participans de la propre substance du corps et du sang de Jesus Christ. . . . D’une part il nous fault, pour exclurre toutes phantasies charnelles, eslever les cueurs en hault au ciel, ne pensant pas que le Seigneur Jesus sois abaissé jusque là, de estre enclos soubz quelques elemens corruptibles. D’aulture part, pour ne point amoindrir l’efficace de ce saint mystere, il nous fault penser que cela se fait par la vertu secrete et miraculeuse de Dieu, et que l’Esprit de Dieu est le lien de ceste participation, pour laquelle cause elle est appellée spirituelle. Opp. V, 460.

4) Nous avois doncq en quoy Luther a failly de son costé, et en quoy Oecolampade et Zuingle ont failly du leur. Ibid. p. 459.

that while laying stress upon Christ's humanity and abode in heaven, "they had forgotten to show what presence of Jesus Christ is to be believed in the Supper, and what manner of communication of his body and his blood is there received." 1) And of Luther he continues: "So that Luther thought they would not leave any thing else than the mere signs, without their spiritual substance." 2) Now Luther *thought* no such thing. Luther *knew* that Zwingli, not by way of neglect or inadvertency, but purposely and intentionally, excluded from his eucharist every substance save that of the "mere signs" or symbols; and Calvin's "spiritual substance" was a fiction of his own, which he substituted for the true body and blood of Christ, really present and distributed in the Sacrament, a fiction whereby he *may* have deceived himself as he has deceived others into the illusion that his doctrine of the Lord's Supper, though not fully Lutheran, was in such a manner and measure akin to the Lutheran doctrine as to justify his conduct at Strassburg, especially his acknowledgment of the entire Augsburg Confession in 1539.

A. G.

1) Ils oubloient de monstrier quelle presence de Jesus Christ on doit croire en la Cene, et quelle communication de son corps et de son sang on y reçoit. *Ibid.* p. 458.

2) Tellement que Luther pensoit qu'ilz ne vousissent laisser autre chose que les signes nudz, sans leur substance spirituelle. *Ibid.*
