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Calvin

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JOHN CALVIN

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# THE RELATION OF CALVIN AND CALVINISM TO MISSIONS.

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In its halls of fame, the world enshrines chiefly its warriors, men whose glory is written in characters of blood. In striking contrast with the world's ideals, the grandest of all conquerors was the Prince of Peace, who triumphed by the shedding of His own blood, who rules the thought of men by the scepter of Truth, who wins the allegiance of His subjects by the power of Love. As a consequence, He alone will sway the scepter of universal dominion. To Him every knee shall bow, and every tongue make confession. The means by which He shall eventually be crowned Lord of All and "His glory spread from pole to pole," through the agency of the church is missions—the world-wide proclamation of the Gospel.

In keeping with its ideals are the heroes adjudged by the world worthy of monuments at its hands. I have stood by the equestrian statue of Charles II, near St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, while scarcely ten paces distant, the only tablet to John Knox was a flat stone in the pavement, marked "J. K.," over which rattle the wheels of traffic, and resounds the tread of the passer by. Geneva has erected monuments to Servetus and Rousseau, while even the reputed grave of

Calvin, marked by a modest stone, engraved "J. C.," is at best only a guess at the last resting-place of the great Reformer who sleeps in an unknown grave. Nevertheless, Scotland is the real monument of John Knox, and John Calvin's is every Republican Government of earth, the public school system of all nations and "The Reformed Churches throughout the world holding the Presbyterian System."

The personality and glory of Calvin suffer by any attempt at eulogy. His cotemporaries vie with each other in an effort to do him honor. Even his enemies, by the closest scrutiny, reveal no glaring defects of character. Ernest Renan, who unconsciously awards him apostolic succession by saying, "Paul begat Augustine, and Augustine begat John Calvin," exalts Calvin himself as "the most Christian man of his generation."

I. In discussing our appointed theme, "The Relation of Calvin and Calvinism to Missions," we shall invite attention first of all to Calvin and missions.

The times of Calvin were polemic, rather than evangelistic. It was the great Reformation period of Church History, which afforded not so much the opportunity of evangelistic crusades for the conversion of the world, as it required the heroic spirit of the martyr in witnessing to the truth of God, exemplifying the fundamental root-meaning of witness (martyr) in the original tongue. Not in the sense of sealing his faith with his blood, but in the higher significance of suffering mentally and spiritually for the faith, John Calvin was a martyr to the truth.

Banished from Geneva at one period, persecuted, his life in constant danger, and even when at the zenith of his power and influence, unloved by Geneva, but

merely tolerated for the sake of his presiding genius in affairs of statecraft, he suffered not the momentary pangs of a dying martyr, but the long-drawn-out agony of life-martyrdom; as widely removed from the other as anguish of soul exceeds the pangs of physical pain.

The spirit of evangelist and polemic alike is service and sacrifice. The missionary, subjecting himself to the hardships of heathenism, displays no higher type of sacrifice and engages in no nobler service than the soldier of the Cross, who stands for the defense of the citadel of truth. The latter may even demand a severer type of moral courage. Unquestionably the maintenance of the truth is as important to the life of the Church as the propagation of the faith in the extension of the Kingdom.

The choice of God for Calvin's sphere of service fell in the direction of polemics. The battle he waged, and the victory he won for the truth was more than the winning of a heathen continent for Christ. It affected the destiny of all nations, and stretches in its far-reaching consequences unto all the generations of the coming ages.

Still, at the same time, it was also permitted him to exhibit the missionary spirit of Christianity. Occupied by affairs of state, burdened with the responsibilities of civic righteousness, charged with the duty of theological instruction, yet he found occasion to undertake a campaign for the conversion of South America. In the *Christian Retrospect and Register*, Robert Baird, upon the authority of the "*Histoire Universelle*," gives the following account of the first mission undertaken by Protestantism:

"To Calvin, the Reformer of Geneva, belongs the credit of having first attempted, in the Protestant

churches, to excite interest in behalf of a heathen nation. An expedition was fitted out in the year 1555 by Villegagnon, a Knight of Malta, under the patronage of Henry II. of France, with the view of establishing a French colony in the New World. The approbation of the monarch was secured through the medium of the excellent Admiral De Coligny, whose favor Villegagnon propitiated by the secret understanding that the projected colony should protect the Reformed religion. Accordingly, Calvin was applied to, in order to obtain ministers to embark with the expedition.

“After consultation with the other pastors of Geneva, he sent two—Guillaume Chartier and Pierre Richier,—who were afterward joined by several others. Their object was, at once, to labor among the colonists and to evangelize the heathen aborigines. The expedition reached Fort Coligny, as it was named, on the Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, in March, 1556. On their arrival, the Genevan ministers proceeded to constitute a church, according to the forms and rites of the Reformed churches, and celebrated the Lord’s Supper. But Villegagnon soon betrayed his true character and disposition, and after cruelly maltreating the missionaries, forced them to re-embark and return to France.”

One can scarcely avoid speculation as to what “might have been,” if the unfortunate mission had not been thus prematurely wrecked. As Calvin’s name is associated with Augustine, the great theologian, might it not also have been linked with Augustine the missionary in the conversion of a continent? If the seeds of Protestant Christianity planted by him in South America had germinated, who can say if the glory of that misguided continent might not have shone with all the lustre of Protestant North America? But, alas!



his missionary venture served no useful purpose, except to exhibit his Christian spirit and benevolent attitude toward world-wide evangelization in obedience to the Great Commission.

Just as a premature blossom in the treacherous Indian summer, though nipped by the early frosts of winter, is nevertheless a prophecy of the coming spring; so Calvin's ill-timed evangelism was but the guarantee of the evangelistic spirit of Calvinism, when the springtime of favorable seasons should furnish opportunity to flower out in the glorious harvest of the world's conversion.

In the providence of God, his missionary zeal was confined to the task of laying foundations in practical home mission work, while foreign missions was rather the future outcome of his spirit and principles. Though the foundation of an edifice may not be as ornate and attractive as the superstructure, yet it must be even more substantial by reason of its supreme importance. The glory of Calvin in the sphere of missions is the glory of laying foundations; and he must also share the glory of the magnificent superstructure, supported by so substantial a basis. If some twentieth century Apostle Paul should convert South America to Protestantism, and place a new continent in the galaxy of evangelical Christianity, would that be more glorious than the transcendent work of Calvin, whose well-nigh inspired genius laid the foundations of North America's future greatness, and made it such a potent factor in the evangelization of the world as to justify the rallying cry, "As goes America, so goes the world"?

II. This opens the way for the consideration of the second part of our subject, "The Relation of Calvinism to Missions."

It might be pertinent to inquire first of all, What is Calvinism? The system of Calvinism, by taking the name of Calvin, introduces confusion into the thought of men; for Calvinism has a two-fold significance. From its theological side, it is a misnomer. The Five Points of Calvinism reach back to Augustine and to Paul. Renan was substantially right: "Paul begat Augustine, and Augustine begat John Calvin"; but a profounder thinker than Renan traces Calvinism back to Christ, and indeed to the prophets of Israel, and to the tents of the patriarchs. Consequently, in its theological aspect, Calvinism is older than Calvin; just as Christianity is older than Christ. In the sense that Calvin was a Christian, Christ himself was a Calvinist. It was Christ who affirmed, that "Many are called, but few are chosen"; and unhesitatingly declared that the divine providence affecting individuals and nations was determined and conditioned for "the elect's sake." No Calvinist ever uttered stronger Calvinism than One who said: "No man can come unto me except it were given unto him of my Father." "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." "And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Only on its scientific side, as a Life System, is Calvinism distinctly Calvinistic. The distinctive work of Calvin was to bequeath to the world as his legacy of thought that virile and logical system, which is the creator of the modern world; or, as the English historian Green expresses it: "It is in Calvinism that the modern world strikes its roots; for it was Calvinism that first revealed to the world the dignity and worth of man." The keynote of his religious philosophy was the individuality of the human soul in direct contact and immediate communion with God.

In the sweep of its mighty movement, it affected alike the individual soul, the ecclesiastical system, and the polity of the state. In religion, it swept aside priests and intermediaries with their confessionals and dispensaries of divine grace, and placed the soul in immediate and direct touch with God, in its own individual responsibility. The logical result in church government was to sweep aside bishops and prelates as obstacles and rubbish, and place the people, through their elective representatives, in charge of the church as sole rulers in the house of God.

James I. was astute enough to see the bearing upon civil government of Calvin's system, when he stated: "Presbytery agreeth as well with monarchy as God with the devil"; and we will not presume to take issue with so eminent authority as His Majesty, King James. History has since justified his foresight; for Calvinism has swept aside scepters and thrones, and substituted for autocratic monarchy popular republicanism in its varying forms.

Bancroft, the greatest American historian, was eminently justified in crowning John Calvin as the "father of America"; while D'Aubigne, the historian of the Reformation, supports his position by declaring: "Calvin was the founder of the greatest of republics. The Pilgrims, who left their country in the reign of James I., and, landing on the barren soil of New England, founded populous and mighty colonies, were his sons; and that American nation which we have seen growing so rapidly boasts as its father the humble Reformer on the shores of Lake Lemman."

Four considerations will be urged to justify our contention that Calvinism is the most potent agency in the evangelization of the world.

1. In its theological aspect, Calvinism, existing ages before Calvin, had its influence in the early days of Christianity on the life and activity of the church. In character it made men conspicuous in their differentiation from other classes. In heroism and endurance, it gave the world startling exhibitions of martyrdom in men who could kiss the chains binding them to the stake, and sing hallelujahs as their souls departed in chariots of flame. In zeal and activity, it enlisted the rank and file of the church in a religious enthusiasm, which went from house to house, and carried the Gospel "To the uttermost parts of the earth."

The Apostle Paul is the classical illustration of the spirit of the ancient church. Is it a mere coincidence that Paul, recognized as the profoundest exponent of Calvinism, is at the same time regarded next to the Master himself, as the type and model of all missionary effort? Opponents of Calvinism have not hesitated to charge Paul with the responsibility of giving the Calvinistic cast to the theological thought of the church. Yet this same Paul is always exalted as the greatest and grandest of all missionaries. How did these elements in his character stand related as cause and effect? Was it his thorough Calvinism that created his intense missionary fervor, or vice versa? The question answers itself.

The Calvinism of the first century was as unquestionable as that of Paul himself, who gave cast to the thinking of the first century. Sacred history, ere closing, itself gives significant glimpses of the missionary spirit of the church while under the dominating influence of Calvinism. That was an exquisite touch which records in the language of the Church's enemies, the estimate of apostolic success, complaining: "These

that have turned the world upside down have come hither also." It was not an ardent admirer of Paul who testified to his credit, "That not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people" from idolatry. Paul himself gives a suggestive hint of the missionary propaganda of the age by asserting, that they had preached the Gospel "to every creature which is under heaven." (Col. i. 23.)

The remarkable characteristic of the evangelism of ancient Christianity was its propaganda in the face of persecution, and even at the cost of martyrdom. The twentieth century Christianity, "holding the wealth of the world in its hands," propagates the faith by putting a conservative percentage of its wealth into the enterprise of evangelizing the world. The first century Christianity, conspicuous for its poverty, put its soul into the task, and poured its blood more freely than to-day the Church, rolling in wealth, pours its money. It was proverbial: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

In the spirit of Paul, the church of that Calvinistic age "Counted not its life dear unto itself." James Anthony Froude could not be accused of partiality to Calvinism, and yet his statement remains unchallenged that Calvinism, as long as it was the creed of the Church, made the grandest heroes of men, and gives as illustrations, William the Silent, Luther, Knox, Andrew Melville, the Regent Murray, Coligny, Cromwell, Milton and Bunyan. The Calvinism which made heroes and martyrs of men gave also through them such an exhibition of missionary zeal and successful propagation of the Gospel in those early days of Christianity as has never since been paralleled in the history of the world.

2. In its scientific aspect as a Life System, the influence of Calvinism on governments and society has largely produced our modern Christian civilization, whose chief glory is not the marvelous material development, nor the dazzling scientific achievements of the age, but the revival of a missionary zeal, which seeks to rival the apostolic triumphs of Calvinistic Christianity.

Bartholdi's Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World is essentially a false conception in point of fact; but nearly always the false has some basis in truth. Calvin moulded the thought of the Renaissance, which in the political hemisphere of the state manifested itself in the largest freedom of life and action through the operation of modern republicanism. This liberty, thus the product of Calvinistic thought and ideals, reaching its highest development in republican government, has in removing the bonds and shackles by which the Church has been held in more or less restraint, furnished the opportunity for the Gospel of Christ to fulfil its divine mission in enlightening the world. It was not liberty itself, but the Gospel which was given its liberty, that is enlightening the world.

The torch lighted by John Calvin gave to the world the twin-product of republicanism in the state and the free Christian commonwealth in the Church. On its political side, it found expression in the republicanism of Geneva, Switzerland, Holland, Great Britain and America, and in its ever-widening influence is being felt to-day even in autocratic Russia and despotic Turkey. On its ecclesiastical side, it reaches its full stature in "the Reformed Churches throughout the world holding the Presbyterian System," which, however, in its indirect influence modifies alike the inde-

pendency of Congregationalism and the despotism of Prelacy, attracting each to itself as the golden mean.

It was Calvinism which lifted Geneva from the depths of civic and moral degradation, and placed it, as a glittering gem of civil and religious liberty, on the brow of Europe, the first-fruits of a new philosophy destined to revolutionize society and human governments. It was Calvinism which, through the instrumentality of John Knox, awakened Scotland to a higher life; which hurled the stool of Jennie Geddes at tyrannical encroachments upon religious liberty, and made the sturdy Scotch character the staunchest and grandest national life the world has ever produced. It was Calvinism which took off the head of Charles I. and gave England in the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell the first full breath of constitutional liberty, and at the same time furnished that larger protectorate to struggling Protestantism throughout Europe, making that era the brightest chapter in English history. It was Calvinism which waged successfully under William the Silent, the unequal contest of Holland with Spain, and created the Dutch Republic, which eventually hurled the Stuarts from the throne of England, and guaranteed constitutional and religious liberty to the English-speaking world. It was Calvinism which founded in America the greatest of Republics, and made it the Liberator of Cuba and the Philippines, and the protector of the weaker members in the family of nations. It is Calvinism which, through the agency of Robert College on the Bosphorus and Presbyterian missions in the East, is leavening the Ottoman Empire, and giving even the Turk a taste of constitutional liberty.

In the historic conflict of the ages, Calvinism was vanquished in France, in the defeat of the Huguenots; and as a consequence France, the fatherland of John Calvin, descended almost to the level of Spain. If Spain had triumphed in Holland, in all human probability Calvinism would have perished from the earth, and Holland would also have joined France and Spain in a trio of degenerate nations. In that case, William of Orange would never have turned the scale against the Stuarts in Britain, and North America would read its fate to-day in the stagnation of South America. So that the glory of North America is due chiefly to the triumph of Calvinism, justifying Ranke, the historian, in speaking of Calvin as "virtual founder of America."

Here the question arises, What bearing has all this on Missions? "Much every way," chiefly because Calvinism created the modern Anglo-Saxon world, and the Anglo-Saxon is the greatest evangelistic force of Christendom. The Anglo-Saxon has created an empire of missions—world-wide, on whose dominion the sun never sets. The statistics of 1908 reveal a total gift to foreign missions last year of \$22,846,465, and of this amount, the Anglo-Saxon contingent contributed \$19,266,880, nearly 90 per cent., leaving only \$3,578,588 for the remainder of the world. If this were not demonstration sufficient of the influence of Calvinism, as an evangelizing force, it could also be further demonstrated by statistics that the Calvinistic churches lead the world in their gifts to missions.

3. The essential principles of Calvinism would lead us *a priori* to infer that it would furnish the strongest incentives to successful missionary effort. Nothing is more reassuring and better calculated to arouse the supremest effort for the advancement of the Kingdom



than a profound belief in the divine sovereignty of God, who "sits on no precarious throne" and sends his servants on no uncertain mission. In human governments, that army will struggle most valiantly which has implicit confidence in the competency of the government to direct its affairs, and its ability to execute its purposes. Calvinism enthrones God in his sovereign omnipotence, controlling alike the worlds which revolve in their orbits and the mote which floats in the sunbeam, directing all the events of the universe according to a divinely appointed plan, arranged in the councils of eternity.

Is it any wonder that His subjects, persuaded that they are executing the designs of God himself, toil in the strength born of the conviction that though their immediate designs may fail, and they themselves perish, yet God himself lives and reigns, and will in His own sovereign wisdom and appointed time bring to pass His purposes of grace? Missions may challenge their faith, and make unrelenting draughts on their resources and activities; but what matters it, if it be the sovereign purpose of God?

Distrust of self would ordinarily weaken and paralyze all effort, were it not for the fact that such distrust flings the soul back upon God in its weakness, and by an abiding faith in Him, obtains a strength that is invincible. "When I am weak, then am I strong," is the paradox of Calvinism. Will the impulsive, spasmodic zeal, springing from self-confidence and reliance on human means, stand the strain of long-continued effort so well as one who makes God his confidence, and "endures as seeing Him who is invisible"? The firm conviction, that we rest not on human but divine efficiency, gives stability to our vacillating efforts, and

makes us strong by the mighty hands of the God of Jacob. These "shall mount up on wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint," in the Herculean task of bringing the world to Christ.

Not simply viewed from the standpoint of belief in the divine sovereignty, does Calvinism thus evince its superiority as a potent influence in world-wide evangelization, but it is equally evident from the human standpoint of the perseverance of the saints. If the stereotyped objection to Calvinism were true, that it is cold, calculating, lacking in fervor, it would be more than counterbalanced by the steady, persistent, unflinching, perseverance of an undaunted faith, which holds on the even tenor of its way in the face of opposition, despite difficulties and discouragements, till it wrings victory out of defeat. The fevered brain may produce momentarily an unnatural strength, born of delirium; but will it endure the trials and press on in the race with the steady gait of one in the full possession of robust health?

Calvinism finds its analogy, not in the whirlwind of impetuosity, not in the fire of religious fanaticism, nor in the earthquake of spasmodic upheavals, but in the "still small voice" that speaks conviction in the silent depths of the soul. If, in the sphere of missions, failure and disaster overtake his best efforts, and success be long delayed, the Calvinist undeterred sees in the analogy of nature how slowly and silently she elaborates the best and grandest results of her mighty plan by gradual processes and takes comfort in the thought, that in the Kingdom of Grace, God works by the same methods and executes His largest purposes by the steady, irresistible perseverance of the saints, re-

remembering that though "the Kingdom of God cometh not with observation," it comes none the less surely.

Tested by practical results, will an appeal to the history of missions justify this contention, that the principles of Calvinism pre-eminently qualify its adherents for leadership in evangelizing the world?

Among the Reformers, who led the way of Protestantism in the first missionary venture, but the Calvinists of Geneva? Who penetrated first the trackless forests of the New World, carrying the Gospel to its untamed savages, but Brainerd and Eliot? Who led the modern missionary movement, which is awakening all Christendom to the task of making Christ known throughout the wide world? If the roll were called of the Calvinists who have led the advancing hosts of the Church, in its attack on heathenism, it would include well-nigh all the great names of history conspicuous for missionary enthusiasm and achievement. Time would fail to enumerate William Carey, Henry Martyn, David Livingstone, Robert Moffatt, Alexander Duff, Adoniram Judson, Robert Morrison, John G. Paton, John Leighton Wilson, William H. Sheppard, and a vast host of others, who "through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight", etc.

According to Dr. Moses D. Hoge, "the first missionary since the Reformation sent forth by any church in its corporate capacity, and ordained to labor in the foreign field, was Alexander Duff (commissioned by the Presbyterian Church of Scotland), whose name stands as a synonym of whatever is heroic, self-sacrificing and saintly in missionary character and achievement."

At the meeting of the Alliance in Glasgow, Prof. Lindsay informed that august and venerable body, representing the larger part of the Calvinistic forces of the world, that, "The Presbyterian churches do more than a fourth of the whole mission work among the heathen that is done by all the Protestant churches together," and mentioning three of the greatest denominations, asserted that, "The Presbyterian Church is doing more in the foreign field than all of them combined."

At the same meeting of the Presbyterian Alliance, representatives of the Eastern Section of the Ecumenical Methodist Conference appeared and made a most cordial and pleasing address, expressing their fraternal good will and appreciation of our principles and work in the following complimentary language:

"Taking the world over, Presbyterianism in the future must be looked to as one of the greatest and most beneficent forces for the conversion and evangelization of the generations of mankind on every continent. We do unfeignedly rejoice as we behold your goodly array of churches, giving the noblest of their sons, and consecrating their vast resources of learning and wealth to the greatest, the mightiest of all enterprises, the conversion of the world to Christ," and the address closes with the prayer that our "cherished ideal of 'a free church in a free state' shall in every nation under heaven be an accomplished fact, and every citizen be taught that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

Is not the wisdom of Calvinism justified by the missionary achievements of its children?

4. In conclusion, it is Calvinism which furnishes the only guarantee of the ultimate triumph of the

Gospel in extending the sceptre of Christ, till "The kingdoms of the world shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." Others may indulge a well-grounded hope based upon an abiding faith; but Calvinism plants itself on "The sure word of prophesy," and maintains that the conversion of the world is one of "The eternal decrees of God," revealed as "Foreordained for his own glory," and must therefore surely "come to pass." It has been prophesied, "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father," and it could not be prophesied unless it had been predestinated; for contingent and doubtful events cannot be prophesied. Prophecy is always and everywhere based on predestination, and not upon mere fore-knowledge; for prophecy is fore-knowledge revealed, which presupposes the event, as a fixed and unchangeable decree.

The Son of God, in the 2nd Psalm, encourages himself in the predestined triumph of His Kingdom: "I will declare the decree, the Lord said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." Let the heathen rage, and the world in arms combine; let the evil powers of the Kingdom of Darkness assault the Citadel of Faith; let all worlds join in a universal rebellion against the Lord of Glory; nevertheless the eternal decree shall stand; for "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." The Lord God Omnipotent proclaims from His eternal throne in the heavens: "Yet have I set my King on my holy hill of Zion," and that King, though still uncrowned and at the moment in

the weakness of the flesh, even with the cross confronting Him, could yet declare, "Upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

One of the ablest bishops of America recently published, over his own signature, in the daily press, this statement: "The world will either be all pagan or all Christian; I believe it will be all Christian." A thorough Calvinist could not have consistently indicted that statement. Planting himself on the sure word of Prophecy, which grounds itself in predestination, he would have announced: "I know whom I have believed." "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."

No one will dispute the assertion of the author of "The Creed of Presbyterians," "That friends and foes alike award to the Presbyterian Church as its wreath of thorns, or its diadem of glory, the distinction of being the world's historic and leading representative of the creed of Calvinism." Is that the explanation also of the fact that in missions, "It has always led the van of the advancing hosts of God?"

After quotations showing that, "The largest Protestant family in the world is the Presbyterian," in eloquent language Dr. Smith gives a grand summary of her missionary achievements: "More catholic and imposing even than the Presbyterian numbers is the world-wide range of the Presbyterian empire. While the adherents of other Protestant communions are more or less massed in single countries, the Lutherans in Germany, the Episcopalians in England, the Methodists and Baptists in the United States, the line of the Presbyterian Church is gone out through all the earth. She thrives this hour in more continents, among

a greater number of nations, and peoples, and languages, than any other evangelical church in the world. As her witnesses in Continental Europe, she has the historic Presbyterian Reformed Churches of Austria, Bohemia, Galacia, Moravia, Hungary, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Greece, the Netherlands, of Russia, and Switzerland, and Spain. She is rooted and fruitful in Africa, in Australia, in Asia, in Great Britain, in North America, in South America, in the West Indies, in New Zealand, in Melanesia,—the people of this faith and order gird the earth. Presbyterianism possesses a power of adaptation unparalleled by any other system. It holds in steadfast array a great part of the intelligence and moral vigor of the Christian world, and from its abounding spiritual life are going forth the mighty forces of Christian missions into all the heathen world.”

That was not a vain-glorious boast of the American Presbyterian Church in its report to the Alliance of Reformed Churches: “The missionary heralds of our Pan-American Presbyterianism alone, which is but a branch of the catholic Presbyterian Church, are scattered from British Columbia to Ucatan; they are in Central America, and in Columbia; Venezuela, British Guiana, and Brazil; they on the African Coast, from Liberia to the Ogowe, and in the heart of the great Congo Basin; they are strong in Syria and Persia, and side by side in India our separate columns are advancing under one Captain; we are proclaiming glad tidings in Siam and Laos, in Hainan and the Philippines, in Cuba and Formosa; we have long since partitioned China, not for political spoil, but for her own salvation; our united forces are teaching the Hermit Nation that, as no man, so no nation, liveth to itself; we have

proclaimed to the Sunrise Kingdom the Sun of Righteousness, whose rising shall know no setting. Our strategic points are taken, our stations occupied, our watch towers girdle the globe."

This is the 400th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin—scholar, author, teacher, philosopher, statesman, theologian, reformer, and, according to Ernest Renan, "the most Christian man of his generation." No man has been more misunderstood, misrepresented, villified. What is to be the outcome of this worldwide, quadricentennial celebration? Will the thought of mankind re-examine his teaching and spirit, and yet accord him substantial though tardy justice? Will he at last come into his own? Will the world of thought revivify a system, which turned the current of centuries out of its channel, destroyed despotism, broke the yoke of oppression, created modern civilization, and rescued the Church from dead forms and ushered in the largest spiritual life?

Is there to be a revival of Calvinism under the life-giving breath of the Spirit of God? Will the Calvinism of the first century, which triumphed over paganism backed by the power of the Roman Empire, and "turned the world upside down," be paralleled in a twentieth century evangelism rivaling apostolic times? Will the revival of Calvinism be the signal for the ultimate triumph of the Gospel? Will the renewal of its youth and virile power manifest itself in the dream of present-day Christianity, "The evangelization of the world in this generation"?

May the glad shout of a redeemed world speedily resound to the embattlements of heaven: "Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth"; and may heaven and earth unite in "bringing forth the royal diadem to crown Him Lord of All." Amen and Amen.