

CALVIN JEAN

LETTERS OF
JOHN CALVIN,
VOLUME II

Jean Calvin
Letters of John Calvin, Volume II

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*Letters of John Calvin, Volume II / Compiled from the Original Manuscripts
and Edited with Historical Notes:*

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Jules Bonnet
Letters of John Calvin,
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CXLIV. – To Viret. ¹

Unpopularity of Calvin – various advices

[Geneva, September 1545.]

When a crowd of the godly had come hither, and I heard

¹ The letters of the Cantons to the King, in favour of the Vaudois of Provence, only served to irritate that monarch. He passionately replied, – "The Vaudois have but received the just punishment of their crimes. Besides, the Swiss have no more right to busy themselves with what passes in my kingdom, than I have to make inquiry into what they do at home." – *Histoire de la Confédération Suisse*, vol. xi. p. 289. The failure of those proceedings redounded to the discredit of Calvin with the people, as he had been the instigator of them. His adversaries went about reiterating everywhere that he had compromised the most valued interests of the Cantons, by drawing upon them the enmity of the King of France.

some things which it was of great consequence you should know, I wished two of them at once to set out for you. You will understand that Satan seeks by every sort of artful contrivance to keep all men from thinking of succouring these people, and to give a keener edge to the ferocity of the King and courtiers, which is already more than sufficiently whetted against them. The Swiss also are uncommonly severe upon me, not only the pensionaries, but all those who have no other wisdom than that of Epicurus, because, by my importunity, I have drawn down upon their nation the hatred of the King. But may there be nothing of such moment as shall retard us in the discharge of our duty beyond what cannot be avoided.

Charles the schoolmaster, on whose account Sebastian abused me, has deserted his post, induced by what prospect I know not. We have appointed Francis his successor; but as he had received one month's payment out of the salary of your school, it seemed the more honourable course that he should previously request permission and his discharge from the Bernese Council, a matter in which, as I trust, there will be no difficulty. A maternal uncle also of our colleague Peter sought a recommendation [for him,] which he brings with him. If you think it called for, you will likewise lend the aid of your suffrage. We have always found him an excellent and ingenuous man, peaceable and modest. He is said, for instance, to have laboured faithfully, and with success, in the vineyard of the Lord in Provence.

Adieu; may the Lord be ever present with you. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

CXLV. – To Monsieur de Falais. ²

Exhortation to glorify God amid poverty and persecution

[September 1545.]

Monsieur, – Although I do not know the state of mind or body in which you are at present, nevertheless, I have good confidence in God that, whether in health or sickness, he gives you strength to overcome all the annoyance you may have to encounter. For you are no novice in the fight, seeing that for a long time past the good Lord has begun to prepare you for it; and nothing has happened to you which you had not looked for beforehand. But it is time to show in reality that when you have set yourself frankly to follow Jesus Christ, you have not done so without being resolved to hold fellowship with him at the cross, since he has done us that honour to be crucified in us, to glorify us with

² Letter without date, written at the same time as the following, (September 1545.) Summoned in the name of the Emperor to leave Strasbourg and return to Brabant, M. de Falais had not obeyed that command. This refusal, in stirring up the imperial displeasure against him, had exposed him, without defence, to the interested denunciations of his enemies. The butt of most calumnious accusations, he saw his character misunderstood, his name outraged, his property put under sequestration, while he pined away himself – a prey to sickness and discouragement.

himself. And there is no doubt, even at the time when you were in your own mansion, and in the peaceable enjoyment of your property, you would have had the courage to quit everything had it so pleased him, and that you were of the number of those who *use the things of this world as not abusing them*, (1 Cor. vii. 31.) But, forasmuch as it is very reasonable that one should be taught by experience to discern what our affection is most set upon, you are to consider that it has been our Lord's will to give you to many others for an example, and, by this means, to glorify his name in you.

On the other hand, we know not what it is to part with everything for the love of him, until he has brought us to the test. True it is, that he who has taken off his affection from the goods of this world has already sold all, and has made himself poor, so far as depends upon himself; but the fruit and the proof of this spiritual poverty are, patiently to endure the loss of worldly goods, and without any regret, when it pleases our heavenly Father that we should be despoiled of them. I do not set these things before you as to one who is ignorant, or who has need of lengthy remonstrances, but for the love that I bear you, of which God is my witness. I take comfort along with you, as I also suffer in your person.

The time then is arrived when you must manifest that you reckon all things no more than dung, that you may reach forward to Him who not only has bestowed on you all his benefits, but also himself. And since God has permitted that you should be

disburdened of a part of your worldly goods, you are to consider that he has clearly perceived that, for the present, they would prove a useless fardel for you. I say a part, albeit that, as it were, the whole has been snatched away from you, yet, so that there remains, as I hope, an abundance for your use. These whirlpools, however, which engulf the whole world, have daily greater want than those whose substance they have swallowed down.

In short, you have not been lessened one whit, seeing that our Lord, while teaching you that your inheritance is in heaven, has made provision for what might be useful for the life of the body, by bestowing contentment upon you, and, as regards property, more than was needful to make you contented. If the whole should be taken away from you, there would yet remain the consolation to which we must chiefly betake ourselves, namely, to yield ourselves up entirely. It is certain, that having the Son of God, we suffer no injury in being deprived of all else: for thus highly ought we indeed to prize him. But further, since this kind Saviour has so benignly upheld you, that while calling you to the fellowship of his cross, he has provided for your worldly comfort, it is quite fitting that you submit yourself to his good pleasure, and, besides, rejoice that in being minished, so far as the world is concerned, you are thereby so much the more exalted before him and his angels. For howsoever the world strives, by all means, to bury Jesus Christ in ignominy, his burial cannot be otherwise than glorious, not only in himself, but also in his members. Let us therefore endure personal humiliation, as shall seem good to him.

But my letters would never come to an end were I to follow out the drift of this discourse. Therefore, Monseigneur, after having humbly commended me to your kind favour, I pray our good Lord that he would so work in you now more powerfully than ever, to make you despise all that is in the world, and to make you breathe upwards direct to him with your whole heart, without being turned aside by anything whatsoever, making you taste what is the worth of the hope which he reserves for us in heaven; and that it may please him to lighten your burden as regards the body, in order that you may be all the better disposed, well to meditate upon the favours he has bestowed upon you, and to take delight in them, acknowledging the love which he has shewn you. My wife, who is sick in bed, begs also to be humbly commended to your kind remembrance. This bearer, who is of the better sort, and of the stamp such as you require, will inform you more at large concerning our state.

Your humble brother, servant, and assured friend,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CXLVI. – To Madame de Falais

**Congratulations on the constancy manifested
by her in the midst of trials – salutations
from the suffering Idelette de Bure**

From Geneva, this 18th September [1545.]

Madame, – I have not leisure to write at such length as I willingly would, on account of the state in which we are. The present letter shall be solely to praise our good Lord for the trust which he has bestowed on you, enlarging your heart in the midst of anxieties, by which it might have been tried, without your having his comfort from on high. Whatsoever may happen, if we have the patience to hearken to our Saviour, he will always give us wherewithal to rejoice our spirits, and will make us taste and feel, in a lively way, that it is not in vain that he has promised to make us unconquerable in tribulations. Now, then, learn in reality what that beautiful promise is worth, that we are indeed happy, when all the world shall speak ill of us, and shall hate us, and shall persecute us for his name's sake. Therefore it is, that he has prepared you, long before exposing you to danger. To this truth it is that you must now recur, that you may acquiesce in it; and, indeed, he is actually leading you thither by the hand.

Wherefore are we not together, to provoke Satan, by meditating upon the things which may well cause us spiritual rejoicing, and give us matter for glorying more than ever, even when we are utterly discomfited according to the world's estimation? But I am aware that you have no need of my fellowship in that; and besides, I say so, more to content myself than because of your necessity. Above all, understand that now the hour is come when you must shew what a helpmeet you are to Monseigneur your husband, in such a sort that he may always have occasion to bless God, as he has had hitherto, for having provided him with such a support. I say this, because I consider that it is the principal one that God has left him as regards the creature, without having deprived him of all. I see clearly, though absent, by what zeal you are urged forward to acquit yourself of duty, and what trouble you take to employ yourself therein. For which reason, what I now speak is not so much by way of exhortation as, while congratulating, to uphold you in that good courage which God has given.

I address to your care some reply which I have made to the sister of Monseigneur, who is at Mons, to a communication which she sent lately to the wife of Saint-André. If it seem good to you, you can cause forward it to her, with this which I send to the sister of Monsieur David. I submit the whole to your good discretion.

To conclude, Madame and very honoured sister, after having affectionately commended me to your kind favour, and having

also presented to you the humble commendations of my wife, who lies sick in bed, I entreat our good Lord to fill you with all grace, daily to increase his glory in you, and to triumph in your constancy, in order that finally we may be also partakers of his glory which he has promised us.

Your servant and humble brother,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CXLVII. – To Monsieur de Falais. ³

Vanity of trust reposed in the princes of this world – confidence in God

Monseigneur, – I hope that, when these present shall reach you, they will find you, by the favour of our kind Lord, in such state of mind and bodily health as we desire, and likewise Madame your wife. The news, however, which we have had of the sickness of both has grieved us, and will do so until we receive other which may gladden us. Besides, there is reason indeed that we should live and that we should die to Him who has purchased, in order to be every way glorified in us, and that we shew practically that we are his, submitting ourselves entirely to him in true obedience, which is not in our power to do without resigning and giving up our persons to him, so that he dispose of them as shall seem good to himself. If it please him to prolong life, we must prepare to see much poverty in the Christian Church. We see the dispersion and complete disorder there is in it at present. Hope of amendment there appears none on the side of the world; for to befool one's-self in relying upon princes,

³ This letter, without date, seems to have been written at the same epoch, and under the same circumstances as the two preceding letters.

that is labour lost. They have, besides, so many hindrances, that they have not leisure to think about what ought to be the chief consideration of all. In short, they are entirely taken up with their civil state, for the sake of which they will persecute Jesus Christ, thinking that there is no other method of maintaining it. It will be nothing new, however, if, though only for shame's sake, they should make a pretence of applying a remedy for such horrible confusion, on account of which both heaven and earth cry out. Wherefore, it only remains for us to pray God that it may please him to strengthen us with true constancy in the midst of these scandals, in such a way that nothing may seduce us, but that we may persevere always. And also, that he would look in pity upon his Church, and put forth the hand to lift her up again, fulfilling that which the prophet has said, that *seeing that he had no helper among men, he has put forth the strength of his arm*, (Isa. lix. 16.)

In conclusion, let us employ ourselves in his service, labouring without growing weary or losing courage, until he call us away into that blessed rest where we have contentment in himself, delighting ourselves in the labours we shall have undergone, receiving then the recompense of reward which shall be there revealed to us.

Now therefore, Monsieur, after humble commendation to your favour and that of Madame, I beseech the good Lord to uphold you in real prosperity, continuing his graces in you, so that to the end you may be instruments of his glory, and that he may be your sanctification.

Your servant and humble brother ever,

Charles d'Espeville.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CXLVIII. – To Farel. ⁴

Captivity of Farel's brother – ravages of the plague in Geneva

[September 1545.]

You will hear sad news; for this person will inform you that your brother Gautier⁵ is lying in fetters, and in imminent peril of his life. The very thing that I always feared, and that I foretold would occur, has happened; and in this I regret that I have not proved a false prophet. But of what avail are such complaints? With regard to helping him, I do not know how far it is in the power of the Bernese to do so, nor what, at this time, they may be willing to undertake. You will know these things better than I. There is no hope of obtaining any seasonable assistance from Germany, unless by means of John Sturm, who, however well disposed he may be towards the cause, is not, so far as things have gone, friendly to your brother. Would that you had thought better, while there was time, of what it is to offend a friend who

⁴ Letter without date, and without conclusion, written during the attack of the plague, under which the minister Geniston succumbed, that is to say, in September 1545.

⁵ Gautier Farel, brother to the Reformer. He was very soon afterwards restored to liberty, contrary to all expectation.

deserved well. Besides, you are not ignorant of the fact, that there are servile persons who wish, at this time of the day, to approve their obsequiousness to the princes. Yet, if you shall be of opinion that it will be useful to attempt something in that quarter, your influence with Sturm himself is great. You have, however, your own Bucer, to whom he never ventured to refuse anything; but it is a long circuit. Let him, therefore, accelerate the movements of the Bernese, lest the remedy come too late.

We are surprised that we have had no announcement regarding yourself. Viret made me aware of the resolution that had been come to by the brethren; but, as far as I can gather from his letter, nothing has been done in the Council. How long, therefore, will the matter remain in doubt? Here, as you know, we are in great straits: you are away from us; Matthæus is occupied in the hospital for those who are suffering from the plague. In the meantime, while we are calling upon you to come, we have lost our very excellent brother and most faithful colleague Geniston.⁶ What if the others should likewise be taken away? What if one only should survive, [I myself?] What if the ministers be shut up by themselves, through the absurd superstition of our townsmen? – just as lately a large number was within a little

⁶ The minister, Louis de Geniston, following the noble example of Pierre Blanchet, cut off by the plague in 1543, had, of his own accord, offered himself for the service of the hospital set apart for those afflicted with the plague. He fell under it, a victim of his devotedness, in September 1545. His wife and two of his children were carried off a few days afterwards by the scourge, which almost wholly depopulated several quarters of the city.

of being so confined. Consider, therefore, these our difficulties, lest you put us off longer than is right. But what Viret mentions that your people have added, viz: that you are conceded to us, on the condition of our being able to bring about the succession of Toussain, is certainly ridiculous; for what can we do in that matter, or in what way shall we attempt the business? The short of it is, we by no means prescribe a definite time, but we desire you to use your utmost diligence to disengage yourself from the place where you are, in order that you may forthwith repair to us unfettered;⁷ for we are now sadly in want of your presence, as you may judge from our condition. The wife of Geniston is, at the same time, in the death-throes, his little girl is wearing away, and his little boy is now given over...

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

⁷ There exists (Imp. Lib. *Recueil Hist., de France*, vol. xix.) a piece entitled *Lepida Farelli Vocatio*. In that letter Calvin vigorously urges his friend to repair to Geneva, by calling to mind the religious violence with which he was himself detained there, by the voice of Farel, at the time of his first entrance into that city in 1536. "Do you expect that I should thunder as you were wont to do, when you wished forcibly to draw me hither?" The urgencies of Calvin were fruitless, and the Church of Neuchatel retained, for twenty years longer, the services and the indefatigable activity of Farel.

CXLIX. – To Viret

Dispersion of the School at Geneva – contests at Neuchatel on the subject of church property – Calvin's opinion of Farel

24th October 1545.

We shall wait until you either restore Francis to us, or send Erasmus. As, meanwhile, the school is dispersed,⁸ you must make haste. If both of these courses appear to you tedious, or attended with difficulty, briefly signify so to us; for I will send for a person from Strasbourg, who, in my opinion, will be suitable, although I would rather have taken one from this quarter. With regard to the *assistant-teacher*, I do not venture upon anything, because it will be more satisfactory that the person who has the superintendence of the school shall have the unfettered power of selecting whom he chooses.

I had excused myself to Farel, but he remains fixed in his

⁸ The plague had dispersed the regents and students of the College of Geneva, and Calvin was labouring at the re-organization of that establishment. He had already proposed to the Council, in March 1545, to call to Geneva the celebrated Maturin Cordier, *as president of the regents*; but this proposal ended in nothing, and Maturin Cordier remained at Lausanne.

purpose.⁹ It would not only be ridiculous, but bordering on imprudence, to undertake to correct in the Neuchatelese a vice which here we are not able to cure. I had given it as my advice, that it would be better to draw up a memorial, in which the Princes should promise that they would be always ready to make restitution, if an agreement could be come to regarding legitimate administration. In the next place, I advised them, under this pretext, to put a stop to those profane alienations, in order that the matter might be left undecided until a more favourable time. Farel replies, that the authority of the Princes will not avail much. What confidence then will our letter produce? He further urges me to enter into communication with Bucer, in order to obtain from the Council of Strasbourg a letter to the Council of Berne to this purport: – That it had been pointed out to them that the Neuchatelese did very wrong in squandering the goods of the Church; and that it was the duty of the Bernese to check this license. He hopes that a letter of that nature would also do good at Berne. I, on the contrary, hardly think that the people of Strasbourg would write such a letter, as they would be afraid of increasing the sore. In the next place, if they should write, do we not know that their admonition would be laughed at? And, although the Bernese were in the highest degree desirous to remedy this fault of the Neuchatelese, with what face could they set about it? I have to implore that they will not venture

⁹ Farel was then at strife with the Seigneury of Neuchatel, on the subject of the administration of ecclesiastical property.

to reprehend in others that which they pertinaciously defend as lawfully done by themselves. I may therefore say of Farel what Cicero said of Cato, "That he acts indeed with good judgment, but in counsel does not always shew the best." The cause of this is chiefly, that being carried away by the vehemence of his zeal, he does not always discern what is expedient, and either does not foresee dangers, or despises them; and there is to be added the evil, that he cannot bear with patience those who do not comply with his wishes. But what could I do? for I will not be induced to undertake anything which I think will be of injurious tendency.

Christopher will tell you about Champereau,¹⁰ and I will write when the matter has come to an end. Adieu, most excellent brother, and most sincere friend. I have not yet had an opportunity of meeting Amédée. I will, however, fulfil your commission. – Adieu, again, including your wife, aunt, and brothers. The co-presbyters, my wife, and the neighbours respectfully salute you. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. copy – Library of Geneva. Vol. 111.*]

¹⁰ Rebuked on the ground of his morals, this minister had been banished to a country parish, and having refused to submit to the entire Consistory, he had received his dismissal.

CL. – To Monsieur de Falais

Prayers for his restoration to health

From Geneva, this 26th of October [1545.]

Monseigneur, – I hope that, according to what Antony Maillet has latterly informed us, you are better in body and mind than usual, for which I thank our good Lord, beseeching him fully to confirm you; for I doubt not but the sickness has left a long trail of feebleness. But He who has begun to raise you up, will perfect, as I hope, what he has begun by his infinite goodness, as well to grant the prayers of his servants as to shut the mouth of the wicked, so that they take not occasion to say that you have been overcome by their temptation; for you are aware that they want not great colour for their blasphemy. Therefore, God will shew them that he has fitted you to receive still greater assaults, if there is need; and in the meanwhile, will grant us the favour to enjoy a longer time of you to our singular consolation. When we shall have tidings from yourselves, they will rejoice us still more.

In the meantime, Monsieur, after having humbly commended me to your kind favour and that of Madame, and having presented to both of you the kind remembrances of a woman brought back to life, I beseech our gracious Lord to have you

always in his holy keeping, multiplying his graces in you daily,
to the glory of his name.

Your humble brother, servant, and entire friend,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CLI. – To Farel

News from Germany – journey of the French Ambassadors to Geneva – details concerning the condition of the town

Geneva, 26th January 1546.

There is nothing from your brothers since they passed through this place. I briefly indicated my opinion to Viret about the choice of a colleague for you. I am afraid that further delay may involve a long train of inconveniences, which I should wish to be guarded against. Feron, our brother,¹¹ so far as I see, will never have quiet of mind until he is translated elsewhere. I had made mention of him to Viret, but it will be for you to consider the matter.

My brother brought back no news from Germany, except that the Ratisbon Assembly pretends that our party continue their deliberations at Frankfort,¹² and the confident report of a league,

¹¹ Minister of the Church of Geneva; deposed, a few years afterwards, on account of the irregularities of his life.

¹² Alarmed at the first movements of the Council of Trent, and the perils to which the good understanding between the Pope and the Emperor might subject the Reformation, the Deputies of the League of Smalkald had reassembled at Frankfort. But their union

or at least a friendly alliance, between your party and the King. The Emperor was also said to be laid up with gout in the feet or hands. The King's ambassador in that quarter, when passing through, supped with me. We talked together familiarly, for he acknowledges being under some obligation to me. I again, however, urge you to beware lest our friends prove too compliant. I point to the license that prevails over the whole kingdom, of taking cruel measures against the godly. We will await the issue. You are aware that the Pope is now busying himself that, by means of false pretences, a council may be held at Trent; we do not, however, hear that there is to be a full convocation.

I wish that even one day could be given to a conference on our affairs. As this, however, is for the present impossible, do not needlessly vex yourself, should many reports be spread abroad. There was, indeed, a time when we were on our guard, when our party appointed sentinels for the gates, and were usually more careful in keeping watch.¹³ But they inconsiderately gave a signal of alarm, without my knowledge, however, and when I had not the smallest suspicion that anything of the kind would take

was not so solid as the gravity of the occasion demanded. The Elector of Saxe and the Landgrave of Hesse were influenced by different political views; but they were both alike disposed to seek the alliance of the Kings of France and England, as well as of the Protestant Cantons of Switzerland, that they might withstand the storm that menaced them. – Sleidan, l. xvi., and Robertson, vol. iv. B. vii. p. 234. London, 1851.

¹³ "Upon the intelligence that the Duke of Savoy has retaken two strongholds in Piedmont, and that he is collecting a body of troops, resolved to continue to work at the fortifications." – *Registers of Council*, 28th December 1545.

place.¹⁴ Seizing the opportunity, our neighbours [the Bernese] run to our aid, and most unreservedly offer their assistance. No one had any suspicion of kindness so obliging. Our friends make no communication to me, and after speeches had been made backwards and forwards, an agreement is come to between the parties. Shortly afterwards, there arrives a new embassy with the most monstrous commissions. The captain of the garrison, proffered by the Bernese, with his proposals, having met with a refusal, has quitted the city.¹⁵ I am now aware how many various reports are everywhere circulated, but I see no danger. Should you hear anything, deny confidently the existence of any sort of alliance between us. For presently, when they become ashamed of themselves, they will have recourse to the old arts, saying that they are unjustly defamed, &c. I can hardly persuade our friends that there is need of deeds on our side; nor is this wonderful, for in other things they act foolishly in spite of my remonstrances. Adieu, brother and most sincere friend. Salute for me, in the kindest manner, all your co-presbyters and your family. May the Lord direct all of you by his Spirit, and preserve you safe.

The impostor who had undertaken to carry Bucer's letter to you, stopped at Montbeliard, nor would he ever have conveyed

¹⁴ "Oath exacted of all private individuals, of fidelity to the Seigneury, and of their readiness to live and die for liberty." – *Registers of Council*, 7th January 1546.

¹⁵ The Seigneurs of Berne, eagerly seeking every opportunity of establishing their influence at Geneva, had offered to guard the city, and to protect it against all foreign attacks. This proposal was discarded, as tending to compromise the independence of the Republic. – *Registers of Council*, 11th January 1546.

it to you, had not my brother purposely set out for that place, because he had in his keeping another of far greater moment. He is a worker in gold by trade, but a fellow who is deserving of the gallows.

I am so far convalescent as to be able for preaching and lecturing, but am kept busy with arrears.¹⁶

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

¹⁶ We read, in the *Registers of Council* of the 29th of January of this year: – "Calvin having been ill, the Seigneury present to him ten crowns. On his recovery, he returns the money to the Council, who cause it to be expended in the purchase of a tun of wine for him, thus leaving him no alternative but to accept it."

CLII. – To Monsieur de Falais.¹⁷

Calvin dedicates to him one of his Commentaries

[January 1546.¹⁸]

Monseigneur, – Since my written letter, I have changed my mind, touching the epistle dedicatory of my Commentary, because it is a great trouble and difficulty to be forced to fill up so many pages and no more; I therefore send it altogether, nevertheless, with this condition, that it shall not be printed but by your command. Wherefore, I enclose it in the present letter, in order that Vendelin¹⁹ may not have it but from your hands. Should it not appear fitting that I address it to you, I shall make a new one, on being advertised to that effect. As for the rest, do not be astonished if I speak with brevity of you, for I would fear to touch some thorns in entering further on the subject. But according as circumstances will bear it, we can, should it so please God, on a

¹⁷ Calvin had just dedicated to M. de Falais his Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. The epistle dedicatory is of the 22d January 1546. The name of M. de Falais – sad example of the fragile nature of human affections! – was effaced ten years afterwards from the preface of this Commentary, and replaced by the name of the Marquis of Vico.

¹⁸ *On the back*, in the hand of M. de Falais – 'Received the 6th February 1546.'

¹⁹ Printer in Strasbourg.

second impression, discourse fully and say all that there shall be need for. Howbeit, I would greatly desire, if it might so please God, to be with you for three or four days, to confer by word of mouth rather than by writing. Possibly it is folly on my part to think that my presence can be of any service to you. But why so? while the power may be wanting, affection makes me speak thus. These wishes, however, are more easy to form than to fulfil. So let us be content with what God gives us.

Yesterday we had news here of the defeat of four thousand English by five hundred light horse. But it is from France.²⁰

Monseigneur, after having humbly commended me anew to your kind favour, and that of Madame, I pray always our Lord that he would uphold you in his glory.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

²⁰ The French were then besieging the town of Boulogne, occupied by the English. The peace between the two rival monarchs of France and England, was signed the year following. – De Thou, lib. i. ii.

CLIII. – To John Frellon.²¹

Rupture of the Relations between Calvin and Servetus

This 13th of February 1546.

Seigneur Jehan, – By cause that your last letter was brought to me at my going away, I had not leisure to reply to what was inclosed therein. Since my return, at the first leisure that I have had, I have been quite willing to satisfy your desire; not that I

²¹ The following is the address of this letter, taken from the original in the archives of the old Archbishopric of Vienne, and first published by the Abbé d'Artigny, – *A Sire Jehan Frellon, marchand libraire demeurant à Lyon, en la rue Mercière, enseigne de l'Escu de Coulongne.* The mysterious personage who is pointed at in this letter, is no other than Michael Servetus – seven years before the trial which was to attach so fatal a celebrity to his name. Settled as a physician at Vienne, in Dauphiny, he kept up a correspondence with Calvin, under the cover of John Frellon, and he had just sent the Reformer an extract of the work which was in preparation under the title of *Christianismi restitutio*, expressing at the same time the desire of coming to Geneva. Then it was, that Calvin wrote to Farel the letter which has been so often cited, where this passage occurs, "Servet has lately written to me, and has added to his letter a large volume of his own delirious fancies... *If it may be agreeable to me, he undertakes that he would come hither. But I will not interpose my assurance of his safety, for if he shall come, provided that my authority is of any avail, I shall not suffer him to depart alive.*"* – Letter of the 13th February 1546. We know how that terrible threat was realized seven years afterwards.

have had great hope of late of being profitable to a certain person, judging from the disposition in which I see him to be; but in order to try once more if there shall be any means of bringing him back, which will be, when God shall have wrought in him so effectually, that he has become entirely another man. Since he has written to me in so proud a spirit, I would fain have beaten down his pride a little, speaking more harshly to him than is my wont; but I could scarcely do otherwise. For I do assure you that there is no lesson which is more necessary for him than to learn humility, which must come to him from the Spirit of God, not otherwise. But we must observe a measure here also. If God grants that favour to him and to us, that the present answer turns to his profit, I shall have whereof to rejoice. If he persists in the same style as he has now done, you will lose time in asking me to bestow labour upon him, for I have other affairs which press upon me more closely; and I would make a matter of conscience of it, not to busy myself further, having no doubt that it was a temptation of Satan to distract and withdraw me from other more useful reading. And therefore I beg you to content yourself with what I have done in the matter, unless you see some better order to be taken therein.

Wherefore, after my commendation to you, I beseech our good Lord to have you in his keeping.

Your servant and hearty friend,

Charles d'Espeville.

[Printed – *Nouveaux Mémoires de l' Abbé d' Artigny*, tom. ii. p. 70.]

CLIV. – To Farel

Reply to various questions – terrible threat against Servetus – imprisonment of one of the leaders of the Libertins

Geneva, 13th February 1546.

You will be at ease regarding your brothers since you received the letter of Claude. The messenger who brought it asked whether mine would be ready when I returned from sermon, after three o'clock. I replied in the negative; but I bid him dine at my house with my wife, as I myself had been invited to dine with Macrin. I promised to be with him immediately after dinner, to make a brief reply. He did not come [to my house,] but hurried away without waiting a moment, so that I was confounded by so sudden a departure. And yet the youth had not appeared to me to behave badly in general. I trust the reflection may occur to your brothers, that they have been thus extricated from all their difficulties by the hand of God, in order that they make the greater haste [in the work.] It did not become the Israelites, when a way was opened up to them, to show remissness in immediately

girding themselves for flight.²² Such would have been the burden of my epistle had not the messenger deceived me; but I am confident that they are burning with ardour of their own accord. I now come to your own contests.²³ If the ungodly still occasion you some trouble, when that letter shall arrive, I have briefly expressed in it what I think should be your mode of proceeding. I should wish, however, the matter to be discussed *viva voce*; and that, thereupon, the result, or something like it, be committed to writing. You will perhaps smile because I suggest nothing out of the common, as you looked for something recondite and elevated at my hands; but I do not wish, nor, besides, is it right to be fettered by your estimate of me. I had rather, however, be foolish by so writing, than by my silence lead you to suppose that your entreaties were neglected by me. If nothing can be effected by reasoning, and in this lawful way, the Bernese must be privately prevailed upon not to allow that wild beast to go out of its den. I do not sufficiently comprehend your meaning regarding a treaty, unless it be, as I conjecture, that you are turning your thoughts to some sort of alliance, with a view to your receiving the assistance of the Bernese; and that just as they guard the liberty of the people by the law of the state, so they may protect ministers in their office by some title which

²² Decimated by the most cruel persecution, the faithful of Dauphiné, the native country of Farel, had inquired of the ministers of French Switzerland, whether it was lawful for them to have recourse to flight, in order to escape the fury of their adversaries. Numerous refugees had already settled at Geneva. – See vol. i. p. 473.

²³ Ecclesiastical embroilments with the Seignery of Berne.

commands respect. If that be provided for, I do not disapprove of [the alliance.] Bear in mind, that recourse should be had to those extraordinary remedies only when there is the exculpatory plea of an ultimate necessity. In the next place, be very cautious lest anything you do be such as may injure your interests in time to come. You may have greater cause of regret in that you once received aid, and were parties to a compact, than if you were to remain in your original servitude. Marcourt has, without doubt, already promised a place for himself; for he publicly proclaims that he does not regard the consent of the brethren, since he is desired, both by magistrates and people, and he has no doubt but that they are indignant against you. Finally, since he prematurely discloses the wickedness of his character, he must be repulsed by all artifices, lest he rise to a position in which he is able to perform what he threatens. With regard to those who gave out that we were establishing here a permanent seat of despotism, under colour of defence, let us suffer this rumour to spread on both sides. Their impudence has been met with civility and mildness, so that they ought to be ashamed of themselves.²⁴ I trust that they will keep quiet. I seek, as far as I am able, to persuade our friends to remain unconcerned. Servetus lately wrote to me, and coupled with his letter a long volume of his delirious fancies, with the Thrasonic boast, that I should see something astonishing and unheard of. He takes it upon him to come hither, if it be agreeable to me. But I am unwilling to pledge my word for his

²⁴ See letter of the 26th January, p. 28, note 2.

safety, for if he shall come, I shall never permit him to depart alive, provided my authority be of any avail.²⁵

More than fifteen days have now elapsed since Cartelier²⁶ was imprisoned, for having, at supper in his own house, raged against me with such insolence as to make it clear that he was not then in his right senses. I concealed what I felt, but I testified to the judge that it would be agreeable to me were he proceeded against with the utmost rigour of the law. I wished to go to see him. Access was prohibited by decree of the Senate; and yet some good men accuse me of cruelty, forsooth, because I so pertinaciously revenge my injuries.²⁷ I have been requested by his friends to undertake the part of intercessor. I refused to do so, except on these two conditions, viz: that no suspicion should attach to me, and that the honour of Christ should remain intact. I have now done. I abide the judgment of the Council. – Adieu,

²⁵ See the preceding letter. It appears that relations between Calvin and Servetus continued in a state of interruption, as is proved by the following passage of a letter of Calvin to Viret, dated 1st September 1548: – "I think I once read to you my answer to Servetus. I was at length disinclined from striving longer with the incurable obstinacy of a heretic; and, indeed, I ought to have followed the advice of Paul. He now attacks you. You will see how long you ought to persist in rebutting his follies. He will twist nothing out of me henceforward." – *Library of Geneva*, Vol. 106.

²⁶ One of the most violent members of the party that combated the influence and institutions of the Reformer at Geneva.

²⁷ Calvin shewed himself, on more than one occasion, disposed to forgive personal injuries, as the Registers of Council testify: – "A woman having abused M. Calvin, it is directed that she be consigned to prison. Liberated at the request of the said M. Calvin, and discharged with a reproof." – 12th December 1545.

brother, and most sincere friend. We all salute you and your sisters. You will convey to the brethren the best salutations in my name, and that of my brethren in the ministry. May God ever bless you and prosper your labours. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Imp. Library, Coll. Dupuy. Vol. 102.*]

CLV. – To Farel

Pacification of the Church at Neuchatel – report of the speedy arrival of the Emperor in Savoy – dangers at Geneva – withering mention of Francis I

Geneva, 20th February 1546.

I specially congratulate you and all your friends, yea, ourselves also, and the whole Church of Christ, that the Lord has unexpectedly stilled all tumults, by restraining the ungodly. Viret had already requested me to be prepared at all points in case there should be need of my presence, and assuredly I should not have been behind; but God is twice to be praised, who by his own counsel has adjusted matters that were in so great confusion. We acknowledge that he was present with you when he opened up to you that plan of admonishing the heads of the citizens. We again acknowledge a memorable work of his, in having given to you those who of their own accord were disposed to act well towards you. I feel confident that the matter has been brought to a conclusion in harmony with the desire of all good men. If our service be desired, you know that we are all yours. I now hourly expect your brothers. May the Lord restore them to us safe and

with good fortune.²⁸ A confident report is spread abroad here of the arrival of the Emperor. I hold it for certain that a passage across will by no means be opened up to him without a bloody conflict. It cannot be doubted, that even though our neighbours were willing that we should be left exposed to the danger of becoming the prey of the conqueror, they would nevertheless find it necessary to guard their own territories; although I do not know why our party have so soon become careless, unless they wished to subject themselves to their sway, and thus save themselves from other masters. It is a hard condition that you must give up your liberty in order to secure allies as defenders.²⁹ Our party erred in one particular, that they made too violent a reply. But what could I do? On me, nevertheless, the odium redounds, though I strove with great vehemence to prevent the ground of it; but I have bid adieu to the perverted judgments of men. I pass on to another subject. Matters will go more severely with Cartelier, because he mixed up with myself part of the Senate. After that I have respectably enough discharged the duty of clemency, I have resolved to halt. The malevolent will heap obloquy upon me, but if there be an opportunity of replying, I have the means of stopping their mouths. No one certainly will allege that any word less than fair fell from me, for among good and bad I have endeavoured to extenuate his offence. The

²⁸ See p. 22, note 2.

²⁹ Allusion to the Bernese and to their pretensions of ruling Geneva under cover of the Alliance. – See p. 28, note 2.

Parliament of Paris, as I hear, now wages war with fire and faggot against Christ.³⁰ It is indeed certain that a great multitude of the godly are everywhere held in bonds. Sardanapalus,³¹ meanwhile, in the midst of his courtezans, feeds his fancy with victories. May the Lord have respect to his Church!

Adieu, most upright brother in the Lord, together with all your fellow-ministers, whom you will respectfully salute in my name, and in that of the brethren. May Christ ever direct you all by right counsel, and bless your auspicious endeavours. – Yours,

John Calvin.

To the four Presidents of the citizens, special compliments in my name. May the Lord bless them exceedingly.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

³⁰ The year 1546 was especially remarkable for the great persecutions that arose within the bounds of the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris. Meaux, Seulis, Orleans, reckoned numerous martyrs. One named Jean Chapot of Dauphiné, colporteur of Geneva, arrested at Paris, was condemned to death, after having undergone the most cruel tortures. He had his tongue cut out before he was cast into the flames. "The dispersion," says Beza, "was widespread, but it led to the great advancement of many churches which were built up of the stones of that ruin." – *Hist. Eccl.* tom. i. p. 82. *Histoire des Martyrs*, pp. 170, 177.

³¹ Francis I., King of France.

CLVI. – To Viret

Election of a minister at Neuchatel – sickness of Viret's wife

Geneva, 22d February 1546.

I learned from Farel's last letter, that the commotions at Neuchatel were allayed. And I now feel assured that the matter of the choice of a pastor is concluded; for it had at length been agreed that the ministers should promise on oath to nominate in good faith the person whom they deemed most suitable. It was already considered as almost certain, that Christopher would be the man, provided the Bernese would part with him;³² and there is hope that they will offer no objection. Farel wrote that the good cause had been not a little aided by the Consul Wateville.

Had they invited us as brethren, I should have been ready at any hour. But I rejoice especially, that you were of more service than you thought you would be; for all loudly assert that your arrival was highly advantageous.

³² On the death of the minister Chaponneau, the people of Neuchatel wished to have in his room Christopher Fabri, minister of Thonon: they accordingly asked him from the Seigneury of Berne, who with a good grace conceded him to them. – Ruchat, vol. v. p. 299.

I see that Textor does not hold out much further hope of your wife. You need no more words to admonish you to hold yourself ready to bear with moderation the issue, whatever that may be. Would that I also could fly thither, that I might alleviate your sorrow, or at least bear a part of it!³³ But so long a ride would cause me pain. I rather advise, should matters happen otherwise than as we wish, that you come hither for a few days. – Adieu, most sound-hearted brother, along with your wife and family. The Lord comfort and strengthen you all. Amen. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

³³ We again find marks of the same solicitude in a letter of Calvin to Viret of the preceding month. "Adieu, with your wife, whose health we will commend to the Lord. Be assured that we are not less solicitous about her than if she were the wife or daughter of each of us. The Lord keep you and sustain you with the consolation of his Spirit." – (January 1546,) Vol. 106, from Geneva.

CLVII. – To Viret. ³⁴

Calvin invites his friend to repair to Geneva after the death of his wife

Geneva, 8th March 1546.

Come, on this condition, that you disengage your mind not only from grief, but also from every annoyance. Do not fear that I will impose any burden upon you, for through my means you will be allowed to take whatever rest is agreeable to you. If any one prove troublesome to you, I will interpose. The brethren, also, make the same promise to you as I do. I will also be surety that the citizens do not interfere with your wishes.

I know not what I ought to imprecate on the wretches who had spread a report of your death. Never did a letter from you arrive

³⁴ Viret was at that time plunged into the deepest affliction. He had just lost, after a long illness, his wife, Elizabeth Turtaz, of Orbe, with whom he had lived for many years in a godly union. The grief which he felt on that occasion is expressed, in a very touching manner, in a letter written many years afterwards to Calvin: – "I was so completely dispirited and prostrated by that arrow of affliction, that the whole world appeared to me nothing but a burden. There was nothing pleasant, nothing that could mitigate my grief of mind." – *Calv. Epist. et Resp.*, p. 53. The friends of Viret, and especially Farel and Calvin, lavished upon him, during that trial, marks of the tenderest and most brotherly affection. The familiar correspondence of Calvin furnishes us with precious revelations in this respect.

more opportunely. Although your death was announced, yet as mention was made of poison, Textor was already in the midst of preparations for the journey, that he might speed to Orbe on fleet horses. A great part of the brethren were present, all overwhelmed with deep affliction. Shortly afterward your letter made its appearance, and such exultation instantly broke forth, that we were hardly masters of our senses. It was fortunate that we did not pass a night of sorrow, else I should not have borne it without danger. But why do I detain you, and not rather incite you to hasten hither as quickly as possible? Adieu, brother and most agreeable friend. Salute respectfully the brethren James, Ribitti, Hubert, Cordier, Celio, Francis, Merlin. The Lord protect you and the remainder of your family. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. copy – Library of Geneva. Vol. 111.*]

CLVIII. – To Viret

Renewed and more pressing invitation to come to Geneva

15th March 1546.

I have hitherto delayed writing to you, because I daily expected you to come hither, as you had promised; nor should I have written even now, as I remain in the same state of expectation, were it not that I might incite you to hasten your journey; for I wonder why it is that you thus put off from day to day. I remember that John de Tournay³⁵ told me that you had a horse; but why not rather come by boat? Unless David has sold his [horses,] that difficulty could be easily got over, although I believe that one may now be more easily procured than it could have been eight days ago, for fewer couriers have passed this way during these days. Make haste, therefore, that you may recruit a little, and gather heart again with us; for people from your quarter say that you are half dead. Since I can draw you out by no other inducement, I make the announcement, that you shall have no letter from me until you come. Quick, then. – Adieu. Salute all friends. May the Lord shortly bring you in safety to us. – Yours,

³⁵ Nephew of Viret, and minister in the Pays de Vaud.

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

CLIX. To Theodore Vitus. ³⁶

Indication of the various documents wherein are set forth the opinions of Calvin regarding the Lord's Supper – earnest desire for union and peace among the Churches – condition of Geneva

Geneva, 17th March 1546.

Your letter gave me the greater pleasure, as I had not ventured to look for it, for it was my part to draw a letter from you by being the first to write. But that you, without being called upon, should of your own accord have anticipated me, I take as a proof of your greater friendship towards me. If, however, you would know the reason of my not writing, I refrained more from modesty than negligence. And generally the testimony of Philip [Melanchthon] is with me sufficient; but when no great familiarity intervenes, the crooked policy of the times sometimes makes me apprehensive. Wherefore, I am the more grateful to you for having removed every scruple. I greatly rejoice, also, to find that my pamphlet, *De Coenâ*, has met with your

³⁶ To the most honourable Doctor Theodore Vitus, most faithful Minister of Christ at Nuremberg.

approbation.³⁷ It was written in French ten years before. When, without my knowledge, it had been already translated into Latin by two individuals, I at length consented to its publication, being afraid, in fact, that some worse version might forestall it. A style of instruction, simple and popular, and adapted to the unlearned, shews what my purpose was from the first; for I usually write more carefully for those acquainted with Latin. I laboured, however, not only faithfully to express my views, and reduce them within a brief compass, but also to unfold them lucidly, and without technicalities. Since then the *Institution*, having been revised, was again given to the public, in which, unless I am mistaken, I expound and more fully confirm the same doctrine, under a different form of expression, and with somewhat greater development. I at length also published a *Catechism*, which is trustworthy and pertinent evidence of the kind of doctrine with which the common people are imbued by me. Would that the people of Zurich, as you say, were willing to give their assent to that confession!³⁸ I do not think Luther is so unyielding but that there might easily be an agreement, and they do not, withal,

³⁷ The following is the passage of the letter of Vitus to Calvin to which he here refers: – "I have read your short address to the people on the Sacrament of the Supper, and I approve of your calling the bread and wine signs in such a sense that the things signified are in reality present. Would that they who leave only the naked signs, might be led by you to adopt that view!" – *Calv. Epist. et Resp.*, Amst., p. 37.

³⁸ This desire was happily realized some years afterwards, by the adoption of a common symbol on the Supper, approved alike by the theologians of Zurich and Geneva.

venture to disapprove of my views. The chief obstacle to their giving a public assent to my doctrine is, that being pre-occupied by a meaning, once and now for a length of time prescribed to them, they so stick to their customary forms as to admit nothing new. But if you consider the tyranny manifested by certain of the adverse party in the attempt to force the world, not only into their peculiar views, but also into a prescribed form of words, the furious insolence they shew, what commotions they excite, – the moderation as well as rectitude by which you are characterized, will lead you to condemn in the matter the absurd conduct of those parties, not less than the people of Zurich. May the Lord by his Spirit dispose us all to true moderation. You know that I am not in the habit of complaining when there is no ground for it; nor do I doubt but that you yourself, as might be expected from your eminent piety, sigh in secret over the same evils, while it is not in your power to remedy them. With respect to the assurances you give me regarding yourself, I wish you in turn to believe, that I am and always will be your sincere friend and brother. I now, with many others, request you to go on strenuously, and make no halt in your progress, until you have handed over to us Genesis completed.³⁹ For as Luther has just grounds for congratulating himself in having found such an artist to polish his works, so others experience how advantageous the labour is to the public.

³⁹ Vitus lent useful aid to Luther in the revision of his different writings, and rendered a real service to the Church by collecting and offering to the public the Commentaries of Luther on the Prophet Micah, and the first eleven chapters of Genesis. – Melch. Adam, *Vitæ Theol. Germ.*

I may have wished, however, that you had been more sparing in your mention of the Sacramentaries, because I see that the minds of some are thereby exasperated, of whom there was a hope that they would be brought to moderate views. It will be for you to consider what may be more conducive to that end. I will be satisfied if you take my warning in good part, whether or not you act upon it. The Ratisbon Assembly will indeed bring forth smoke for us, which the Lord will soon dispel.⁴⁰

Here we are tranquil unless the Emperor molest us. Some suspect him of having an eye on Burgundy, with the view of threatening the kingdom of France from that quarter, while he would harass Provence by means of the young Duke of Savoy, and send in the English from the other side. I hold myself under the protection of God alone when I see that we are not far from certain danger. Adieu, most honoured sir, and most sincere friend. May the Lord Jesus ever guide and direct you by his Holy Spirit, and bless your labours. All my colleagues respectfully salute you. To yours also you will convey the highest respects in my name, and in that of my colleagues. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. Copy, Library of Zurich, Coll. Simler. Vol. 59.*]

⁴⁰ The Conference opened by the Emperor at Ratisbon, and to which Bucer had been summoned, was a mere feint to divert men's minds, and to transfer the decision of the points at issue to the Council of Trent.

CLX. – To Viret. ⁴¹

Instructions to Viret about a journey to Geneva

Geneva, 26th March, before supper.

The person who delivered yours to me did not know whence it came. I thus received it somewhat later than I wished. I attended to the wish you expressed, that a suitable horse, and one without show, should be sent to you. It would, however, have been sent off sooner, had I not told our people beforehand that you could not leave your place of residence before the morning discourse. I certainly could have wished, if your letter had arrived in time, that you had been sent for sooner. But I supposed that you had set out with Christopher: for that was the reason why I gave you no letter by the messenger belonging to my household. If, after preaching, you can come as far as Nyon, you will be here on Monday before supper; but take care lest you fatigue yourself. You had better come to Nyon on Monday. We shall have you with us in good time, if we get you well. Salute all the brethren.

⁴¹ Viret, yielding to the entreaties of Calvin, went to Geneva towards the end of March, and there received the most honourable marks of public affection. We read in the Registers of Council, of date the 2d April 1546, – "Grand reception given to Farel and Viret, who had just arrived at Geneva."

May the Lord bring you to us safe and in good spirits. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.* – *Library of Geneva*. Vol. 106.]

CLXI. – To Monsieur de Falais

**Calvin's labours – the diet at Ratisbon –
the Church at Metz – the reformation at
Heidelberg – *apology* for M. de Falais –
opinion regarding the sermons of Ochino**

*[April 1546.]*⁴²

Monseigneur, – I thank you for the care which you have of my health, anxious that I would not overburthen myself, in straining a point to write to you, when I am not in a fit state to do so. But had I only to write to you, it would be to me a very easy labour, if that can be called toil wherein one only finds pleasure. The difficulty arises from the annoyances and interruptions of the train of thought which intervene, to break off a letter in the midst twenty times over, or even more, beyond all bounds. As regards health, I was much more feeble when I wrote to you a while ago than I am at present. But being in a good state of general bodily condition, I am unceasingly tormented with a heaviness, which, as it were, suffers me not to do anything. For, besides the sermons and lectures, there is a month already gone in which I have scarce

⁴² *On the back*, in the handwriting of M. de Falais, – Received the 16th of April 1546.

done anything, in such wise that I am almost ashamed to live thus useless. But if it please God, of his goodness, to make use of me, he will release me and allay this ill, which holds me so fast that I cannot set about any labour of importance, to employ the leisure which he gives me. Nevertheless, he does not cease to exercise me by some means or other, in order that I may not grow rusty through laziness. If, however, he does not graciously restore me to a better condition, I am not likely ever to get on horseback. Even more than that, were I ever to be sent for, I could not stir out of the house in such a state. But, as you observe, they let me alone, from fear of setting astir the frantic blockheads; and on my side, I willingly give up the diets to those who have a liking for them, as for any good they do.⁴³ I am glad that our Lord has put you out of pain as regards Norberg. As for what remains to be done, you will have an opportunity of considering what it ought to be, having been informed by Jéhan de Rochefort, and after having established your case, as it can be done, in coming forth out of Egypt and out of Babylon. It is like what is said by Moses and by Ezekiel, – *in much stir and with haste*. I hope, should it so please God, that all is over by this time. I would not have you to be too much astonished at the length of time you have been in receiving letters from him, considering the length of the journey. But if God has been so gracious to him, and to you also, as to

⁴³ A new diet had been assembled at Ratisbon, for the pacification of the religious troubles of Germany. That assembly opened in the month of June 1546, in presence of the Emperor, and like those which had preceded, concluded without any result whatsoever.

make a way of escape out of danger, he will not have tarried so long on the way as not to be, by this time, on his return. Thus, being at rest in regard to that matter, you will take counsel for the future.

As to Constance, I had not spoken to you, but that your present abode did not please you. When the crisis comes, however, Strasbourg is more suitable, and I like it better, were it not for the reason which you allege.

In Metz,⁴⁴ I see a great evil, the want of guidance and of cordial interest, albeit that these are rather two evils. But God will find the remedy. We must try every method which he presents to us, and even stir up ourselves, where the means appear to be wanting. And whereas I know that you have no need to be exhorted not to spare yourself, I forbear to do so.

I am not at all amazed, if Master Peter Alexander is bold, having his chin thus held above water, and that besides he is quite accustomed at Heidelberg to hear that doctrine already for a long time past.⁴⁵ He is even well aware that he has no other means for

⁴⁴ The Protestants of this town, feebly supported by the league of Smalkald, and intimidated by the presence of the imperial legate, devoted to the Roman Catholic clergy, had already lost the rights which had been guarantied to them by the accord of 1543, and so found themselves deprived of the exercise of public worship and of the pastorate. — (See a letter of Myconius to Calvin, 13th November 1543. *Calv. Epist. et Responsa*, Amst. p. 26.)

⁴⁵ In the year 1546, the Palatinate witnessed the accomplishment of a great religious revolution. The Elector, Frederic II., yielding to the wish of his subjects, proclaimed the establishment of the Reformation, and the abolition of the old worship in his states. The chief instrument of that revolution was the minister Paul Fagius, the disciple of

advancing himself. Thus it is no wonder if he takes advantage of it where there is no danger at all. But I see quite well that he is not an over-confident man, were it only by his conclusions. What is worse, he makes a stupid blunder in this, that he says, the swearing an oath is forbidden by God; and that with a blasphemy, inasmuch as he attributes authority to Saint Paul to permit what has been prohibited by his Master; but these are matters for the civil magistrate to decide.

The Apology would be much better drawn up where you are than at a distance. This I say not to exempt myself, but inasmuch as I think that such is the case; for I am quite ready to undertake the employment. So also would Master Peter Viret, but his style of writing would not be altogether suited to such an argument, owing to his want of conciseness. And for myself I would have to bite my nails in more than a hundred passages, if we could not confer together so as to resolve by common accord what might be fit to say or to omit. Nevertheless, we shall take care to meet your wish whenever you shall have come to a determination upon the whole case and the state of your affairs. Howbeit, I have retained no memorandum of the particulars beside me. What I have told you about the Emperor, was not so much to find fault with what has been done, as to set forth the reason why it ought not to be inserted so as to be seen. I praise our Lord that the present of my Commentary is agreeable to you. In conformity with your answer, our brother sent his translation to Vendelin, addressing

the preface to you, in order that having seen it beforehand, you may judge what course shall appear to you to be expedient.

The request which I made to you so affectionately, not to separate your household from the French Church,⁴⁶ was not founded upon any report, but solely upon a passage of your letter where you signify that you were in course of doing so, not perceiving any amendment in that quarter. It suffices, that I am aware of your intention, so as not to be further troublesome to you on that score. I see indeed the reasons you may have, but I take into view the scandal which would thence arise. All is well, since you have condescended to my request.

I would desire, Monseigneur, that the hundred crowns [escus] might be sent to the lady, and they would be returned to you forthwith, sending to the Ladies de Tilly what is resting due to them, since the father shews himself such a one as he is. I would earnestly wish, that in disposing ourselves willingly and patiently to bear the cross, we were framing our shoulders to such a charge. But these are matters about which we shall better talk together than we can write.

I pray you to hold me excused, if I do not as yet signify my opinion of the translation of the Sermons of Messire Bernardino.⁴⁷ I may, however, speak a word in your ear, that they

⁴⁶ The French Church of Strasbourg, of which Calvin had been pastor during his exile from Geneva.

⁴⁷ Introduced by Calvin to Myconius, Ochino made but a very short stay at Bâle, where those writings made their appearance which have been such a blot upon his memory. In 1545 he went to Augsburg, where he became minister to the congregation

are more useful in Italian than in other languages, were it not that the name of the man is of use; and then there is such a variety of minds, that it is not amiss to endeavour to draw some of them by that means. Of the translator, I shall let you know my opinion, please God, in a few words shortly.

As touching the *apology* of the ladies,⁴⁸ I think, Monseigneur, you have my opinion of it signified already in brief, at least I would here declare it, that the author has not observed what the Latins call *decorum*. For the course of procedure is unbefitting the individuals. Everybody will not perceive this, only those who have their wits about them. This is the reason why I have retained it beside me.

The letters of Diaz⁴⁹ were not needed to shew me on what

of Italian refugees until the epoch of the *Interim*, which was the cause of his betaking himself to England. His leanings toward heterodoxy were veiled from the eyes of every one, except perhaps the clear-sighted discernment of Calvin, who valued his abilities, without having an entire confidence in the solidity of his doctrines. The ever-recurring changes of his unsettled life led him, at a later period, to class himself with the sect of the anti-Trinitarians. His discourses, so much admired by Cardinal Bembo, and the Emperor Charles V. himself, are less remarkable for their purity of doctrine than for the warmth of feeling and the poetical flash of the style. They have been printed under the following title: *Prediche di Messer Bernardino Ochino*, 1543, and reprinted on several occasions; but we are not aware of any translation, whether Latin or French. See Schelhorn, *Ergötzlichkeiten*, tom. iii. pp. 2022, 2161, 2166, and pp. 2174-2179.

⁴⁸ The sisters of M. de Falais.

⁴⁹ Juan Diaz, originally of Cuença, in Spain, studied letters at the University of Paris, and was distinguished, amid the scholars of his nation, "by superior learning, adorned with pure morals, great mildness, prudence, and benignity." Initiated in the knowledge of the Gospel, he left Paris and visited Geneva, Bâle, Strasbourg, where he acquired the friendship of Bucer, whom he accompanied into Germany. The Jesuit, Malvenda,

authority you had opened those which he might write to me. For you have sufficient authority without any one else giving it to you. I humbly thank you for the offer which you have so kindly made for the baptism of our child.⁵⁰ And now, Monsieur, to conclude, after having humbly, and with all possible kindly affection, commended me to your good favour and that of Madame, and having also presented the humble salutations of my wife, I pray our good Lord to guide you always as he has done, shewing himself the true protector both of you and of all that concerns you.

Your humble brother, servant, and ever your entire friend,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

a stout defender of Popish idolatry, having made vain efforts to lead him back to the Romish Church, the adversaries of Juan Diaz planned a most detestable conspiracy against his life, and, on the 27th of March, he was assassinated by order of Alphonso Diaz, his own brother, who had come from Rome in order to the accomplishment of this execrable outrage, the instigator of which remained unpunished. – See the record of this odious fratricide in Sleidan, and *Histoire des Martyrs*, pp. 162, 168; and Letter CLXIII.

⁵⁰ Calvin had this year a child by his wife, Idelette de Bure, which died in the birth.

CLXII. – To Monsieur de Falais

**Advice regarding the editing of the *Apology* –
details of a loan contracted for M. de Falais
– news from Germany and Italy – Farel
and Viret at Geneva – death of Juan Diaz**

16th April 1546.

Monseigneur, – You see here what I have done desiring to comply with your wish.⁵¹ That it shall altogether satisfy you I shall not venture to promise myself. It will be quite enough for me if you have the persuasion that I have not failed from lack of good-will. Indeed, I fear you may not find that which you had looked for. But it is not reasonable that I bear the blame of the too great credit which I may have with you. If I had been in a

⁵¹ At the request of M. de Falais, Calvin had prepared an apology for his Lordship, which was to be presented to the Emperor at the Diet of Ratisbon. This memorial, drawn up at first in French, then translated into Latin, and along with a profession of faith, containing valuable details for the history of M. de Falais, has the following title: – *Apology of the very Illustrious Lord James of Burgundy, of Falaise, and of Breda, wherein he has wiped away the accusations wherewith he has been branded in the sight of the Imperial Majesty, and sets forth the Confession of his Faith.* This morceau has been published by the Amsterdam editor at the end of the letters of Calvin to M. de Falais.

right frame, and had I had leisure, possible it is that I might have done better. But since these two things have been wanting to me, I pray you that you may please hold me as excused. It would not have cost me very much to fill up a much larger extent of paper; but I have studied brevity, thinking that nothing could be better, considering the personage to whom the writing is addressed. It did not occur to Saint André that it wanted anything, except that, on having come to the passage about your retirement, you might insist upon deducting separately in detail the travelling expenses which you had incurred up to that time. I had, indeed, thought of another conclusion to be urged, but because I did not well know how to keep within bounds, I have let it alone. You will exercise your own discretion as to adding an article to that effect, if you think fit, namely, with regard to the property, which you did not venture to make any other request to him about, fearing that it would be trouble thrown away, to speak to him about the property before being reinstated in his good graces, and also because that is the thing you most of all desire and prefer to anything else. In any event, let it please him to have regard to such a family, and not allow himself to be led by those who only seek its destruction. I know not whether it would be of advantage to your brothers⁵² to make mention of them. You will consider about that. Towards the end, it would be needful to add an express clause, to remove

⁵² M. de Falais had five brothers. Those alone of whom mention is made in the letters of Calvin, are John, Seigneur de Fromont, and Peter, Pronotary apostolic, who had embraced the Reformation.

the suspicion that you had too great regret, declaring that for the honour of God you bear the loss patiently, beseeching God that he would always make you sensibly aware of the work of Jesus Christ, and of the benefits bestowed on you by him, so as to reckon all things but loss and dung in comparison of him. If you determine to enter upon the subject of the property, it appears to me that it would be advisable to mention it thus briefly; I have explained the reason why I have not done so.

But to proceed, Monseigneur, I have detained the man who has brought me your last, hoping that he would be the messenger to carry you this answer. But, at the end of six days, there has occurred a sudden piece of business to Sire Nicolas the present bearer. I have thereupon sent away the other, delivering to his care the two young children, because he could not have arrived so soon. He has been sufficiently admonished, not so much by me as by the others, to settle and choose some manner of livelihood; but I see clearly that he is not yet tired of running about. That arises in part from his too great simplicity, – for he has no great head-piece. Some clodpole, scarcely wiser than himself, had whispered in his ear in passing, that I would be quite able to recommend him to Berne, and put him in the way of his becoming a preacher. I have done everything to repress such an expectation: but he does not leave off his roving about; and although he seems to approve an advice when offered to him, immediately afterwards he begins to do the same thing again. I am sorry for it, for in other respects, I find him well disposed,

and without malice.

As for the business of Sire Nicolas, the case is thus: – He had no means of squaring his accounts, but in taking the place which had been adjudged in hypothec to another preferable creditor, having struck off some pieces for law expenses. Thus he would have been excluded, had he not undertaken to reimburse the other party. What is worse, he who held the security was himself under hypothec elsewhere, in danger that his property might be sold, and needed to re-assure his interest therein. The subject is well worth what the said Nicolas has bargained for. The hardship was for him, that he would have had to pay seven hundred crowns before next Easter, and also that it is too large for him. But the necessity made him forget all that. It is true that he has to receive from Sire Antony Sieglessen a sum in satisfaction thereof, but he fears that it may not be ready at so short a term, seeing that he will have to transact with people who have no pity. In that perplexity, he has thought that if, peradventure, Antony de Sieglessen might not so readily be forthcoming with that which he has to receive from him, you would afford him some assistance, for a month, or six weeks' delay, on his giving you the security of Sire Antony and the place, on good and equitable terms. When he asked advice of me, I requested him to try all means before having recourse to you, which he had already indeed determined, as he told me, but that it was his last remedy. In any event, however, he would bring you letters of assurance over the place. To this I have not agreed, fearing lest it might appear to you that it would have

the effect of protracting a settlement, promising to him to assure you that the responsibility lies not with himself but with me.

I have wished much to make this statement to you, Monseigneur, on purpose that you should be informed, that he did not rashly go beyond his authority, but that he had been constrained thereto; in order also, that when he could nowise do without your help, you might the more be induced to aid him. I can indeed assure you, that there will be no risk, for the assignment is quite valid. And if money were to be had here, he would not need to stir out of the house. But the country is stripped so bare of money, that it is lamentable, the more so that there is more due to him at Strasbourg than he has need for. I do not take upon me to ask it of you, for that is not my business. In so far as I have endeavoured to remove the doubts which might prevent you, I hope you will take it in good part, and that you will not ascribe it to importunity. Besides that, it is my duty, for I have been the cause, along with Monsieur David, of involving him in this anxiety. For we made the first purchase in his absence, because the said Monsieur David was fully resolved from that time forward to complete the transaction.

I believe that you have been otherwise informed of the death of the Marquis of Guasto.⁵³ We are not aware what the Emperor intends to do, except that people are coming from Naples toward Genoa. One can scarce think that he would go so far for pastime

⁵³ Alphonso d'Avalos, Marquis of Guasto, governor of the Milanese, and one of the ablest generals of Charles the Fifth. He died in 1546.

as to Argiers. And, indeed, I believe, that considering himself secure upon the side of France, and leaving the English to occupy the King's attention, having fully ordered everything to his own advantage in Germany, he would not make a mere feint of going to Argiers.⁵⁴

Master William Farel and Master Peter Viret, in passing from hence, have requested me to present you their humble commendations. They have been here eight days to my great comfort, except in so far as they have made me put off my excusing myself to you. I am glad of your well-disposedness, and principally for your cheerfulness, and also because I hope that it will prove a means of our seeing you. We shall, in the meanwhile, however, pray God, that he would restore you from better to better, albeit that we must not look, neither you nor myself, to be ever of much worth in this world.

We have made Saint-André preacher, at which possibly you will be amazed. He did not look for it; and I believe also, that at the first move his courage would not have inclined him that way. But we have made conscience of it, seeing his zeal and readiness, not to leave him always idle. I hope that God will make use of him for the profit and upbuilding of his Church. He has not been brought to it without a struggle, but perceiving that the call was from on high, he has not resisted it.

⁵⁴ The Emperor, in 1544, had undertaken a disastrous expedition against the town of Argiers. The military movements which were then going forward in Italy, were intended to cover his real projects of attack against the Protestant princes of Germany.

To conclude, Monseigneur, after having presented the humble commendations as well of myself as of my wife to your kind favour and to that of Madame, I shall supplicate our good Lord to have you always in his protection, guiding you with a view to his honour, as he has done hitherto, and shewing himself so powerful in you, that we may always acknowledge the fruit of that great victory with which Jesus Christ consoles us.

Your humble servant and brother in our Lord Jesus,

John Calvin.

When I had finished these presents, I received the sad news of the death of good Diaz.⁵⁵ But it so happens, that the unhappy Papists shew more and more that they are led by the spirit of their father, who has been a murderer from the beginning.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

⁵⁵ See the following letter.

CLXIII. – To Farel. ⁵⁶

Troubles at Geneva – imprisonment of the several members of the family of Favre – account of the assassination of John Diaz at Neubourg

[April 1546.]

After your departure the dances caused us more trouble than I had supposed. All those who were present being summoned to the Consistory, with the two exceptions of Corna and Perrin, shamelessly lied to God and us. I was incensed, as the vileness

⁵⁶ The Ecclesiastical Ordinances, digested by Calvin and adopted by the councils of the republic, daily encountered the keenest opposition in the heart of a party which reckoned at its head men belonging to the most distinguished families among the Genevese. The Consistory and Councils together took care that the laws were rigidly enforced, and checked improprieties without respect of persons. The Captain-General, Amy Perrin, the Syndic Corna, and several other persons, having, contrary to the prohibitions, danced in a private house, "It is ordained," as is contained in the Registers of 12th April 1546, "that they all be imprisoned;" and with regard to the wife of Amy Perrin, who spoke insolently to the Consistory, that she also be imprisoned, and be required to find security. Perrin, to avoid undergoing the punishment pronounced against him, had recourse to the pretext of a journey to Lyons; but he was incarcerated on his return. The Syndic Corna acknowledged his fault, and, after a deposition of some days, he was reinstated in his office. The minister, Henry de la Mare, was deposed, for having been present at the ball, and taken the side of the dance and dancers against the Consistory. See Registers of Council, April 1546.

of the thing demanded, and I strongly inveighed against the contempt of God, in that they thought nothing of making a mockery of the sacred obtestations we had used. They persisted in their contumacy. When I was fully informed of the state of the case, I could do nothing but call God to witness that they would pay the penalty of such perfidy; I, at the same time, however, announced my resolution of unbarring the truth, even though it should be at the cost of my own life, lest they should imagine that any profit was to come of lying. Francisca also, the wife of Perrin, grossly abused us, because we were so opposed to the Favres.⁵⁷ I replied as seemed proper, and as she deserved. I inquired whether their house was inviolably sacred, whether it owed no subjection to the laws? We already detained her father in prison, being convicted of one act of adultery,⁵⁸ the proof of a second was close at hand; there was a strong report of a third; her brother had openly contemned and derided the Senate and us. Finally, I added, that a new city must be built for them, in which

⁵⁷ At the head of the opposition to the ministers were observed the different members of the family of Francis Favre, a dissolute old man, and father-in-law of Amy Perrin. Francisca, his daughter, wife of the latter, made herself remarkable by the violence of her invectives against the Consistory. "They remonstrated with her, and made no more account of herself and her father than of the lowest in the city. Being again interrogated whether she would name the dancers, twice replied, that she would rather submit to punishment, and be dragged before all the justices, than appear before the Consistory." – Notes Extracted from the *Registers of the Consistory of Geneva*, by the late Syndic Cramer, 4te, 1853.

⁵⁸ "That the father-in-law of Amy Perrin, who has committed adultery, be also imprisoned, and put upon his trial." – *Registers of Council*. Ibid.

they might live apart, unless they were willing to be restrained by us here under the yoke of Christ; that so long as they were in Geneva, they would strive in vain to cast off obedience to the laws; for were there as many diadems in the house of the Favres as frenzied heads, that that would be no barrier to the Lord being superior. Her husband had meanwhile gone to Lyons, hoping that the matter would be silently buried. I thought that they should be forced to a confession of the truth by an oath. Corna warned them that he would by no means suffer them to perjure themselves. They not only confessed what we wished, but that they, on that day, danced at the house of the widow of Balthazar. They were all cast into prison. The Syndic was an illustrious example of moderation; for he publicly spoke against himself and the whole herd so severely, that it was unnecessary to say much to him. He was, however, severely admonished in the Consistory, being deposed from his office until he gave proof of repentance. They say that Perrin has returned from Lyons; whatever he may do, he will not escape punishment. Henry was stripped of his office with our consent. With him there fell out a ludicrous enough altercation. He had admitted that what had been taken down from the witnesses was true. Meanwhile he had recourse to the defence, 'Against an elder admit no accusation unless before two or three witnesses.' I inquired whose saying this was, – 'Out of thine own mouth I judge thee, worthless servant;' for that now the case did not lie in the trustworthiness of the witnesses, but in his confession. Besides, when he repudiated the witnesses, that

he was pressed by the dilemma, either his confession was true or it was false: if true, there was no further ground for hesitation; but if he had said what was false, he was to be held as answerable for perjury, because he had sworn to something different from the reality. It therefore came to this, that he might say that he had spoken falsely and without regard to principle. When he said that it was unfair that he should be pressed by one who ought to have been his defender, I inquired by what obligation I was bound to him to defend a bad cause, for that I had taken no oath to the Franciscan faction. Much was said to the man, backwards and forwards, but the result was, that he departed loaded with the reproach and odium of all. Being deprived of his ministry, he was, at the same time, thrust into prison, whence, however, he was liberated in three days. There he was a strenuous patron of the dances, that he might embitter, as far as was in his power, the hatred towards me of those who were already more than sufficiently alienated from me. But whatever Satan may essay by the like of him, he will afford a striking example. For two things are already matter of public talk, that there is no hope of impunity since even the first people of the city are not spared, and that I show no more favour to friends than to those opposed to me. Perrin with his wife rages in prison; the widow is absolutely furious; the others are silent from confusion and shame.

Diaz, the Spaniard, whom you saw here, Viret, at the house of Des Gallars, and who, setting out from Neuchatel for Germany, had passed through with the two Senarclens, was most cruelly

put to death. When the Emperor was said to be approaching, he had repaired to Neubourg, a town under the rule of Duke Otho Henry. From that place he wrote to me on the 13th of March. He had a brother at Rome of the name of Alphonso, who came thither with the express design of making away with this godly man. They conferred together for some days. When Juan observed that he was of no service, he left Alphonso. The latter, pretending that he had forgotten something, sends a servant to recall his brother, and put him to death in the house. He followed him to the house, nor did he believe the domestic that the slaughter had been perpetrated until he himself had viewed the corpse. Then he hurried off on fleet horses to the county of Tyrol.⁵⁹ Duke Otho sent the prefect of the palace to demand that he should be given up to punishment. Unless Ferdinand be willing to throw into confusion all things, both human and divine, he must of necessity avenge so base and abominable an outrage. For the prefect has at the same time surrendered himself a prisoner.

Adieu, dearest brethren; may God ever protect you. Salute all friends. You, Farel, will convey to the heads of the citizens my best greeting. I wish that I could one day creep your length, in whatever way it might be possible. – All ours salute you.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* – Opera, tom. ix. p. 38.]

⁵⁹ See the whole of this narrative in the *Histoire des Martyrs*, from the tract of Claude de Senarclens: *Vera Historia de Morte Joannis Diazii Hispani*. 1546.

CLXIV. – To Amy Perrin.⁶⁰

Complaints regarding the conduct of Perrin – firm and courageous declaration by the Reformer of his resolution to persevere in his duty unto death

[April 1546.]

I should willingly have met you, Lord Captain, had it not appeared to me that a different course was expedient. You will have an opportunity of hearing the reason from me at a proper place and time. I could have wished, however, that you had appeared at the Consistory, by way of example to others. As in that respect you did not do your duty, because you had perhaps not been warned, I desired you at least to be present at the close of the meeting to-day, that the Syndic Corna and I might there discuss the matter with you. What there was to prevent you I do not see. But this I wish you to consider, that we can not enjoy weight for weight with an unequal balance; and if impartiality must be observed in the administration of human law, any departure from it cannot be tolerated in the Church

⁶⁰ Letter without date, of which the original French is lost. It is here reproduced from the Latin translation inserted in the collection of the published Latin letters of Calvin, with restoration of date, April 1546.

of God. You yourself either know, or at least ought to know, what I am; that, at all events, I am one to whom the law of my heavenly Master is so dear, that the cause of no man on earth will induce me to flinch from maintaining it with a pure conscience. I cannot believe that you yourself have any other end in view, but I observe that no one has his eyes wide enough open when the case is his own. As far as I am concerned, I desire, in this very matter, to consult not only the edification of the Church and your salvation, but also your convenience, name, and leisure; for how odious would be the imputation which is likely to fall upon you, that you were apparently free from and unrestrained by the common law, to which every one is subject? It is certainly better, and in accordance with my zeal for your welfare, to anticipate the danger than that you should be so branded. I have heard, indeed, what has proceeded from your house, viz., that I should take care lest I stir up a slumbering fire, lest what occurred before should again take place, in the course of the seventh year. But these speeches have no weight with me; for I did not return to Geneva either for the sake of leisure or of gain, nor will it again grieve me to be constrained to leave it. The convenience and safety of Church and State made me willing to return; and if measures are now being taken against me alone, I should wish it to be said, once for all, to all who think me troublesome, "What you do, do quickly." But yet, the unworthy treatment and ingratitude of some parties will not cause me to fail in my duty, and I will lay aside that devoted attachment to this place only with my last

breath, of which I take God as my voucher. Nor will I ever so far yield to the humours of any other individual, as hereafter to dispense with his personal attendance. These observations do not refer to you, but to that member of your family that is nearest to you. Nor do I write them with the view of spreading quarrels, but that it may be manifest with what firmness I am about to proceed, whatever may happen. I am especially desirous to impress upon you the necessity of earnestly seeking to acquire the primary virtue of obedience to God, and respect for the common order and polity of the Church. May the Lord protect you by his own defence, and discover to you how greatly even the stripes of a sincere friend are to be preferred to the treacherous blandishments of others! – Adieu.

Your attached and sincere brother,

John Calvin.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* Opera, tom. ix. p. 80.]

CLXV. – To Farel and Viret. ⁶¹

Requests in favour of the faithful in France

Geneva, 1st May 1546.

This pious brother is a citizen of Uzés,⁶² a place where many have been utterly ruined by the severity of the ungodly. They have all agreed to try whether any succour is to be found among the Germans. I replied, that I had somewhat greater hope to-day, in that our princes have shewn, by clear indications, their aversion from imprisoning. I had, besides, been reminded that there was a certain person at Worms, sent by the Dauphin, who makes many promises. I am, indeed, aware of the hollowness of courts, but there will be no harm in making trial. I should not have refused

⁶¹ Menaced by a common peril, and having equally to resist the pretensions of Charles V. to universal rule, the King of France and the Protestant Princes of Germany had resumed negotiations, that must seemingly issue in a lasting treaty. This treaty of alliance was for long the object of the prayers and the hopes of Calvin, who reckoned upon extracting from it advantageous results to the French Protestants, and an implicit toleration for churches until then subjected to the most violent persecutions. He pressed Farel and Viret, one or other, to repair to Germany, to hasten the progress of negotiations and determine the conditions of the alliance.

⁶² Is this Uzés a small town of Languedoc, now comprised in the department of Gard? Beza and the historian of the martyrs furnish us with no information on this point.

what they strenuously insisted upon, viz., that I should undertake this journey, were I not still a prisoner, so slow is the process of my convalescence. I hardly know what progress I have hitherto made towards recovery, unless that my sufferings are allayed.⁶³ I have, therefore, left this duty to one of you. Whoever of you finds it convenient will provide the expenses. As you, Viret,⁶⁴ are on the eve of setting out for Berne, it is right that our friend Farel be relieved by you of this burden, if the Senate give its permission. But if you shall not be free to go, Farel himself, I know, will spare neither himself nor his age; certainly otherwise he will be absolutely indispensable. Wherefore, if leave of absence be denied to Viret, take care you do not fail, Farel, for I have almost given a pledge in your name to the brethren. It remains with you, therefore, to fulfil the pledge, even though it were given rashly. Moreover, because, from the present state of the kingdom, it would be in vain to ask of the King what he ought to do of his own accord, we have judged that he must at least be required to undertake the commission of inquiry. This, again, will be equivalent to interdicting the Parliaments from engaging in it. In the next place, he must be asked to nominate extraordinary impartial judges. If this is obtained, a great step will be made. To

⁶³ Desirous of rendering assistance to Calvin during his illness and recovery, the Seigneurs of Geneva decided upon allowing him an attendant at the public expense. – *Registers of Council*, 4th March 1546.

⁶⁴ Viret was on the point of repairing to Berne, in order to discuss certain matters relative to the ordinances of the Reformation in the Pays de Vaud. – Ruchat, vol. v. p. 298.

aim at anything beyond this would, as I said, be superfluous. If the Chancellor is disposed to favour us, all will be well.⁶⁵ But as he is timid and tardy, we must see to it that he is vigorously urged on. Accordingly, not less pains must be taken in these secondary matters than in those of prime importance. But abjuration is always to be expressly excluded; for we do the work of Satan, if we open up a path to the godly whereby they may be permitted to abjure Christ. I diligently commend the whole matter, first to Master James Sturm, whose authority in the conventions is of the highest order; in the next place to Bucer, that he may stimulate those whom he can; again to Sturm and Dr. Ulrich, that they may also interpose the weight of their personal influence. The affair itself will give you counsel. You are not, however, tyros. May the Lord prosper his journey who shall undertake this sacred cause. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

⁶⁵ After the disgrace of the Chancellor Poyet, this high office was filled by François Olivier, Seigneur of Louville, President of the Parliament of Paris. He resigned in 1550, and again became Chancellor in 1559, in order to give his sanction to the lamentable executions of Amboise, which he survived only for a short time.

CLXVI. – To Madame de Falais

Expression of Christian sympathy and condolence on occasion of the illness of M. de Falais

*From Geneva, this 21st of June [1546.]*⁶⁶

Madame, – Notwithstanding that the addition which you have made to your letter has marvellously saddened me, yet nevertheless it was kind to have informed me of it, for that will serve to bestir us, so that we may pray to God with so much the better heart, as danger is to be feared.⁶⁷ And, indeed, I had already heard somewhat thereof by Monsieur Dallein, and Master Peter Viret has confirmed it to me. Beside that in praying to God to look down with pity upon us in this strait, we must look patiently for an outlet such as he shall please to send; and whichsoever way he disposes thereof, that we may be prepared to bear with it in suchwise that it must effectually appear how obedient we are to him. Bethink yourself, also, how by that wearisome sickness and so many relapses, our Lord admonishes

⁶⁶ On the back, in the handwriting of M. de Falais: "Received the 22d July." This note, taken in connection with the beginning of the next letter to M. de Falais, settles the date of the present one.

⁶⁷ M. de Falais was at the time dangerously ill.

you, before the blow, so to strengthen you, that you may not be taken by surprise, whatever may happen. However the event may be, I do well believe that for all that, although he may get the better of it, we must not count, neither he nor myself, upon a long sojourning here below. And possibly you also may very soon after follow us. But, after all, I do not give up hope of more gladsome news.

To conclude, Madame, after having humbly commended me to your good graces, I pray our good Lord to have ever his eye upon you, and to make you know it by experience for your consolation, increasing in you all those graces with which his children ought to be enriched.

Your humble brother, servant, and old friend,

John Calvin.

My wife presents you her humble commendations.

[*Orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CLXVII. – To Farel. ⁶⁸

Excitement caused at Geneva by the Representation of a Play

Geneva, 4th July 1546.

Our plays narrowly escaped being converted into tragedy. When the senate had asked my opinion, I said that I would make no reply unless concerning the common resolution of the brethren. The brethren having been heard, I replied, that for many reasons it did not seem to us expedient that the games should be proceeded with, and at the same time I explained the grounds of our opinion. I said, however, that we did not wish to oppose them, if the senate held out for them. When the day was coming on, Michael, (who had done so once before,) instead of preaching, inveighed against the actors; but so vehement was this second invective, that a concourse of people straightway made

⁶⁸ Certain persons having obtained from the magistrate permission to act in public a *Morality*, entitled, *The Acts of the Apostles*, which had received the approbation of the ministers; one of them, named Michael Cop, less conciliatory than his colleagues, preached a very violent discourse in the church of St. Peter, and said that the women who should mount the theatre to act that farce, would be *shameless creatures*. These words stirred up a great tumult in the city, and Calvin required to put forth all his influence to quiet the agitation, and to preserve the life of his imprudent colleague.

towards me with loud shouts, threats, and what not. And had I not by a strong effort restrained the fury of some of them, they would have come to blows. I endeavoured in the second discourse to appease their exasperation, observing moderation, for I judged that he had acted imprudently in having at an unseasonable time chosen such a theme for declamation. But his extravagance was the more displeasing, since I could by no means approve of what he had said. He maintained it to be true; I firmly denied it. There were some of the brethren who encouraged the man in his obstinacy. About nine in the evening, I was told that a hundred or thereabouts would meet on the following day in the council-room. I immediately called the brethren together: we came to the resolution that we ought to accompany Michael. He was hardly suffered to go out along with me. I bring him to the place of meeting; meanwhile I order the others to be sent for. His accusers indicate their refusal to speak while we are present; for they said they had no concern with me, beyond that they regarded me with reverence, and were therefore unwilling to enter into any dispute with me. I strenuously insist that the cause is common, until it appear that Michael has erred in his duty. We are ordered to withdraw to separate sides of the house; from the opposite party arise seditious shouts; they threateningly assert that they would have killed Michael were it not that they revered me. To restrain the tumult, he was detained in the council-room, but in a respectful manner. On the following day, by the favour of the

Lord, we quieted all disturbances; for Abel,⁶⁹ by the esteem in which he is held, and I by my authority, prevailed with the actors. The senate, however, was on our side. I was so far displeased with it, that it was not more courageous and spirited, for as usual it behaved too timidly; the result is, that the games are now going on. Viret is present as a spectator, who has again returned, according to arrangement, with a view to restore our furious friend to sanity.⁷⁰

Of your brothers I hear absolutely nothing. There is with you one Elie Limousin by name, a native of Rochelle, who has now in a third letter asked me to certify to you what I have known of his former life. Pious people who come from that district declare that he was an upright man, and of honourable life, and also that he was unmarried when he removed thence to us. There is no reason, therefore, why any suspicion of this nature should be a hindrance to his marriage. You will apologize for my not having replied to him, and also for having so cursorily gone over to you what perhaps demanded a longer discourse. Adieu, dearest brother in the Lord, and most sincere friend. Salute respectfully all the brethren; there is no salutation from any one here to you

⁶⁹ The minister, Abel Poupin, exerted his interest with the actors to appease the tumult excited by his colleague.

⁷⁰ It is seen by this instance, that Calvin was not so stern as to proscribe public games and amusements that harmonized with decency. "He himself made no scruple in engaging in play with the seigneurs of Geneva; but that was the innocent game of the *key*, which consists in being able to push the keys the nearest possible to the edge of a table." – Morus, quoted *Hist. de la Suisse*, vol. xi. p. 356.

or them, as no one knew I was going to write except Nicolas, the father-in-law of a brother, who came in. May the Lord be ever present with you, and bless your sacred labours.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp. Opera*, tom. ix. p. 43.]

CLXVIII. – To Monsieur de Falais

Proposals of matrimony on behalf of Viret

Geneva, 4th July 1546.

Monseigneur, – You see, by the date of the other letters, what a length of time they have lain by me since they were written, forasmuch as the bearer could not find means to fill his letter-case; whereof I wished to inform you, fearing that you might suppose that he had kept them up for such a length of time in his own hands. We are in great anxiety for news concerning you, on account of the rumour which is abroad. The Lord graciously vouchsafe that you may have matter wherewith to gladden us. Now, however, since the bearer has been tarrying for a while, I have taken upon me, Monsieur, to make a request of you. You know that our brother Viret is about to marry. I am in as great anxiety about it as himself. We have plenty of wives here, both at Lausanne and at Orbe; but yet there has not hitherto appeared a single one with whom I should feel at all satisfied. While we have this matter in hand, I would beseech you earnestly, if you have remarked any one in your quarter who appears to you likely to suit him, that you would please let me know of it. I have not thought fit to apply to any other than yourself, seeing that every

one has not the prudence which is herein required. You may reply to me, that I am at least acquainted with some one in your neighbourhood; but I shall not venture to breathe a word before having your opinion, which you can tell me in one word, for I shall hold your silence for a *non placet*.⁷¹ I have not felt the least difficulty in addressing you privately in regard to this, although the subject may be rather delicate, for the necessity of the case would excuse me, were I even somewhat importunate, because there was no one else in whom it appeared safe to confide; and I am well aware that, for your part, knowing of how much consequence the marriage of such a man is for the Church of God, you would not spare yourself any pains therein. Indeed, I would not hinder your acting directly for him, supposing that a suitable party can be found there; but in regard to asking advice, I have taken for granted that you will allow me that liberty.

In conclusion, Monseigneur, after having commended me to your kind favour with such affection as that wherewith I love you, I pray our good Lord to have always a care of you, guiding you in suchwise that you may be more and more serviceable for the advancement of his glory.

Your servant, humble brother, and entire friend,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. copy – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

⁷¹ Allusion to a sister of M. de Falais.

CLXIX. – To Viret

Account of the steps taken relative to his marriage

13th July 1546.

Think of what you are going to do, and then write to me again what resolution you have come to. The more we inquire, the more numerous and the better are the testimonies with which the young lady is honoured. Accordingly, I am now seeking to discover the mind of her father. As soon as we have reached any certainty, I will let you know. Meanwhile, do you make yourself ready. This match does not please Perrin, because he wishes to force upon you the daughter of Rameau. That makes me the more solicitous about pre-occupying the ground in good time, lest we be obstructed by having to make excuses. To-day, as far as I gather, he will enter upon the subject with me, for we are both invited by Corna to supper. I will gain time by a civil excuse. It would tend to promote the matter if I, with your permission, should ask her. I have seen her twice; she is very modest, with an exceedingly becoming countenance and person. Of her manners, all speak so highly that John Parvi lately told me, he had been captivated by her. Adieu; may the Lord govern you by his counsel, and bless us in an undertaking of such moment. –

Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

CLXX. – To Viret

Fresh details regarding the projects for his marriage

Geneva, 15th July 1546.

Three days ago, towards the conclusion of supper, mention was made of your marriage, which I had foretold you would be the case. But Dominic Arlot, whose assistance I had employed, presently interrupted the conversation; for he said that the matter was completed. On hearing this our friend instantly sprung up from table, and, in his usual way, gave reins to his indignation; for, says he, his whole body shaking, "Will he then marry that girl of low connections? Could there not be found for him in the city one of better family? Whoever have been the originators or abettors of this business, I regard them as vile and infamous. Of a brother and sister I am thus unwillingly compelled to speak." I, in reply, say, "I could not be the originator of it, inasmuch as the young lady was unknown to me. I acknowledge that I was a promoter of it, and, indeed, the principal one; but that the matter is finally settled, as Dominic has asserted, is not true, beyond this, that I have gone so far in it that to draw back would be dishonourable. In that there is nothing for me to be ashamed of." His fury was thus turned into laughter. But he again began to

grow hot, because the matter had been concealed from him by you. He was especially inflamed with a foolish jealousy, because Corna confessed that you and he, while riding, had talked over the thing together. "Is it even so?" he proceeded to say to Corna. "Was it for this I attended him along with you, that he might in the most insulting manner shut out from his counsels the most attached friend he has in the world? [for] I would cheerfully prefer him to myself."

I objected that he himself drew a false conclusion, since you had not disclosed your mind even to Farel. He was, therefore, again pacified, though he talked of the daughter of Rameau, whom he extolled in an extraordinary manner. I nodded assent to all the encomiums, that I might remain firm in regard to the other party.

Consider, now, whether it be expedient for you to come into the city disengaged. For there will be a hateful apologizing, if they proceed to obtrude her upon you. I know how dangerous even it may be to give a promise before the natural disposition of the girl has been ascertained. I am full of anxiety, nor can I easily clear a way for myself. I think, however, that this course would not be ridiculous. Suppose you consent to my asking the young lady in your name, the condition being added, that before the betrothal takes place, you are to meet her, that we may give some certain promise. They will thus not dare to press you. Write in return, therefore, by the earliest possible messenger what your views are, although, at the same time, I give it as my advice that

you should not delay long, but come on an early day. Of the lady, I hear nothing that is not highly pleasing. In her father and mother, also, there is nothing blamable. I am the more confirmed, when I see that our opponents have nothing to carp at beyond this, that it was impossible for them to frighten us from our purpose. There are some things about the daughter of Rameau which I fear; nevertheless, as it is your own affair, you will be free to choose. I will never, however, allow that there is any man on earth who has greater concern about his own matters than I have about the present.

This youth came to us from Italy, with the view of giving his attention to sacred literature, if a situation had been found such as he had hoped for. But as he has been disappointed, he wished, before he returned home, to pay you a visit. I have observed in him a truly good disposition. You will say a few words to confirm him in the fear of the Lord, and in reverence for his teaching. – Adieu. May the Lord direct you by his counsel, and bless you in a recommendation of so much moment. Salute respectfully all the brethren. – Yours,

John Calvin.

Forgive me for not having, some time ago, sent to you this letter by our treasurer – I mean Bucer's, for, as the messenger brought it open, I thought that it had been already read by you and Farel. Afterwards, he reminded me that not even Toussain had read it. You will therefore send it to Farel, as soon as you shall have an opportunity. I am surprised that Bucer was not

aroused by the murderous outrage so greatly to be execrated, which the Emperor perpetrated when he struck off the heads of the principal senators at Ratisbon. I am also surprised that he has made no mention of the incendiaries, but I set it down partly to his engagements. The other matter he has perhaps passed over on purpose, because he did not dare to commit everything to writing in these dubious times.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

CLXXI. – To Viret

Same subject as the preceding

[July 1546.]

Only say the word, the thing is settled. I should never have been in such haste, had I not been stimulated by so many remarkable testimonies. But nothing gave me a greater impulse than the desire to be freed from those embarrassments of which you are aware.

Adieu, again. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.]

CLXXII. – To Viret.⁷²

Breaking off of the match treated of in the preceding letters

Geneva, 25th July 1546.

What I wrote to you, by the treasurer, regarding the settlement of the matter, was told to me by Peter Ursier, whom I was then employing as negotiator; because I was unwilling to say anything myself, until I had received a more definite commission. But after reading your letter, I waited on the father and daughter, that I might be absolutely certain of success. As soon, however, as reference was made to a change of residence, the father took exception to it, on the ground that something different had been promised him. I said that no promise to that effect had been made with our knowledge; and, moreover, that I had carefully enjoined

⁷² The project of marriage, developed in the two preceding letters, not having been realized, Viret turned his attention in another direction; and a passage in his will, preserved in the Archives of Geneva, informs us that he espoused, in his second marriage, Elizabeth Laharpe, daughter of a French refugee of Lausanne. This marriage was celebrated in October or November 1546, and the nuptial benediction was pronounced by Calvin himself, who, in a subsequent letter, (of the 3d December,) makes allusion to the journey which he had accomplished, in order to be present at the nuptials of his friend.

Peter Ursier not to cajole them by such promises. I pointed out how absurd it would be if we were to leave our churches to follow whither our wives called us; that a marriage consummated under such a condition would be an unhappy, because an unholy, alliance, that would not pass without punishment falling on both you and the girl; finally, that you would never be prevailed upon to afford the first example of so disgraceful a practice, and, therefore, that it was in vain to make the request. I added, that Lausanne was not so far distant from this as to prevent his daughter from being with him as often as might be necessary; that it would, likewise, be more satisfactory to have daily to congratulate his absent daughter than constantly to see and hear her weeping and bewailing the cruelties of her husband, which he observed was the case with so many. He requested space for deliberation, and, at the end of three days, he replied, that he was unwilling to send his only daughter from home. I felt greatly indignant at being so deluded by the folly of those in whom I trusted. I restrained myself, however, and dissembled my anger. But I do not need to offer any more lengthened excuse to you, as I am free from all blame. We may accordingly turn to some other quarter. Christopher spoke to me of a certain widow, who, he asserts, pleases him admirably. If such is the case, I am at rest, and leave it. But if not, indicate your mind. We shall very shortly, also, have a messenger from Strasbourg. – Adieu, brother, and most sincere friend. Salute all the co-presbyters very affectionately. May the Lord preserve you all safe, and direct you

by his Holy Spirit even to the end. – Yours,

John Calvin.

Excuse me for not writing by the female servant of Petronilla, for I was not then fully aware of the state of the case; in other words, there was still a gleam of hope.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

CLXXIII. – To Farel

Violence of the family of Amy Perrin – declamations of the wife of Froment against the ministers of Geneva

Geneva, [1st September 1546.]

Although the letter was not in every respect to my mind, for I was afraid that its undue harshness might hurt so delicate a stomach, I took care to have it forwarded, but in such a way that he should not know that I had seen it.⁷³ For this person conveyed it to his house as if it had been intrusted by you to himself. Should he thunder after his peculiar fashion, his bolts will die away in mere clatter. I not only appear before him, but almost obtrude myself upon him; only, I observe a mean, that I may keep in mind the place I hold; nor is this done on my own account, but because the man, being accustomed to adulation, would abuse my modesty, to the derision of Christ. I therefore despair of him, unless God apply a remedy. His wife is an unnatural fury.

⁷³ At the request of Calvin, Farel had written a letter to Amy Perrin, in order to calm his resentment, and lead him back to the good path. The message of Farel, like that of Calvin himself, was without effect, and the quarrel between the Reformer and his old friend, now his adversary, became daily more confirmed and violent.

The widow N. is so shamelessly wanton, that you would say she is quite youthful. Then, having an evil conscience, she is excited by every word that is spoken before the congregation, and discharges upon us at home the venom she harbours. She has manifested towards you, however, marvellous good-will; for she took to her house your two nephews, when they were dangerously ill, and treats them as her own sons. This kind office deserves a liberal meed of thanks, which you will not omit to convey to her, whenever a messenger shall present himself. She is so opposed to all of us, that I believe Cæsar⁷⁴ himself is not more of an enemy; and yet, I confess I do not know what cause is to be assigned for this, unless that she shamelessly undertakes the defence of all her crimes.

I am now going to give you a humorous story. The wife of Froment⁷⁵ lately came to this place. She declaimed through all the shops, and at almost all the cross-roads, against long garments. When she knew that I was aware of it, she excused herself by alleging that she had said with a smile, that we were either unbecomingly clothed, to the great detriment of the Church, or that you taught what was erroneous, when you said that false prophets could be distinguished by their long vestments. When I was rebutting so stale a calumny, she began

⁷⁴ A term frequently employed by Calvin to designate Perrin, with the adjunct of a derisive epithet, – *Cæsar our comedian*.

⁷⁵ See note 1, vol. i. p. 343. It appears, from this passage, that Froment was not at that time settled in Geneva. He was called thither a short time afterwards to assist Francis Bonivard in digesting the Chronicles of the city.

to ascribe even to the Holy Spirit what she had directed against us. What is the meaning, said she, of that passage of the Gospel, "They will come to you in long garments?" I replied, that I did not know where that sentence was to be found, unless, perhaps, it might occur in the gospel of the Manichæans; for the passage of Luke xx. 45, is as follows: "Beware of the Scribes, who desire to walk in long robes," but not, "They will come to you," &c., which she had interpolated from Matthew vii. [15.] Feeling that she was closely pressed, she complained of our tyranny, because there was not a general license of prating about everything. I dealt with the woman as I should have done. She immediately proceeded to the widow of Michael, who gave her a hospitable reception, sharing with her not only her table, but her bed, because she maligned the ministers. I leave these wounds untouched, because they appear to me incurable until the Lord apply his hand. We are to celebrate the Supper on the next Lord's-day. You may thus form a judgment of the straits by which I am encompassed. Would that it could be celebrated without me, even on condition that I should creep to you on my hands! I wish that the verse of Terence would occur to your brothers, "To lose in time is to make gain." I have admonished them, but they do not make the haste I wished. They may bear, however, for a short time the delay that has taken place, although it is disagreeable to us. – Adieu, brother and most sincere friend. Salute respectfully, in my name, all the brethren, your family, and the godly citizens. May the Lord preserve you, and always direct you by his Spirit! Amen.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* – Opera, vol. ix. p. 38.]

CLXXIV. – To Farel

Calvin's indisposition – literary labours – apparent reconciliation with Perrin and his family

Geneva, 2d October 1546.

Not to beguile you by a vain hope, I may say that I do not think I shall come to your place before winter; for having once experienced the inconvenience of a voyage, I shall not venture again to commit myself to the waters. A good part of the journey would thus fall to be accomplished on foot, for the jolting of a horse is not only hurtful to me, but the rubbing also is dangerous. I am not acquainted with the physician of whom you speak, nor do I rightly understand what druggist you blame, unless, as I conjecture, you hint at Francis. What Textor may now think I do not know, except that he was too stringent in his prescriptions. For by involving himself in the lawsuits of his father, he has woven, in his native place, a Penelope's web that will have no end. Meanwhile, you see him complaining that he was deprived of my advice. But this peevishness of the good man must somehow or other be tolerated by us. As you exhort me to write, I wish I had more leisure occasionally, and more robust health. I have now,

however, set myself in earnest to the Epistle to the Galatians.⁷⁶ I am not free in the matter of publication, as far at least as the Epistles of Paul are concerned. You once heard from me when I was at Strasbourg, that Wendelin laid me under obligations by services of such a nature, that I should be constrained to charge myself with ingratitude unless I offered this work to him. For at the time of my greatest straits, he expended on my behalf above forty golden pieces, and he was not less prompt in his assistance in taking charge of my domestic affairs, than if I had hired him for the express purpose of superintending them. I am, therefore, now not at liberty to refuse him the Epistles. If I should write anything else, it will rather be published here, and yet Des Gallars could find no one to undertake to bring out two short treatises he had composed. Before, however, I subject my writings to any risk, I shall retain a copy. I left off for a time a short treatise, *De Scandalis*,⁷⁷ that I had begun, because the style did not flow so freely as I wished, nor have I a mind to resume it, until I shall have completed the Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. I had lately some conversation with our friend Perrin. If he perform what he promised, matters will not be at the very worst.⁷⁸ Penthesilæa, while in her outward deportment she

⁷⁶ The Commentaries on the four Epistles of St. Paul to the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, and the Colossians, were not published until 1548, by the bookseller Girard, of Geneva. Is there a previous edition of the Commentary on the Galatians? We are not aware of any.

⁷⁷ This, one of the most remarkable of the works of Calvin, appeared only in 1550.

⁷⁸ This apparent reconciliation was without satisfactory result. Perrin could not

affects a wonderful friendship, rages within doors in a terrible manner. I observe that you have written to her. I shall call for her on the earliest opportunity. I shall then discover what effect your letter has had. – Adieu, brother and most sincere friend. May the Lord be ever present with you, always protect you, and render your labours prosperous! I wrote to the ministers of Berne. If you desire to know the contents of the letter Viret, I think, retained a copy. My wife reverently salutes you, as also Des Gallars, Feron, my brother, (for since I received yours I have not seen the others.) The best greeting to the brethren and friends, and to your whole family. – Yours,

John Calvin.

I had no talk with Perrin about your letter. I was unwilling to touch that sore, until it should have been somewhat mollified by the lapse of time. If there is any news, provided it be certain, let us immediately know, I pray you.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

tolerate, nor Calvin sacrifice, the right of censure vested in the Consistory, and which the excesses of the *Libertins* daily rendered more necessary. "Complaints to the Council by M. Calvin regarding the dissoluteness of the youth, there being nothing more common in the city than acts of debauchery and licentiousness." – *Registers of Council*, 11th October 1546.

CLXXV. – To Monsieur de Falais

Recurrence to the matrimonial projects of Viret – explanations on various subjects

From Geneva, this 4th of October 1546.

Monseigneur, – While hour after hour I was on the lookout for James on his return from Lyons, to reply to you by him, I was amazed the other day when my brother told me that he had passed through without speaking with me. And now it happens that I must write you very much in haste, because of the sudden departure of the bearer. It is very true I was told of it yesterday, but it was at eight o'clock at night, when my megrim troubled me so severely, that it was with great pain I could open my mouth. This morning I thought that he would be gone away, until at the end of the sermon, he told me that he would wait a quarter of an hour to oblige me; wherefore, I must beg of you to excuse the brevity.

As to the affair of the individual for whose sake I have made the request, he has replied to me, thanking you very humbly for the kind affection you have shewn him; that he would desire above all things to have communication with the party, fearing lest, from the want of a mutual understanding, they might not

assort so well together in future. Besides, while these troubles last, it appeared to him that the journey could not be well undertaken, and I am much of that opinion; for thereby there would be some danger of a long protraction of the affair, and this is by no means your intention, which I find very reasonable. As for the rest, there is no sort of hindrance arising from health; but I find this to be an annoyance, that a matter, uncertain at any rate, should be kept for so long in suspense, although I do not find fault with his request, considering the reasons which he has alleged to me for it, that it is necessary that the wife he shall take may be informed beforehand of some domestic charges which he is obliged to bear. Besides, love requires previous acquaintance, and the household affairs never go on well without a private mutual understanding, and a settlement of the conditions required on both sides. The mischief is, the waiting for that length of time; and besides, I do not see any great object to be gained by it. I pray God that, in any event, he would well order it.

About the book,⁷⁹ it strikes me that I have told you enough already of what occurred to me, and therefore I do not comprehend wherefore you ask my opinion anew, unless it might be to shew it to him. Besides, he will take it better, methinks, if it may please you, to shew him the passage of my letter on that point, the more that I speak therein more freely, not knowing the

⁷⁹ M. de Falais had sent Calvin a theological work by a certain Denis de la Roche, requesting his opinion of it.

author. Nevertheless, if it appears to you that there is somewhat more to be said, when you shall please to inform me of it, I will follow your advice.

Furthermore, Antony Maillet has written to me, that he had spoken to Peter Telsen, and tells me that the twelve crowns which Master Valerand has disbursed, are to be refunded to you, although I need not be in very much haste about it, but suit my own convenience. I know not whether he has done so by mistake, but if he has still twelve crowns to pay, Peter Telsen must have laid out twice as much as he ought; for I have sent you twelve crowns by my brother, the which you have told me you had received. Notwithstanding, if Peter Telsen have failed to do so, I would not that you should be the loser, albeit I know not for what purpose he can have employed the money; but as to that, it will be my business to settle with him. Before saying a word about it, I was desirous to know the truth. I pray you, then, that you may please let me know whether, besides the twelve crowns which my brother returned to you, there has a still further sum of like amount gone out of your purse. Seeing that they have roused so much indignation down there, I see not what hinders you to publish your *Apology*, and it seems to me very fit that you do so. Nevertheless, I say what I think about it without prejudice. The rest remains still in the pen, for the bearer has not given me a long enough time. And thus, Monseigneur, after commending me humbly to your kind favour and that of Madame, I pray our good Lord to have you always in his keeping, vouchsafing you

grace in suchwise ever to walk, that he may be ever more and more glorified in you. I render thanks to him for that he hath set you up again, but I beseech of him to increase you in strength daily, until you are completely restored. My wife presents her humble commendations.

Your servant, humble brother, and entire friend,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. copy – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CLXXVI. – To Madame de Falais

Sad communication to be made to M. de Falais – promise to send several discourses

From Geneva, this 19th of October [1546.]

Madame, – Forasmuch as you informed me by your last, that you sent me therewith the letter of Monsieur de Fresne, I feared that the bearer had not done his duty in taking proper care of what had been committed to him. But he has assured me that he had received nothing else but what he has delivered to me. Wherefore, I guess that it has been left behind by neglect. I believe that your intention in sending it to me, was in order to have my advice how to inform Monsieur of it.⁸⁰ Now, as he must be made aware of the news, I could have no hesitation in opening up somewhat of the business, whenever he shall be in a good humour, and then telling him all about it. Except when he is ailing, he is not a man that lets himself be overcome by sadness, and who does not know how to make a profitable improvement of the grace which God vouchsafes him for his consolation.

He has put me in mind that you were complaining lately

⁸⁰ Allusion to the death of one of the sisters of M. de Falais, which they had not ventured to communicate to him.

of Monsieur enjoying himself all alone in the reading of my Commentary.⁸¹ You request me also to have some thought of those who only understand French, that they also may partake, and you ask for my sermons. Well, if there had been a demand for putting them forth, I would indeed have set about it in good earnest; but that will not be this year. However, if God bestow grace to finish the Epistle to the Galatians, which ought to be summary, I have the framework of something of a treatise which shall speak French as well as Latin, that may prove somewhat useful, as I hope.

After having affectionately commended me to your kind favour, and presented the humble salutations of my wife, I beseech our good Lord to have you in his safeguard, making you more and more serviceable for the advancement of his kingdom.

Your servant and humble brother,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

⁸¹ The Commentary on the First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians, dedicated to M. de Falais.

CLXXVII. – To Monsieur de Falais

**Congratulations on his convalescence –
uncertainty of prospects in Germany –
confidence in the all-powerful protection of God**

From Geneva, this 19th of October 1546.

Monseigneur, – I believe that you have received my last letter, by which you will have understood that yours had been delivered by Alexander, but somewhat tardily. I give thanks to our good Lord affectionately for the news which Madame has communicated to me of the recovery of your health. I hope that it may please Him, who has begun so well, that in the spring you will feel yourself so nimble that you will not know how to restrain your merriment, so as to make up for past time. We shall look for that, and for all else, as it shall please him of his infinite goodness to allot, having good expectance that the rage which the Court of *Malines* has vented upon you will pass off in smoke.⁸²

I believe that it will soon be time to sound a retreat for both camps.⁸³ I pray God so to direct the whole that the upshot

⁸² The confiscation of the property of M. de Falais had been pronounced by the Court of Malines. That decree had been submitted to the confirmation of the Emperor.

⁸³ The sentence which put the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse to the

may prove for the advancement of his own honour. I am better pleased that he makes war upon that unhappy tyrant with his own hand, than otherwise. For if we were to attempt anything of importance, I should always fear the fatal consequences of the presumption. We have never yet heard what has become of that harebrained fellow, the Count de Buren,⁸⁴ whether he has passed on with his army, or whether he has been driven back. Howsoever it may be, *it is not the multitude nor the arm of flesh that can prevail.*

Master Valerand is returning; you shall know better from him the whole state of your affairs. Howbeit, I see no other means, unless you yield somewhat on your side, until God opens up a better. You will know who this bearer is, and his purpose in going to you. Because I believed his determination to be right, I have not desired to turn him back from it.

To conclude, Monseigneur, after my humble commendation to your kind favour, I shall pray our good Lord to have ever his hand stretched out to guide you by his grace.

Your servant, humble brother and entire friend,

ban of the Empire, 20th July 1546, was the signal for war in Germany. The Imperial army, and that of the Protestant Princes, observed one another for several months, on the banks of the Danube, without the one being able to obtain any decisive advantage over the other. But the troops of Charles the Fifth were decimated by want and sickness while there was an overabundance in the camp of the confederates.

⁸⁴ Maximilian d'Egmont, Count de Buren, a valiant and adventurous captain. He brought a powerful reinforcement to Charles the Fifth from the Netherlands, and he executed that difficult operation with the most happy success.

John Calvin.

My wife also entreats to be always humbly commended to your kind favour.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CLXXVIII. – To Monsieur de Falais

Excuses for Viret – uses of sickness – various rumours concerning the war in Germany – explanations on the subject of the Supper

From Geneva, this 16th of November 1546.

Monseigneur, – Although I was expecting a letter from you from day to day, I could not let this messenger go away without writing, to make some reply to your last. I shall begin upon the subject of the little book which you sent me. Having read my answer, and the opinion I had of it, you have mentioned to me the name of the author; and because he is somewhat opinionative, you request me to let you know my mind about it, in order that you may tell him on his return the opinion you have formed. Your words are these, "The author is Denis de la Roche, who has requested of me that I would send it you privately. In consequence of this I feel puzzled how to set about finding fault, for I fear he will suspect that the criticism comes from you, and he is a little proud, and withal tenacious of his own views. Inasmuch as you have known him longer than I, write me your advice, so that upon his return I may be able to tell him the judgment which I have come to, when he shall ask me for it."

You must hold me excused in this matter. I know not how to proceed therein, since I have already shortly stated to you my opinion in regard to it. If you ask me for a lengthened discussion, I could not do it so well as when it was fresh in my recollection; and indeed I have doubtless forgotten part of what I formerly wrote. What made me doubtful as to your drift, was that it seemed to me you were asking me to do over again what I had already done. And even now I do not comprehend wherefore you would have a new declaration of my opinion, unless you were dissatisfied with the first. It would be very difficult for me to discuss in detail the things which have escaped me. For I have retained but a confused idea of the general argument, and of some points here and there.

As concerns the marriage in reference to which I have put you in requisition,⁸⁵ I beseech you, Monseigneur, to believe what I shall tell you, for I shall recount the pure truth without any dissimulation whatever. The reason which induced me to write you about it was, that a party had been proposed here who was no wise suitable for him. But on account of the forwardness of some of those who had meddled in the affair, we had very great difficulty in getting the proposal set aside. And so, to break the blow, it was my earnest desire to have found some one in another quarter; for there would have been less envy and jealousy had he taken one from a distance, as we have already had ample experience in the murmurs which some have made when we

⁸⁵ For Peter Viret. See preceding letters to M. de Falais, pp. 63 and 74.

would not follow their leading-string. I assure you, however, that he has not been making indirect application elsewhere. But without reference either to her whom you kindly named in your reply, nor yet to any other, I have thought it advisable, under the circumstances of the case, to recommend the man to you. Then you know the first letter loitered long upon the way, before we had any news from you, which was the occasion of my writing again, and that at his own instance, although I did not comprehend very clearly why. For in the meantime, from what I have since learnt, he had a proposition from another quarter. Nevertheless, after receiving tidings from you, I communicated with himself, and the result was such as I have told you, without feigned civility or double-dealing. Since then, I have understood that the proposal about a widow was still under consideration, although to this hour I know not how it stands. And so far was I from meddling, that knowing in this town of a widow as well endowed as I could have wished for myself if God had so far afflicted me as to have deprived me of my helpmate,⁸⁶ and that there was a necessity for my marrying again; on considering the other proposals which were under consideration, I have not felt inclined to bring forward her name. And notwithstanding, I have no doubt whatever that it would prove an admirable match for him. But all the more that I refrained from active friendly

⁸⁶ Calvin lost his wife, Idelette de Bure, in the beginning of April 1549, and never married again. His Latin correspondence contains two beautiful and touching letters to Viret and to Farel (7th and 11th April) on that sad event. They will be found reprinted in this collection.

interference, it was sufficient for me to commit him to God, and to let the stream find its own channel. You see how I have thanked you without hypocrisy, now that I have set before you the difficulties that I have had here. And I do not think that there was any want of honesty in the man for whom I spoke; indeed I might venture to assure you of it. But purposes change in a few hours. Seeing the present position of matters, I did not like to communicate to him anything of what was contained in your letter. I shall not trouble you with long excuses; and besides, it is well that the thing has not taken wind. Wherefore, if you think fit, consider the whole matter as if it had never been mooted. Meanwhile, your goodwill toward me must not be buried out of mind, nor toward the man who is principally concerned in the affair. For I assure you that he was truly grateful for your interference, and I know that he has it imprinted on his heart, although it was attended with no result.

With regard to the money which has been laid out on account of our child, that you may not be further troubled about it, Antony Maillet will settle the amount. And now, please God, I shall do my duty, thanking you most affectionately that you have been pleased to have patience until the settlement could be made.

Since the *Apology* has not yet gone forth, it is very desirable to have the news which Master Valeran⁸⁷ may bring along with him. And, indeed, over and above the circumstance which has

⁸⁷ Valeran Poulain, of Lille, who was at a later period minister of the French Church at Frankfort.

befallen in your particular case, the general declaration which the man has made against the whole cause, well deserves that the style should be altered, and that some additions be interwoven. And seeing that God has allowed you to wait so long, he will so end all as to instruct you the more certainly.

Although I have indeed heard of a man having been seized at Berne for poisoning and fire-raising, nevertheless, I have so little correspondence in that quarter, that I have heard nothing of it but upon common report. On which account I did not care to say much to you about it. If it be really so as has been related to you, I must acknowledge that it is a good thing that God is more concerned about my life than are my neighbours.

Although your weakness may be protracted, it is much that you go on steadily, though by slow degrees, in the way of amendment. And when I consider the complaint, I feel that there is still greater reason to be well content. Notwithstanding, we shall not give over praying to God that it would please him to confirm you entirely, with thanksgiving that he has brought you back from the brink of the grave. Besides, I hope, from present appearances, that he is minded yet to make use of you in health, since he has employed you in sickness. For although laid powerless upon a bed, we are by no means useless to him, if we testify our obedience by resigning ourselves to his good pleasure, – if we give proof of our faith by resisting temptation, – if we take advantage of the consolation which he gives us in order to overcome the troubles of the flesh. It is in sickness,

especially when prolonged, that patience is most needful; but most of all in death. Nevertheless, as I have said, I confide in this good God, that after having exercised you by sickness he will still employ your health to some good purpose. Meanwhile, we must beseech him that he would uphold us in steadfast courage, never permitting us to fall away because of lengthened on-waiting.

Howsoever doubtful the retreat of Renard⁸⁸ may be, it is nevertheless no small matter, that instead of reaching the point aimed at, which would have been his great advantage, he has made a crablike movement backwards. And from what we have heard, he has left behind the marks of the persecution of God's hand. I am much better pleased that God should cut off his finger than we his arm. Not that that is not still God's work, which he performs by us, but I always fear so much the effect of glory, that I rejoice the more when it is plainly the doing of the Lord. And the unhappy man has likewise still greater occasion to feel uneasiness at heart. Whatever may come of it, I think that I have only spoken the truth, after the news of his departure, in writing what follows: – Whither is he going? Whither is he gone? What will become of that wicked man? – By thus driving him away, God has at least lowered his pride.

A report is afloat, which troubles and plagues more than it astonishes me. It is that Maurice has entered into an understanding with him to ruin his own cousin and his father-in-

⁸⁸ The Emperor Charles V. See note 2, p. 78.

law, and in the end to ruin himself;⁸⁹ for Satan must assuredly have got entire possession of him. We shall await, however, whatsoever shall please God, prepared to accept all that shall please him.

Concerning the advice which you require of me, whether it were expedient to refresh the memory of the ambassadors: before I had an opportunity of writing to you, the time to do so had gone by; I therefore rather held my peace, not so much from forgetfulness as from this consideration: *Ne pluvia post messem*.

There is one point, however, that I think I have forgotten, namely, the complaint they make, that it appears I would shut up the body in the bread alone. I know not where they have dreamed that dream. In several treatises I speak of that matter, but chiefly in the *Institution*, in the *Catechism*, in the *Commentary on Corinthians*, and in the manner of administration of the Lord's Supper. In the *Supplication* I have only touched upon it very lightly. Besides that, I have written a little book upon the subject, in which I believe a reader of sound judgment will meet with nothing to find fault with. But here is their mistake: many think that we make no distinction between the sign and the truth signified, unless we separate them entirely, to make God like a mountebank, who exhibits delusive representations by sleight of hand. It is our duty, however, to proclaim, that this comes by

⁸⁹ Maurice of Saxony, cousin of the Elector John Frederic, and son-in-law of the Landgrave of Hesse, unworthily betraying the cause of the Confederates, concluded a secret treaty with the emperor, to whom he took the oath of fidelity, and who guarantied to him in return the spoils of his father-in-law.

the craft of Satan, who only seeks to bewilder the understanding, that he may render our labours of no avail. Let us therefore pray to God that he would bestow increase by his grace, so that our labour may not be in vain. Such examples ought to incite us thereto, and likewise to admonish us, not to think that we have done some great thing by merely having written.

Monsieur, having presented the humble commendations of myself, as well as of my wife, to your kind favour, and also that of Madame, I pray our good Lord, that it would please him ever to preserve you in his holy protection, strengthening you in all might by his Spirit, making his glory to shine forth in you ever more and more.

I beg to be excused for faults, for I have not been able to revise the present letter, being engrossed by headache with which I have been seized. Our friend and brother, Des Gallars,⁹⁰ also humbly commends himself to you, and sends you a distich which he has composed upon Renard. We greatly desire to have some news. If the war did not give holiday to the printing-presses, I would have sent Vendelin the *Galatians*; but since the *Corinthians* lie quiet in his desk, there is no need for my being in any hurry.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

⁹⁰ Nicolas des Gallars, of Paris, (M. de Saules,) the friend and secretary of Calvin, and one of the most distinguished ministers of Geneva. He was sent as pastor to the Church at Paris in 1557, reappointed in 1560 to the French Church of London, assisted the following year at the conference at Poissy, was named minister of the Church of Orleans, and became, in 1571, preacher to the Queen of Navarre. We have several of his works mentioned by Senebier, *Hist. Litt.*, tom. i. p. 341.

CLXXIX. – To Monsieur de Falais

Consolations on the death of his sister

From Geneva, this 20th of November 1546.

Monseigneur, – The day before Camus arrived, I had written to you, as well as to others, by a young tailor of Picardy; but because I was not certain whether they had as yet informed you of the death of Madame your sister,⁹¹ I did not venture to mention it. Now I have rejoiced, and have thanked God with my whole heart, perceiving by the letter of Madame that you had at once taken your stand upon the point whereon I would have founded my principal argument, if I had wished to console you. And, indeed, you have much occasion for gratitude on account of the grace which God has vouchsafed to her, and to you also. For seeing that her husband had waxed so cold, the good lady would have been in an unhappy captivity had she remained longer in the world, and would only have languished her life away. On your part, you would not have had it in your power to lend her a helping hand, nor to solace her sorrows; and so you never could have thought of her without regret and vexation. God, therefore, has had pity upon you and her, in thus providing, and above all, in preventing

⁹¹ Helène de Falais. She had married Adrien de L'Isle, Seigneur de Trénoy.

the dangers into which she might have fallen in a long career, by reason of the frailty which is in us. And we have yet a better ground of further consolation, that it will not be long ere we find ourselves together again. Meanwhile, let us think of preparing ourselves to follow her, for the time will soon come. But I like much better to congratulate you, seeing that our Lord has already put these things in your heart, than to labour in recalling them to your memory. The other news which Camus has told me about you, has also cheered me to await the time when God will bring to pass what he has put into so good a train.

Monseigneur, after humble commendations to your kind favour, and having presented the humble remembrances of my wife, I pray our good Lord to have you ever in his safeguard, to strengthen you in body and in spirit, so as always to make you more abound in his service.

Your humble servant and bounden friend,

John Calvin.

I assure you that you make me desire the arrival of the spring-time more than I would otherwise have done. Our brother Des Gallars commends himself also very humbly to your kind favour.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CLXXX. – To Madame de Falais

Assurances of affection for herself and her husband

From Geneva, this 20th of November 1546.

Madame, – Having been made aware that Monseigneur had been informed of the death of his sister, I have only given him one word on the subject, knowing beforehand from yourself that he has no need of long consolation, seeing that God, without human means, has put into his heart that which cannot fail to alleviate his sadness.

As for my promise, to which you hold me bound, I shall discharge myself of it, when God shall have vouchsafed me the means wherewith to do so. But I am astonished that you should even hint at the reward which my said Lord intends for me, as if I were looking to that, and had not other considerations in the discharge of my duty to him. The love and reverence which I may well bear toward him in our Lord are so strong, that I am very sorry that I cannot devote myself more to his and your service, to shew what is in my heart. Howbeit, I beseech you not to take amiss what I have now said, for I have had no other feeling than the fear that you may not place such reliance upon me as I desire. Besides, I do not mean to make any complaint

which deserves a reply; for it is quite enough for me that you have neither entertained a doubt nor a suspicion which has induced you to mention it.

Now therefore I shall make an end, after having humbly commended me to your kind favour. I pray our good Lord to have you always in his holy protection, guiding and governing you after his own good will, so as to glorify his holy name in you.

Your humble servant and good brother for ever,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CLXXXI. – To Viret

Statement of the expense of a visit to Lausanne, on the occasion of Viret's marriage – ecclesiastical difficulties at Berne

Geneva, 3d Dec. 1546.

Two letters of Bucer were delivered to me after a short interval. I send both of them to you, although they may contain almost nothing which you have not learned from other sources. With regard to the King of France, I think that he will shortly be brought to give some assistance with money to our party – the only thing that is sought from him. It is, moreover, in the highest degree, his interest to distract the attention of Charles by another war.⁹² I have enjoined Peter Textor to pay to you sixteen crowns; for although I had ten with me when I came to the marriage, it escaped my memory. But here is a greater lapse of memory; when I had found them laid aside in my desk, I stood still for some time, not knowing whether I had ever seen them before.

⁹² This diversion, dictated to the King of France by sound politics, was not effected, and Francis I. remained a peaceable spectator of events, whose necessary tendency was to secure, by the defeat of the Protestant party in Germany, the ascendancy of Charles V. in Europe.

Raymond came upon me, who reminded me of the fact, that he had given them to me by order of Antony Maillet. You will therefore add this sum to the former. In the other six [crowns,] I am afraid that I have made a mistake; for they may possibly belong to my brother. For as a teacher of Orleans was in his debt, he arranged that payment should be made by the son of Bruno. He had lately received five [crowns.] You will therefore retain these until I shall have learned with certainty from Saint André, whether they ought to be given to you or to my brother.

Sulzer lately wrote to me that matters had reached an extremity.⁹³ He implores our aid. I consulted with the brethren. As we could discover no plan of procedure in circumstances so perplexed, and almost desperate, I repaired to Nyon. I became aware that they had committed much more grievous errors than the letters contain any mention of. They are not, in my opinion, fighting for a cause that is good in every respect. All see that their proceedings are preposterous; and yet when we also see that everything is going to ruin, with what conscience shall we be silent? I asked Nicolas,⁹⁴ whether he thought that a letter from us would be of any service? He gave a trembling and hesitating

⁹³ The ministers of Berne were divided by incessant disputes on the subject of the Supper. Sulzer and certain of his colleagues inclined to the Lutheran view, which Erasme Ritter combated; and by an abuse of power, that was not uncommon at that period, the Seigneury of Berne claimed to determine by itself the sense of the controverted dogma, the settlement of which ought to have been remitted to a Synod. – Ruchat, tom. v. pp. 225, 226.

⁹⁴ The senator, Nicolas de Zerkinden, friend of Calvin and prefect of Nyon.

consent to our writing. Should a messenger present himself in good time, I wish that you also would intimate your opinion; thereafter consider whether it be not time to press for obtaining a Synod.

Adieu, brother, and most sincere friend, along with your wife, whom you will respectfully salute in the name of all ours, as well as James and the rest. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

CLXXXII. – To Monsieur de Falais

Military movements in Switzerland – policy of the Cantons in reference to the Emperor

From Geneva, this 8th of December 1546.

Monseigneur, – I have nothing to write you at present, except that we are waiting to see what will be done by the Swiss.⁹⁵ All is in readiness at Berne as if to start at any moment, the captain, his council, officers, soldiers, chosen and commissioned; a second order sent, to be ready to march, with artillery and baggage. Their army consists of ten thousand men. I believe they would not have delayed so long, if there had not been an impediment which holds them as it were tied by the leg. For it is now about a year since all the cantons agreed that none should leave the country

⁹⁵ The Roman Catholic and Reformed Cantons, solicited, the former by the emperor, the latter by the Protestant princes, to take part in the struggles of which Germany was the theatre, had both observed a strict neutrality. But the Seignury of Berne having received information that military movements were taking place in Franche-Comté, then under the rule of the Spaniards, summoned ten thousand men to arms, and occupied the passes of the Jura. That measure, which arose out of the pressure of circumstances, would perhaps have brought about a division among the confederates, and serious complications from without, if the treachery of the Elector Maurice had not hastened on the course of events in Germany. – John de Müller, *Hist. de la Confédération Suisse*, continuation of M. Vulliemin, tom. xi. p. 292.

to engage in war, without the consent of the rest. Now there is fear that the Papists may be urged to invade the country while it is depopulated, under colour of breach of treaty; which if the King of France had only thrown in a word, would have happened a long time ago, – namely, had he called the Papists to enter his service, which ours would have readily agreed to do. Thus would the one side have spoken German to Charles, the others Italian or Picard.

I fear indeed that there must be a want of good management as well in that as in other things. Thereby are we so much the more admonished to pray God that he by his infinite goodness would be pleased to supply so many shortcomings. True it is, that the ignorant are apt to judge foolishly. But however that may be, every one is amazed that they are so long – ,⁹⁶ without putting forth an effort. For it looks as if God were holding out the hand to us, as much as to say – enter in. And in letting the time slip by, we only invigorate *him* who is already almost desperate. Let us pray, therefore, and seeing that it pleases God to make trial of our patience for our good, let us be content with what he sends us, never growing weary of serving him, on any account whatsoever.

There has been murmuring of late on account of some appointment. They would indeed need wondrous masons to complete the building. But I fear that our people, or some of them at least, may let themselves be so far led away as to entertain the proposals, which would be to replace the enemy, not only in the

⁹⁶ A word effaced in the original.

exercise of his former tyrannous sway, but even of that to which he has always aspired. Yet, inasmuch as I feel assured that it will not so happen unless God shall be altogether exasperated against us, I trust that he will avert so great a danger. For I have no doubt that he looks rather upon his own work in us, than upon our sins and shortcomings, that he may have pity on us.

And now, Monseigneur, having humbly commended me to your good favour, and that of Madame; having also presented the commendations of my wife, and of our neighbours, I pray God of his goodness to keep you always in his protection, and to make you feel more and more the joy of his help.

Your servant and humble brother and ever bounden friend,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CLXXXIII. – To Madame de Budé.⁹⁷

Calvin exhorts this lady to leave France, and retire with her family to Geneva

*This 20th ... 1546.*⁹⁸

Madame, – Howbeit that I have occasion to praise God for the great zeal and constancy he has vouchsafed to you, as I have heard from the bearer, yet, believing that my exhortation might

⁹⁷ The original letter is without address. But it is generally believed that it was addressed by Calvin to the widow of the celebrated William Budé, great-grandson of the secretary to King Charles V., and one of the most learned personages of the period of the revival of letters. William Budé having declared in his will that he wished to be buried without ceremony, this circumstance led to the supposition that he had died in the faith of the Reformed. His widow not being able to make free profession of her faith at Paris, was about to settle at Geneva, on the solicitation of Calvin, (June 1549.) She was accompanied by her daughter and three of her sons, Louis, Francis, and John de Budé, who held a distinguished rank in the republic. The best known of the three brothers is John de Budé, Sieur de Vêrèce, the particular friend of Calvin and of Théodore de Bèze. He was received an inhabitant of Geneva the 27th June 1549, burgess the 2d May 1555, member of both Councils in 1559, fulfilled several important missions to the Protestant princes of Germany, and died in 1589, after having rendered distinguished services to his new country, and thereby added fresh lustre to his family, whose descendants still live at Geneva. – Galiffe, *Notices Généalogiques des Familles Genèveises*, tom. iii. p. 83, *et seq.*

⁹⁸ *On the back*, in another handwriting, – "Of 46. I think that this letter must be to Madame Budé."

not be superfluous to you, in the midst of such diversified trials and conflicts, I was unwilling to forego writing you some words by him, and, above all, to help you to come to a determination upon the point on which you are still somewhat doubtful; that is, as to your retiring hitherward that you may serve God in peace of conscience. Were it possible for you to discharge your duty where you are, I would by no means advise you to stir. But I am well aware in what captivity you are held. If God had given you strength and constancy to prepare for death, and not to flinch for any fear of the danger wherein you are, there would be nothing better than to keep that grace in exercise. But if you feel that the weakness of the flesh gets the mastery, and hinders you from doing your duty, seeing that your conscience must needs be troubled and in continual torment, the only way is to seek a suitable remedy. For it is no slight perplexity, yea, even agony, to feel ourselves blamable in a matter of so great moment; yea, and that the evil continues to such an extent, that we can make no end of offending God. Although many deceive themselves in this matter, making themselves believe that it is but a trifling fault to defile themselves with superstitions which are repugnant to the word of God, and derogate from his honour, I reckon that his honour, to whom we owe everything, is so precious to you, that it is felt to be a subject of intolerable regret to you to offend against it daily, as you are constrained to do at present. I do not doubt, therefore, but that you have a special desire to escape out of such wretchedness, and that until you do, you cannot but be in very

great anxiety and sadness. Consider, now, whether this is not an unhappy condition, thus to linger for ever. I know, indeed, that there are many who reply to us, that we here are no more angels than themselves, and that we offend God even as they do; which is true. But as the proverb says, "Sickness upon sickness is not health." If, then, we come far short in other respects, what need is there to increase our condemnation by adding to the rest this sin which is so grievous; to wit, that of not giving glory to the Son of God, who became as nothing for our salvation?

Besides, after you have done your best by dissimulation, to keep clear of the perils which surround you, you are not a whit better; for the wicked are very sharp-sighted, and you will never content them but by an entire renunciation of God; wherefore, you have no rest for the body any more than for the soul. And after declension from God, in order to comply with the world, you have derived no benefit from it, except that you languish as in a trance. You will ask me if, being come hither, you shall always have assured repose. I confess that you will not; for while we are in this world, it is fitting that we should be like birds upon the branch. So it has pleased God, and it is good for us. But since this little corner is vouchsafed to you, where you may finish the remainder of your life in his service, if he so please, or profit more and more, and be confirmed in his word, in order that you may be more ready to endure persecutions, if it shall so please him, it is not right that you refuse it. We have always to take care lest we be the cause of our own misfortune, and draw it down

upon ourselves by not accepting the means of escape which God presents to us. I know that it is a hard thing to leave the country of our birth, most of all to a woman like yourself, of rank, and advanced in life. But you ought to overcome such difficulties by higher considerations; such as, that we should prefer to our own country every region where God is purely worshipped; that we should not desire any better repose for our old age than to abide in his Church, his dwelling-place and the place of his rest; that we should prefer to be contemptible in the place where his name may be glorified by us, to being honourable in the sight of men, while we defraud him of the honour which belongs to him.

Concerning the doubts which may come into your mind, it would be too tedious to reply to them all. But you have always this as a settled point, that we must refer our many anxieties to the Providence of God, trusting that he will provide an outlet in cases where we see none. And in fact it is undoubted, that if we seek him we shall find him. That is to say, he will be with us to guide our steps, and to have a care of our affairs, to order them well for us. True it is, that we shall not cease to be subject to many troubles and annoyances; but let us pray him that, having been strengthened by his word, we may have wherewithal to overcome them. And assuredly you possess many helps, which deprive you of the excuse which many others have. If it shall please God to lead you hither, you will not come so bereft of property as to have nothing to live upon, while there are many poor people who have only burdens without temporal provision. How many Christian

women are there who are held captive by their children! while our Lord has given you this advantage, that you have children who not only are ready to aid in your deliverance from captivity, but also exhort you thereto. You have the liberty which many wish for, of which you ought to avail yourself, that you may all the more freely engage in the service of God. Among the other hindrances that it appears you have, your daughter may be one, inasmuch as she is still unmarried. But instead of reckoning that to be a hindrance, it ought rather to serve as a spur the more readily to decide you. I understand that you love her not merely with the common love of mothers, but with a peculiar affection. I beseech you, then, to consider well whether it would be better for her to be there tied down in marriage, to live in perpetual bondage, or to be brought by you to a place where she may be free to live as a Christian with her husband; for you must trust that God will find out for her a worthy person, who will be a comfort to you as well as to herself.⁹⁹ There is one thing of which it is right that you should be made aware, in order that nothing may alarm you as new and unforeseen. It is this, that Satan will stir up many troubles in order to upset or to delay your pious purpose; but when you shall have taken your fixed resolve, it will not be difficult for you to rise above all. Meanwhile, profit by the opportunity, now when it is offered to you; for as, in matters of conscience, it behoves us to resolve speedily without seeking

⁹⁹ Catharine de Budé married, in 1550, William de Trie, Seigneur de Varennes, a gentleman of the Lyonnais, a refugee at Geneva on account of religion.

advice or long dalliance, it is also necessary to perform soon what we have decided on, fearing, because of the frailty which is in us, to grow cold upon our good intention.

To conclude, knowing that all my exhortations must be vain and useless, unless God make them effectual by gaining an entrance to your heart, I shall beseech him to instruct you with true prudence to decide upon what shall be most fitting for you to do; to bestow steadfast constancy upon you in obeying his will; to stretch out the hand, and be himself your guide; to grant you such grace, that in leaning upon him, you may perceive his assistance in everything, and all throughout.

Your servant and humble brother,

Charles D'Espeville.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

CLXXXIV. – To the Avoyer Nœguely.¹⁰⁰

Complaints of the misconduct of several ministers in the Pays de Vaud

From Lausanne, this 12th January 1547.

Monseigneur, – Seeing that this present bearer¹⁰¹ has brought me so good a testimony regarding Lion, and also that I myself have known him to be both well qualified and zealous, insomuch that I have no doubt of his fitness to serve the Church of God, I am constrained to recommend him to you, assured also that the letter of introduction which I give him to you will be of service to him, considering the kind affection which you bear to me. I pray you then humbly that it may please you to hold him as recommended, to the intent that by your means he may hereafter find an opening for the service of our Lord Jesus, in which you

¹⁰⁰ John Francis Nœguely, one of the most illustrious magistrates, and one of the most able captains of the republic of Berne, in the sixteenth century. In 1536 he commanded the Bernese army, which conquered the Pays de Vaud from the Duke of Savoy; discharged the functions of Avoyer from 1540 to 1568, and died at a very advanced age.

¹⁰¹ In a note, by an unknown hand, "Philippe Buissonnier de Bresse."

may have occasion to rejoice; for were not such my expectation, I would be very sorry to breathe a word about it.

Moreover, Monsieur, if God granted me an opportunity of speaking to you, I would willingly disburden my heart of the scandals which lie heavy upon us here, on account of the misconduct of some who are ministers of the word of God in your demesne, and in their whole life give constant occasion to blaspheme the name of God.¹⁰² I am well persuaded that you, on being made aware of the wretchedness in which every one thereabouts is sunk, will be as well disposed to provide for it, as I have great regret and sorrow even to hear it spoken of. I believe, indeed, that you will have spoken about it in council, seeing that a poor brother who goes to your quarter, named Master Francis Maurice, will give you occasion to think thereupon. I do not touch further on the maladies, except that I earnestly desire that it would please God to put it in your heart to apply an effectual remedy. And because I know that individually you are well inclined, as becomes you, I do beseech you, inasmuch as I ought to have the interest of the Church of God at heart, that it would please you to hold out a hand to those who are in trouble for having borne themselves faithfully in God's service and yours: Wherefore, Monsieur, after having humbly commended me to your kind favour, I pray our good Lord to uphold you in his safe

¹⁰² Several ministers of the Pays de Vaud, and particularly Zebedee, later pastor of Nyon, Lange, pastor of Bursins, delivered from the pulpit the most virulent declamations against the doctrines of the Reformer.

keeping, guiding you always by his Spirit in obedience to his will. – Your humble servant,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

CLXXXV. – To Farel. ¹⁰³

Mission of Calvin to Switzerland – dispositions of the various Cantons

Geneva, 20th February 1547.

Textor will have returned to us before my letter reaches you. The reason why I did not proceed by way of [Neuchatel] in returning from the Swiss, was, that I had engaged to be present with the brethren on a day that must have elapsed had I not made very great haste. With regard to the present disturbances, I have to remark, that the people of Bâle are either in a state of marvellous insensibility, or they possess a wonderful power of concealing their real feelings. They did, however, make some exertion, but coldly, and their zeal was not to my mind. I observed great fervour at Zurich. The inhabitants of that place were as

¹⁰³ On the news of the dangers that menaced the churches of Germany, an important mission had been confided to the Reformer. "Calvin is despatched by the Seignury to Zurich, to obtain certain information of the condition of the war between the Emperor and the Protestant princes." – *Registers of Council*, 23d January 1547. "Calvin having returned, reports that the war between the Emperor and the Protestants is more enkindled than ever, and that the Swiss, apprehensive of that prince turning his arms against them, are putting themselves in a state of defence." – *Ibid.*, 23d January 1547.

much concerned about the people of Constance¹⁰⁴ as about themselves. They made over to them all their resources, and yet the wretched state continued still to vacillate, just as if it had been without any help whatever. If it had stood to this hour, I think there would have been no danger for the future. If you are in possession of any information, make us aware of it. Some people were furious, because of a report that the ambassadors of the people of Strasbourg were seen in the court of Charles. To me it does not appear probable. The people of Zurich were soon persuaded. I was, however, greatly pleased to find that they forgot all causes of dissension, and thought only of the common weal, being prepared to spend their strength not less in behalf of Strasbourg than of Constance. You can hardly credit how offensive are the terms accepted by the cities that have surrendered; but the most disgraceful of all is Wurtemberg.¹⁰⁵ This, to be sure, is the reward of tyrants. I observe that the Bernese were occupied in defending their own bounds, that they might be the less conscious of the neighbouring conflagration. But there are very many more private matters regarding the

¹⁰⁴ Situated at the extremity of the Confederation, without forming part of it, and sharing the faith of the Reformed Cantons, Constance, the first city open to the attacks of the Emperor upon the banks of the Rhine, invoked the aid of the Cantons, whose rigorous neutrality left it exposed without defence to its adversaries. — *Histoire de la Confédération Suisse*, tom. xi. p. 296.

¹⁰⁵ Ulrich, Duke of Wurtemberg, although among the first to submit to the Emperor, was compelled to sue for pardon on his knees, and to pay a ransom of 300,000 crowns. — Robertson, *Hist. of Charles V.*, book viii.

churches that cannot be committed to writing. It would therefore repay the trouble if you came hither speedily, because I have now in hand certain materials which I must send back in a short time. I am desirous that their contents be communicated to you, and you will infer that I am not desirous of that without good grounds. – Adieu, my brother, along with your whole family, to the members of which you will convey the best greeting in my name and that of my wife. Salute also respectfully all the brethren. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.* – *Library of Geneva*. Vol. 106.]

CLXXXVI. – To Monsieur de Falais

Search for a house for that gentleman in Geneva – Various details – Mention of Charles V. and Francis I

From Geneva, this 25th February 1547.

Monseigneur, – Having received your letter by the Sieur de la Rivière, I feared that the other, of which you made mention, must have been lost. It has since been brought to me. In reply, I thank God for having increased your joy and contentment. I have written briefly a joint letter to the three companions, to congratulate them on their welfare. I know not whether God will one day so bless us, that they shall have no more need of my letters. If not, I shall another time be a little more liberal on paper.

As for yourself, in obedience to the commission which you gave me, I have looked about since my return for a convenient lodging. As for that of Clébergue,¹⁰⁶ you would be too far away from the neighbours you desire;¹⁰⁷ although I have long had a

¹⁰⁶ The present *Quai des Bergues*.

¹⁰⁷ Calvin at that time inhabited the house of the Sieur de Fréneville, situated in the *Rue des Chanoines*, near St. Peter's Church, and corresponding to the house in

wish for it myself, for the sake of retirement, when I seek to have leisure: And they promised to let me have an answer; but none has come. If I had it at my disposal as they had given me to hope, you know that it would be very much at your service. Near us, I have not been able to find one having a garden, which would be more suitable for you than the one which I have taken. Not that I am quite content with the lodging, but I took it for want of a better. You will have in front a small garden, and a tolerably spacious court. Behind there is another garden. A great saloon, with as beautiful a view as you could well desire for the summer. The other rooms have not so pleasant an aspect as I would like. But when you have arrived, possibly we may devise some satisfactory arrangement. With the exception of the saloon, one might find houses better furnished and more conveniently laid out; but there would have been no garden, and I see that is a feature which you desire above all. However that may be, it is hired for twelve crowns. When you see it, if you say that this is too much, I shall have my excuse ready, that I am not such a manager as to be very sparing of my purse, any more than of that of others. I have hurried on the bargain solely on account of the garden. If time hangs heavy with you where you are, it appears to me the season will be as suitable in a month as at a later period, provided that the weather be as favourable as it usually is at that time. As for escort, although my brother is not here at this

the same street which is now No. 122. – See the *Mémoires de la Société d'Histoire de Genève*, vol. ix. p. 391.

moment, I can safely venture to undertake for him that he will willingly serve you; and he has gone that road so often, that he ought to know it well. Moreover, he has already had to do with the boatmen: and I believe you will recollect my advice, that you should come part of the way by water, to refresh you. Awaiting your full resolve, we shall sow without making any stir about it, and prune the vines.

As for your causes of complaint, I beseech you, Monseigneur, to overlook many things, to avoid that vexation which does not alleviate the ill, and cannot mend it; above all, to please to bear with what may have been done from inconsiderate zeal, for that is a fault which happens with the best. But I believe the matter has been already settled in some way or other. I hope the consequences have been modified by your prudence.

With regard to Sieur de Paré,¹⁰⁸ if peradventure he should come straight to you without passing this way, and that besides he makes fresh overtures in regard to the proposal, you have there Monsieur D'Albiac, who, being very intimate with him, will be able to inform you of everything better than Maldonado can have done. And it will be right to make diligent inquiry; for I would fear that by the follies of his youth he may have had some disease, such as many persons have now-a-days. I openly avow to you my fear, choosing to exceed in that respect, rather than to conceal anything until it be too late. You will ask me wherefore then I have put off so much time already. But my conjectures on this

¹⁰⁸ He sought in marriage a relation of M. de Falais.

point have arisen since. It would indeed have been the shortest way to communicate by word of mouth, if I had conceived in my mind all that I do now. I set the matter before you, that you may think of it. For I would not have that reproach, – I mean not only in the sight of the world, but also before God, – that the girl should have been in any way wronged by my concealment. I am aware, that by reason of its being a malady so common and prevalent, many make scarcely any difficulty about it. But I suspect that you, like myself, will have your scruples.

To make an end, Monsieur, after having humbly commended me to your kind favour, and that of Madame, I entreat our good Lord to have you in his keeping, which is the one thing needful of our whole life, as well for this present time as that which is to come; I mean that he may always make you to feel as he does now, that you are under his guidance. All those who do not write, humbly commend them to your good graces, and to those of Madame.

Your servant and humble brother,

John Calvin.

Monsieur, he who will present you this letter, is the ambassador from this town. There are two who proceed to your quarter, I know not wherefore, that is to say, on account of their private affairs, which they have to settle together. I have thought it well to inform you of this, for no other reason, save that I presume you would have been sorry not to have been told of it. For if your affairs admit of your deciding to come, you may avail

yourself of this means of communication; not that there is need of great ceremony, as we have already spoken of it, but only in order that they may not fancy themselves slighted, especially if you should come hither. I speak the language of the country. If there are any good tidings, I hope that they will bring them to us. But there is need for God humbling us, from whichever side it may come. I hope, however, that our Antiochus,¹⁰⁹ who presses us at present, will be so hard pressed, that he shall be regardless of the gout in his hands and in his feet; for he will have it over his whole body. As regards his companion, Sardanapalus,¹¹⁰ may God have a like care of him! for they are both well worthy to have the same measure meted to them.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

¹⁰⁹ The Emperor Charles the Fifth, – conqueror, without a combat, of the army of the confederate princes: thanks to the treason of Maurice of Saxony, this prince, although suffering severely from the gout, was at this very time receiving the submission of the confederate towns of Suabia and of the Palatinate, from which he exacted enormous penalties.

¹¹⁰ The King, Francis I. He died the following month, the 31st March 1547.

CLXXXVII. – To Monsieur de Falais. ¹¹¹

Instructions regarding the *Apology* – alarming rumours current at Geneva – Calvin's confidence

From Geneva, this 7th of March 1547.

Monseigneur, – I forgot in my last letter to mention the subject of the *Apology*, and I know not how it had escaped me. Saint André had the copy; and in so far I was not deceived in my opinion. But as matters stand at present, if you should think of printing it, I do not see anything there will be to change. To soften it down, that is not possible; and the times will not warrant its being kindled into greater vehemence, at least with any effect. And if you determine to have it printed at Strasbourg, I am not very sure that they will venture to admit it as it is. "*For what can he dare to do who hath once involved himself with a tyrant?*"¹¹²

¹¹¹ *On the back* – To Monseigneur, Monsieur de Fallez, at Basle, near to the Cauf-Hauss. – M. de Falais was in fact about to quit Strasbourg, then threatened by the imperial army, to fix his residence in Switzerland.

¹¹² "Quid enim audeat, qui tyranno se implicuit?" The town of Strasbourg had submitted itself to the emperor. The terms of that submission bore, that it shall renounce the League of Smalkald, and shall contribute, with the other states, to the

Here there would be more liberty. I recollect that you spoke to me, immediately after having seen it, about correcting some points, but without signifying to me what these were, nor how to be corrected. Will you therefore please to let me know your wish by the first opportunity, and what you desire that I should do? As for some one to translate it into Latin, you have one at hand sufficiently elegant, should you think proper to make use of him.¹¹³ Here, also, we might doubtless find one; for want of a better, I shall undertake it myself, – and that I hope I may do, without boasting; for provided that it is perspicuous, that will be sufficient; and besides, the barbarism of *Majestas vestra*, which one must employ, forbids a too exquisitely ornate style. In any event, however, we shall have need of your advice, in case we undertake it here. Moreover, our people are in some alarm. But I do not think they have any cause. You know very well that frontier towns are very apt to take fright; and forasmuch as we have Granvelle for a neighbour,¹¹⁴ and we hear talk of a levy of men, one is somewhat in doubt. As for me, I think differently, for it is not the proper season for attempting anything here. But we must let many rumours glide past, even as we cannot hinder water from going downwards. However matters turn out, I am very glad that our Lord arouses us, in order to make us turn to himself; and

execution of the sentence pronounced against the Landgrave and the Elector.

¹¹³ Sebastian Castellio, who had then retired to Bâle.

¹¹⁴ Antoine Perrenot, Bishop of Arras, Cardinal de Granvelle, the celebrated minister of Charles V. and of Philip II. He was born at Ornans, near Besançon in 1517, and died in 1586 at Madrid.

that is the greatest mercy that can happen to us, that we may be led to commit ourselves in real earnest to his protection.

Making an end for the present, Monsieur, after having humbly commended myself to the kind favour both of yourself and Madame, and having presented the respects of our neighbours, I pray our good Lord to have you in his holy keeping, to guide you in all your paths, to show you what is right and fit for you to do, and to give eventually a good and prosperous result.

You will perceive by the letter of Sire Nicolas how it goes with your money. He has also informed me of the choice which he sets before you; you will make your election as opportunity presents itself.

Your servant and humble brother for ever,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CLXXXVIII. – To Monsieur de Falais

Disputes of M. de Falais with Valeran Poulain – Reports of the expected arrival of the former in Geneva

From Geneva, this 15th March 1547.

Monseigneur, – I am glad that you have our brother, Master Peter Viret, to cheer you in the midst of the annoyances which must have been very hard upon you, seeing that I have been tormented more than I can express through mere sympathy. But I hope that God has applied a remedy as regards the actual issue; and assuredly he has cared for you by sending you him from whom you may receive as effectual consolation as from any man in the world, so that I am in nowise sorry that I did not undertake the journey; for I do not fear that you will have any need of me. For this reason, also, I shall make my letters to you shorter.

Concerning the person you allude to,¹¹⁵ I am not aware of having given him any reason to think that I deemed your

¹¹⁵ Allusion to Valeran Poulain. It appears from the next letter in this Series, pp. 104-106, that Valeran sought, in spite of the opposition of M. de Falais, the hand of Mademoiselle de Willergy, a relation of this Seigneur, likewise sought by M. de Paré. – See Note 1, p. 98.

complaints excessive; but fearing lest some illness might attack you, and also thinking it unbecoming that you should enter into contention with a man of his disposition; considering on the other hand his audacity, and what a venomous animal is apt to emit when pressed, I entreated you to take the whole with moderation, so far as might be possible. Besides, I know him well, and do not so much fear his ill-will, as to wish that the Church of God should suffer from my dissimulation. But I do not see now what I can do in the matter, and indeed there is no present need. For where he is known, his reputation is already lower than we need. Where he is unknown, nothing would be gained by speaking of him, unless he endeavours to insinuate himself. But yet God may make him wise, after having suitably chastised him on account of his foolishness.

I now come to your journey. Although I see no danger in the way, either of ambush, or of other proceedings of a like kind, nor yet of open violence, – nevertheless, as for the first, I have given no assurance to any one to that effect, but on the contrary rather have my suspicion. In the second place, as regards the time of your coming, I have spoken as one who knew nothing at all about it. It is true that when I am asked if you have an intention of coming to see us, I am not very obstinate in the denial thereof to my friends, fearing lest they might think me a double dealer. And even when I have hired the house, not only he who spoke to you, but some others also, have at once conjectured that it was for yourself. I have answered them, Yea, that it was possible,

but that there were others for whom it might be; that I took it thus at a venture, not doubting, however, to find a tenant to put into it. I cannot, however, hinder many from guessing about it, and persuading themselves, without my breathing a word on the subject, that you are coming. However, if it please God, you shall have no prejudice thereby so far as I am concerned. I hope, if the Lord will, that next week Master Peter Viret will bring us your news. If after having heard our brother Saint André, you have anything new to tell me, you will find a suitable messenger in him.

Whereupon, Monsieur, having affectionately commended me to your kind favour, and to that of Madame, and having presented to both of you the remembrance of my wife and friends, I beseech our good Lord to have you always in his keeping, to comfort you, to strengthen and perfect you in every work for his glory, and your salvation. Amen.

Your very humble servant and brother,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CLXXXIX. – To Valeran Poulain. ¹¹⁶

Severe reprobation of his behaviour towards M. de Falais – reply to a calumny directed against the Reformer

[Geneva, March, 1547.]

Greeting, – I only received your letter this day, which was later than was proper. Meanwhile, however, I think that the conversation of our friend Viret has done something towards changing your mind on the point. When I heard Saint André's account of the matter, I briefly replied that I was not a little grieved to find that you had thus sullied by your last act whatever praise you had earned, in the discharge of a mission so illustrious. And I am not indeed so light-minded, as to pronounce a judgment after hearing merely the one side of a question. Nor is my vision blinded by the splendour of rank; but while I hear men indifferent, and giving expression to no accusing word, I am constrained to think that you acted neither with prudence nor propriety in soliciting the girl in marriage. But I am still more displeased, seeing she complains that you circumvented her by

¹¹⁶ Enclosed in a letter to M. de Falais, with the words, – Copy of a letter written to Valeran.

means of numerous baseless accusations, and indirect arts. You mention to me Bucer and Bernardino. If you had done nothing but with their advice, you would, assuredly, never have set about what you did. Do you suppose that your cause will meet with their approval? I mentioned in a former letter, regarding the younger [lady] to whom you aspired, what I thought was censurable in her. In seeking after this one, you seem to have forgotten what you wrote to the other on your departure. Even although nothing else had stood in the way, you ought to have absolutely abstained from the mention of marriage until she had reached her destination. But if what she herself testifies be true, the engagement was brought about through the influence of the worst inducements. Accordingly I shall not believe that the marriage is, as you say, from the Lord, until you prove that she says what is untrue, when she affirms that you had beforehand engrossed her mind with numerous calumnies. Albeit, she strongly asserts that she gave you no credence, and that no engagement was formed between you, but that she always expressly stipulated to be allowed to do everything in accordance with the advice of Monsieur de Falais. She says, however, that you affirmed that his will was quite well known to you, that the only difficulty would be with his wife, as she still regarded with admiration the fumes of nobility. These were not the tokens of God; but you prohibit me from believing them. I can do nothing less, however, than hear both sides. When I reflect on the whole circumstances, certain particulars appear with which, I confess, I am displeased. You remind me that

illustrious men are sometimes guilty of grave offences. It is on other grounds, however, that I love and reverence M. de Falais, than on account of the mock greatness on which alone most of the nobility pride themselves. In the next place, I have, as yet, heard nothing from him but reasonable complaints. Moreover, I have looked more to the matter itself than to the persons. I wish that you had never involved yourself in those troubles; but since it has so happened, it remains for me to desire to see you relieved from them in a short space, which I trust is now accomplished.

With regard to the estate which I am said to have purchased with so many thousands, I should indeed be silly if I spent many words in rebutting falsehoods so gross. There is no one here, or in the whole vicinity, who is not aware that I do not possess a foot of land. Moreover, my acquaintances well know that I never had money sufficient to purchase an acre, unless when I am paid what enables me to meet the expenditure of the quarter. I have surely not reached the point alleged, as I am still using in my house another's furniture; for neither the table at which we eat, nor the bed on which we sleep, is my own. Whence, then, those reports? I know not, unless it be that godless men so malign me, in order to fix a brand on the Gospel. They will never, however, prevent me from being truly rich, because I am abundantly satisfied with my slender means; and while my poverty is a burden to no one, it is nevertheless an alleviation to some.

Adieu, and believe that I am friendly disposed towards you. I wish there may sometimes occur occasion for correspondence,

&c.

[*Lat. copy. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CXC. – To Viret.¹¹⁷

Weakness of the Genevese magistracy – Expectation of Viret's arrival in Geneva

Geneva, 27th March 1547.

I am in doubt with regard to your coming to us.¹¹⁸ Roset, as far as I hear, exceeded due bounds in explaining to you the necessity for it, although he is not the only one who errs in this respect; for the whole council is in a state of groundless agitation. I see no one of the whole number in whom I can put confidence. I certainly observe no one here who can be said to be judicious. They show no boldness in a good and praiseworthy cause. So childish are they all, that they are frightened by the silly shake of a head, while a man of no consequence displays

¹¹⁷ Invested with the right of censure and ecclesiastical excommunication, the Consistory daily beheld its authority assailed and disowned by numerous adversaries, who accused it of encroaching upon the power of the magistrates. "The ministers complain that they are accused of exceeding the authority accorded them by the edicts, and request permission to put into force the right of excommunication, in order to bring offenders to their duty. Resolved to hand over to the Consistory rebellious and obstinate offenders, and to leave the others unmolested." – *Registers of Council*, 21st and 29th May 1547.

¹¹⁸ "Arrival at Geneva of the minister Viret, a very excellent man." – *Registers*, April 1547.

his insanity. I do not defend my cause under the form of a public one, carried on in my absence. If I desist from prosecuting it, the whole consistory will of necessity go to ruin. Moreover, they so conduct themselves as to extort daily clamours in the course of their sermons; otherwise the entreaties of Roset would not have particularly influenced me. Just now, our brother has made known to me from Saint André, that our comic actor Cæsar, and certain of his faction, have been making diligent inquiry as to whether you were coming hither immediately. I observe, therefore, that there is a strong desire for you on the part of some, that others expect you because they are aware that you have been summoned. With no one belonging to the council have I any communication that can be relied on, Michel¹¹⁹ alone excepted; but he is neither very sharp-sighted, nor is he even admitted to the more private deliberations. John Parvi makes a magnificent offer of his services, but he is not the thing. Besides these, no one has come near me. Certain guesses, not lightly formed, have made me suspicious of Corna. I indeed love the man, but he does not permit me to confide in him. In the first place, he is timid; in the next, he is distrustful; and, finally, he adores that shadow, or ghost if you will.¹²⁰ Those who are desirous that the matter should be arranged without disturbance, hope that you would prove a suitable pacificator. The party composing the faction itself is anxious for you, with the view of being somewhat

¹¹⁹ Doubtless Michel Morel.

¹²⁰ Is this an allusion to the gradually declining influence of Amy Perrin?

relieved from its difficulties by your mediation. We desire and solicit you, I myself in particular, that you may see, judge, and do whatever in your opinion shall be for the interest of the Church. But observe its wretched condition. Farel lately learned that he had been unfortunate in turning to me for assistance, because nothing could be done unless he were separated from me. Nothing assuredly would be more agreeable to me, than if all matters here were brought to a happy issue by your interference, even though I were banished to the Garamantes. But this mode of procedure will be as little satisfactory to you as to myself. I mention this plan as that prescribed by the most moderate, as they wish to be thought. But if you could be here by Tuesday next, and remain until Monday, you might have my opinion of this complicated matter; you would, in that case, I presume, conduct public worship. Should it be necessary for you to return sooner, I do not advise you to subject yourself to so much trouble for no purpose. If the arrangements of your church do not permit you to come in such good time, I have nothing to say; but if I were in your place, I know what I would do; I do not, however, wish you to be guided by my judgment. Adieu, therefore, brother and dearest friend, along with your wife and brothers, all of whom you will greet in my name. Des Gallars sends his warm thanks to you through me, and he expresses the same to me, on the ground that I am the cause of your undertaking the journey. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

CXCI. – To Wolfgang Musculus.¹²¹

Anxiety regarding the Churches of Germany – advice to Musculus

Geneva, 21st April 1547.

If I were to follow out the subject in this letter, as time and the present condition of things demand, I see that there would be no end to it. There are, besides, other reasons that prevent me from entering on this forest so full of thorns. I was unwilling, however, to send away this youth wholly empty, who had come in my way, without at least testifying to you, in the present calamitous state of your church, and as becomes the friendly relations subsisting between us, that I ever bear you in mind. Indeed, when the earliest rumours reached this, you were among the first, of those whose danger caused me agony, to occur to my mind; and when the ungovernable violence of my grief had hurried me to Zurich, as soon as I fell in with Bernardino,¹²²

¹²¹ To the excellent servant of Christ our Lord, Doctor Wolfgang Musculus, most reverend pastor of the Church of Augsbourg, brother, and fellow-minister.

¹²² Named pastor of the Italian church at Augsbourg in October 1545, Ochino fled from that city on the approach of the imperial army, in the early part of the year 1547. – Schelhorn *Ergoetlichkeiten*, vol. iii. pp. 1141, 1142.

who had arrived about half an hour before I met him, I began at once, forgetful alike of salutation and everything else, to make inquiries after you. I confess, however, that I was solicitous about your safety, in proportion to the strength of the fear I had, lest you should abandon the Church in such a time of need, as usually happens when matters are desperate and past recovery; or rather lest, being as it were deserted by your flock, you should betake yourself elsewhere;¹²³ for it is difficult, amid so great darkness, to discern what is most expedient. Now, howsoever severe the trial may have been, I yet rejoice that the Lord has caused the spirit of prudence and counsel to spring up in you and your fellow-ministers, and has sustained your minds with the spirit of fortitude, as far as might be in circumstances not the best. I also give God thanks, that in whatsoever way matters have been improved, a short breathing time is granted you, until at length tranquil serenity may clearly dawn upon you. Meanwhile, it is proper we should learn, that it has been usual with God in all ages to preserve his own Church in a wonderful way, and without human protection. Relying therefore on this ground of confidence, let us strive to break through whatever difficulty there may be, and let us never lose heart, even although we should be destitute of all things.

Adieu, most upright brother, and one dear to me from the

¹²³ Wolfgang Musculus did not cease to proclaim the Gospel in Augsbourg until the church in which he preached had been closed by order of the emperor, and his congregation dispersed. He was himself obliged to take his departure the year following, (26th June 1548.) – Melch. Ad., p. 381.

bottom of my heart, as also your fellow-ministers, all of whom you will very affectionately salute in my name. May the Lord Jesus be present with you, guide you by his Spirit, and bless your holy labours. You will also convey to your family my best greeting. – Yours,

John Calvin.

My colleagues also reverently salute you all. If any opportunity be afforded you, you will make me aware of the state of your affairs.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Zoffingue. Vol. i. p. 10.*]

CXCII. – To Monsieur de Falais

Steps taken at Basle to retract a promise of marriage made to Valeran Poulain

From Geneva, this first of May [1547.]

Monseigneur, – I wrote to Myconius,¹²⁴ as you will see by the copy which I send you. I was of opinion that it was enough, because the judges will better comprehend my meaning from his mouth. It will have more weight, because the prosecution of the suit will not thus be so vehement on my part, as if I should take upon me to write to them, thus making myself too much a party in the matter. I believe that our brother, Master Peter Viret, will do the same in regard to the Sieur Bernard Mayer, in consequence of what I have told him. Should there be any need for it, he condemns himself of treachery in the letters which he has written to me. For after having requested me, in the month of January, to intercede for him in regard to the marriage of Merne, he has told me that Wilergy was in love with him *many months before*: so much so, as to ask him in marriage, rather than wait

¹²⁴ See *ante*, vol. i., pp. 312, 313, *note*. Calvin called on him for his aid with the magistrates of that town for having a promise of marriage cancelled between Mademoiselle de Wilergy and Valeran. – *Bibl. de Genève*, vol. 106.

to be asked. How is that to be reconciled, unless he wanted to have both of them? But he must be cut short in the whole of this troublesome nonsense; seeing that it is quite unworthy of a hearing. I have no doubt that the judges will very soon put an end to that.

Monsieur, having heartily commended me to your kind favour and that of Madame, without forgetting the three Demoiselles, I pray our good Lord to have you in his keeping, to confirm you always in patience, to deliver you from the annoyance of this importunate suitor, and to bring you into assured prosperity.

Your servant and humble brother,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CXCIII. – To Francis Dryander. ¹²⁵

Confused state of the Church – hopes and fears for the future

Geneva, 18th May 1547.

Greeting: – It would not require a letter of very great length, were I to comply with your request to write to you at full length my opinion of the present state of general disorder; because when matters are in so great confusion, I not only abstain from passing any judgment, but I do not even venture to inquire into what may be the issue of them. For as often as I have begun the attempt, I have been immediately involved in darkness so intense, that I thought it better to close my eyes upon the world, and fix them intently upon God alone. I only speak of myself, as I am here situated. Had I been placed in the situation which some others occupy, my mode of procedure might then have required to be changed. Besides, I cannot from this retreat as from a watch-tower observe the circumstances that go to the formation of a judgment. And if anything reaches me, it comes late. Further, nothing can with certainty be determined, until the whole particulars are gathered together. But at present the more

¹²⁵ To the most erudite Doctor Francis Dryander, and very dear friend.

private counsels, from which an opinion is chiefly to be formed, are unknown to me. What folly then would it be for me to fatigue myself to no purpose or profit, by occupying my attention with what is obscure! "What," therefore, you will say, "do you alone wish to enjoy undisturbed quiet amid the ruins of the Church?" On the contrary, I sigh anxiously night and day, but I repel as much as I can all needless reflections that from time to time steal upon me. I do not, nevertheless, succeed in this so far as I could wish; it is, however, something, that I do not indulge a prurient disposition. I occupy myself in considering what is already done; and I connect matters that occur from day to day, with what preceded them. Reflection on these things furnishes me, I confess, with various grounds both of hope and fear. But because, as I have said, there are so many opposing reasons, I restrain myself in good time, lest I say anything rashly and beyond what is proper. The prediction, indeed, which you gave in your letter, will never deceive us, even although heaven and earth were mingled in confusion together, viz., that God will take so peculiar a care of his own Church, as to preserve it even amid the annihilation of the whole world. Excuse the brevity of this epistle, as I was warned a little before supper of the departure of the messenger. [My] brother had told me before mid-day, that he was ready for the journey: I would not have written, if he had gone so soon. He returned after three o'clock: I had thus less time than I should have had. Adieu: may the Lord direct you by his Spirit, and preserve you safe. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Protestant Seminary of Strasbourg.*]

CXCIV. – To Monsieur de Falais

The sending of a minister – perplexities regarding anticipated events in Germany

From Geneva, this 18th May 1547.

Monseigneur, – Since your convenience has not permitted your coming hither as we had hoped, it is enough if God graciously grants you health where you are. For albeit I might desire to be near you, nevertheless I prefer what is best for you. Concerning the man of whom Maldonado spoke to you, besides the knowledge which I have had of him while he has been here I have made inquiry about him at his old master, Gallars, who tells me that he found him very leal and serviceable. It is true, that he would not reckon him qualified to manage great affairs, unless one should instruct and set him his lesson; but that in the carrying out of whatsoever he shall be commanded to do, there will be nothing wanting; nay, that he will even be vigilant. And even as regards the former quality, I do not undervalue him. For a staid and modest man is far better, than one who is overbold and venturesome. You will decide according to the turn of your affairs, in order that the Sieur d'Albiac may send him; and thus you may not remain long unprovided. Moreover, I hope that God

has rid you of the annoyances wherewith that marplot¹²⁶ has been so long teasing you. That done, you may be altogether at ease about your house.

We are still on the lookout for news about the general state of the church. If God intends so sorely to afflict us, as to let loose that tyrant upon us,¹²⁷ who only seeks to ruin everything, we must be quite prepared to suffer. Considering that He who has us in charge, rules in the midst of his enemies, it becomes us to have patience, consoling ourselves in the assured hope, that in the end he will confound them. But yet I hope that he will provide against these great troubles, supporting our weakness; and that he will check the boldness of those who triumph before the time, and that against himself.

Monsieur, having humbly commended me to your kind favour, and that of Madame, and having presented to both of you the remembrances of my wife, I pray our good Lord to guide you continually, to watch over you and to enlarge you in all his mercies. I abstain from entering upon the proposal which the Sieur Maldonado has brought me, about settling a church in that quarter;¹²⁸— for I know not what to say about it, except that I

¹²⁶ Valeran Poulain. See pp. 104, 110.

¹²⁷ The Emperor Charles the Fifth had just gained a decisive victory at Mühlberg (24th April 1547) over the Protestant princes.

¹²⁸ That is to say, at Bâle. The French church of that town was founded after the massacre De la Saint Barthelemy, at the request of a great number of refugees, among whom we find the children of the Admiral de Coligny. — MSS. of the archives of the French Church of Bâle.

would desire that all may be well done.

Your servant and humble brother,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CXCV. – To Monsieur de Falais

Information in regard to a house – advice on the subject of a marriage proposed for a relative of Monsieur de Falais

From Geneva, this 26th of May 1547.

Monseigneur, – I hope that the bearer of these presents will be the captain of our town,¹²⁹ from whom I have hired the house. He has a mind to betake himself to your quarter, in order to confer with you. He has offered me an alternative condition. In the first place: should it please you to lend him money for a certain term, that the house shall remain pledged to you in security for the repayment, without paying any rent; and that of the repairs which you may make for your convenience, he shall bear a part: secondly, that he should sell it to you. It is true that he is not the feudal superior, but he engages at all risks to maintain and warrant you in the sale of it out and out. In this case, he must have three hundred crowns for it. If your intention is to purchase, you

¹²⁹ The bearer of this letter was the captain-general, Amy Perrin, then on his way to Bâle. He had been charged with a secret mission to the new king of France, Henry II., and was imprisoned after his return to Geneva, because of unfaithfulness in the fulfilment of his commission.

will discuss the price with himself, making the best bargain you can. It is very certain, that assuming the responsibility of keeping it in repair, he will not readily give it for two hundred crowns. You will have to choose between these two conditions, and to arrange with himself, if you see it to be for your advantage. If so be that you do not enter into agreement with him, I have told you already that the house could not be secured to you, consequently you would need to look about elsewhere. For you will not prevail on him to put it into a proper state for your accommodation, unless you go about it in this way. And in good earnest, if you purpose to come here about the end of summer, I advise you to endeavour that the repairs may be made before your arrival, to avoid having your heads broken, and many other inconveniences. I believe that the plan I have laid down would please you very well, so that your absence need be no hindrance, and it will be quite easy to have the thing done. He does not think much repair is needed, but I suspect it will not amount to less than forty crowns. Wherefore, the purchase would seem to me more expedient, especially if you could agree at two hundred crowns, and that he would take upon himself to warrant in perpetuity. I desire that you may do something in this matter, provided it be to your advantage.

The Sieur de Parey¹³⁰ arrived last evening, and came to call for me about nine o'clock. As it was rather late, we had scarcely leisure to speak together, so that I do not yet know the

¹³⁰ A pretender to the hand of Mademoiselle de Wilergy.

position of his affairs. After having spoken to Sieur Maldonado, I would advise that you only inform the girl of the nature of the objection, without mentioning to her any mishap which may have occurred to him; for all that would be told over again afterwards. Therefore, I would merely let her understand: "He sleeps little, there is somewhat of levity about him, wherefore some danger might be apprehended from his peculiar constitution. Consider, then, whether you would be patient if God were to visit you with such a trial." That, in my opinion, would be sufficient. And according as you shall see her disposed, you will do what you think right in the matter. We have had some report of the decision, and he,¹³¹ complaining of the sentence of the judges, glories in his shame. May God give him a better mind.

Monsieur, having humbly commended me to the kind favour of yourself and of Madame; and having presented to you the remembrances of Des Gallars and of my wife, I pray our good Lord to have you always in his keeping, to rule and guide you, and bestow grace upon you to glorify him always.

It is enough that you be informed who the bearer is. I do not know if he will have other company along with him, for he went away in such haste, that without having spoken of it to me, he came this morning all booted and spurred, to bid me adieu. You see what has been the cause of my not having been able to communicate with Maldonado, for he went away yesterday evening to sleep at Tourné. That is also the reason wherefore I

¹³¹ Valeran Poulain. See note 1, p. 113.

have not sent you any compliments from him.

Your servant and humble brother,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CXCVI. – To Viret

Interview of Calvin with a senator of Berne – advantage secured over the party of the Libertins

Geneva, 28th May 1547.

Zerkinden¹³² was here. I laid bare the ailments, and at the same time suggested the remedy of which we had spoken together.¹³³ He approved of it, but he thinks it will be difficult to obtain it. If, however, he come to Berne in time, he will make trial; for he admits that, in such an emergency, there is nothing that should not be attempted. I am, however, afraid that others may be sent thither before him, who, as is usual with them, after making a great display, will perform nothing. Thus, what has been for long desired will be granted too late. But may God look to this, as to all other matters!

We had here lately some little trouble about slashed breeches.¹³⁴ This was the pretext, but they had already begun to

¹³² Nicolas Zerkinden, senator of Berne, prefect of the town of Nyon.

¹³³ The establishment of discipline in the churches of the Pays de Vaud.

¹³⁴ An ordinance had recently interdicted the use of slashed breeches at Geneva. The reason which Calvin gives for this prohibition may be seen in a subsequent letter to the faithful of France, (24th July 1547.)

break out into the greatest license. When the *Two Hundred* had been summoned at their request, we were all present. I made a speech, which in a moment extorted from them what with firm expectation they had eagerly swallowed; for I discoursed about sources of corruption in general, premising that I was not speaking against these trumperies. They fall into a rage, and gnash with their teeth, as they do not dare openly to shout. By this one experiment, however, they learned, what they had not supposed to be the case, that the people are on our side. The tragic Cæsar hastily set off on a journey the following day, to avoid being present at the public procession, which that meeting rendered hazardous and puerile, whereas he was hoping that it would be the token of a certain supreme authority. He had returned to terms of friendship with Romanel, with a view to concuss the whole city, with no one to interpose. We, however, have unexpectedly shattered all his plans. Thus does God make sport of those Thrasoes!

Adieu, brother and most sincere friend. May the Lord be continually present with you, and bless and prosper your labours. You will hear the rest from Rebitti. Salute your wife in the name of me and mine. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

CXCVII. – To Monsieur de Falais

Recommendation of John de Budé – Uncertainty of the news from Germany

From Geneva, the 4th of June 1547.

Monseigneur, – I have nothing to write you at present, except that the bearer is one of the sons of the late Mr. Budé.¹³⁵ When you shall have made his acquaintance, you will find him so excellent, that you will esteem him worthy of being loved by all those who love God, even if the memory of his father had not of itself recommended him. He is none of those who make a great show and parade. And all the more on that account is he valued by me, and I know that so it will be with you. His intention is to go to see Bâle and Strasbourg, then to return without making any long sojourn in those parts. Notwithstanding, I have advised him to make full inquiry whether the roads will be safe before going further, and he has promised me to do so; for where there is no necessity, it would answer no purpose to put himself in danger. I believe that before he arrives there, you will be no longer in deliberation with regard to Sieur de Parey. For the prolonged delay which he asks for, is by no means with a view to strengthen

¹³⁵ John de Budé, Sieur de Vêrèce. See note 1, p. 90.

his resolution; and indeed I conjecture, that it has been cautiously suggested by his relations, thinking that between this time and that he might alter his mind, seeing that they must be acquainted with his humour.

We are quite amazed to have no news that can be depended upon. One may perceive the disorder which prevails in Germany, and the wretched management. If there had been a grain of salt among them, they would have looked well to their affairs, before they came to the knowledge of that which was to be known far and wide three days afterwards. But what do I say? *Non est consilium, non est fortitudo absque domino*. Therefore they are taken unawares.

I hope to know by the first what decision you have come to with our captain.¹³⁶

To make an end, Monsieur: having humbly commended me to your good grace and of Madame, and having presented the like remembrances to you on the part of my wife and others, I supplicate our good Lord always to have a care of you, to rule you by his Spirit, to strengthen you against all stumbling-blocks and annoyances, as well as the whole of your household. Although I have not leisure to write to the young ladies, I desire to be very affectionately remembered to all three.

Your servant and humble brother,

John Calvin.

¹³⁶ Amy Perrin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

CXCVIII. – To Monsieur de Budé.¹³⁷

**He exhorts him to follow the example of
the rest of his family, and retire to Geneva**

This 19th June 1547.

Monsieur, – Although I am personally unknown to you, I do not hesitate on that account to write you privately, hoping that my letter will be welcome, as well for the sake of the Master whom I serve, as for the matter of which it treats; and also that those who have induced me to do so, have credit enough with you, as I believe they have, to secure me access. I have heard of the upright spirit which our Lord has given you, wherefore let us

¹³⁷ See the notice concerning the family of Budé, p. 90. We believe, contrary to the opinion of M. Galiffe, *Notices Généalogiques*, tom. iii. p. 83, that this letter is addressed to Louis or to Francis Budé, and not to John de Budé, Sieur de Vêrace, their brother. This latter had already made a journey to Geneva, and he was known to the Reformer, who had introduced him in very kind terms to M. de Falais. – Letter of 4th June 1547, p. 118. It is not then to the Sieur de Vêrace, that the first words of Calvin's letter can apply, but to one of his brothers: "Although I am personally unknown to you, I do not on that account hesitate to write you privately, in the hope that my letter will be welcome," &c. The family of Budé were then preparing to leave France. Two years afterwards, they settled at Geneva, as appears from their registration in the list of the inhabitants, 27th June 1549, and the following passage of a letter from Viret to Calvin, 12th June of the same year: "*I rejoice that the Budé have arrived, along with their mother.*" – MSS. of the Library of Geneva.

all praise him. For although you may have many temptations of a worldly kind where you are, to impede and distract you, you nevertheless do not cease to groan under the unhappy captivity in which you are held, desiring to escape from it. And indeed your honest zeal has been already partially manifested, when, in place of hindering the party who were about to shift their quarters, you confirmed them in their good purpose, and instead of delaying, have endeavoured to forward their departure, only regretting that you could not follow them immediately. Now, then, seeing that Satan has many means to damp our zeal in well-doing, and that our nature is very apt to side with him, you must stir up the fire which God by his Spirit has already lighted in your heart, until the good desire be realized. You must abandon everything as hurtful which separates you from him, in whom lies all our happiness, and with whom if we are not united, we forfeit life and salvation. We do not mean, however, to condemn all those who live elsewhere, as if the kingdom of God were shut up within our mountains, while we know it is extended over all. But it is right, wheresoever we are, that God should be honoured by us, and we are nowise to be excused, if we pollute the earth which he has sanctified to our use. If we are in a place where we are not permitted to acquit ourselves of our duty, and where the fear of death leads us to do what is evil, we ought, knowing our grievous infirmity, to seek the remedy: which is, to withdraw from such bondage. Since our Lord has opened your eyes to let you see what an evil it is to defile yourself with superstition, it

only remains for you to come forth of it. Besides, you have less excuse than another, considering the position which you hold, for the reckoning will be twofold, if instead of shewing the way, as you are bound to do, you give occasion to those who see you, to step aside out of it.

As for the other difficulties which are peculiar to your present circumstances, I refer myself to your own experience. More than all that, you have to consider that if the good lady with just reason dreaded to finish the remainder of her life there, you may well fear a longer period of languishing, according to the ordinary course of nature. There is assuredly no to-morrow that we can make ourselves sure of. Therefore, on the other hand, you ought to make the greater haste, for fear you should be taken unawares. You see, therefore, that God is urging you in every way. Howsoever the matter may be settled, I pray you, Monsieur, not to allow the grace which God has given you to be quenched. If he has given you worldly riches, have a care lest in place of rendering them in homage to him, you may be hindered by them from serving him. I need not tell you, that he has given you a help which every one has not. This is, that you have a Sarah who will be ready to follow you, whithersoever that kind Father shall call you; so that it depends upon yourself alone whether or not you shall follow the example of our father Abraham. It is quite true that you will find no spot on earth where you can be beyond the reach of trial, as indeed it is not reasonable to expect our faith to be exempt from these anxieties. But since the present

is a time of conflict, there is nothing better for us than to fall back upon our standard, where we may receive courage to do battle steadfastly even unto death. It is an advantage not to be despised, when God gives us leisure to confirm our faith, that the preparation may be of service to us in due time and place. For this ought to be quite enough for us, when he arms us with his strength for victory, before putting us to the proof. But seeing that the very beginnings are difficult, and perseverance still more so, the best resource is to pray God that he would stretch out his hand to you, and give you courage to surmount all obstacles. To which end we also would beseech him along with you, that he would please to shew himself your protector even unto the end, upholding you not only against the wicked, but also against Satan their chief. Having humbly commended me to your good favour, and to that of Madame your wife...

John Calvin.

[*Fr. copy – Library of Geneva. Vol. 111.*]

CXCIX. – To Viret

Citation of the wife of Amy Perrin before the Consistory – case of Gruet – news from Germany

2d July 1547.

We must now fight in earnest. The wife of the comedian Cæsar was again summoned to the Consistory, on account of her frowardness.¹³⁸ While there, though she received no provocation, in the form even of too harsh a word, she vomited forth more venom than on any previous occasion. First of all, she denied the right of our court to take cognizance of her, even supposing she had been guilty of a delinquency. In the next place, she complained that she was deeply branded with ignominy, by being compelled to appear in a place to which the depraved and criminal could alone of right be summoned. When one of the assessors sought to restrain her intemperate behaviour, she turned her fury upon him. Abel then interposed, and expressed his surprise that she had at first professed that she was too modest, or too little given to speaking, to be able to answer at greater length, whereas she was a match in abuse for as many

¹³⁸ "Complaint of Calvin against the wife of Amy Perrin, who insulted the minister Abel in full Consistory." – *Registers of Council*, 24th June.

as there might be. At this her fury boiled all over. "No, indeed," she says, "but you are a reviler, who unscrupulously slandered my father. Begone, coarse swine-herd, you are a malicious liar!" She would have almost overwhelmed us by her thunders, had she not been forcibly extruded. The Senate desired that she should be more closely imprisoned. She escaped by means of that matron who is wont to take under her patronage all bad causes. One of her sons accompanied her in her flight. Accidentally meeting Abel not far from the city gate, she insulted him afresh, and even more shamelessly than before. Abel said nothing, but conducted himself with the greatest moderation, just as he had done in the Consistory. Next day a paper is found in the pulpit, threatening us with death, unless we remain silent. I send a copy of it to you.¹³⁹ The Senate, startled by such audacity, orders a rigid inquiry to be made into the conspiracy. The investigation is committed to a few. As many suspected Gruet, he was immediately arrested.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ The import of this note, written in the Savoyard language, and affixed to the pulpit of the ministers, was, "that people did not wish to have so many masters; that they (the ministers) had now gone far enough in their course of censure; that the renegade monks like them had done nothing more than afflict all the world in this way; that if they persisted in their course, people would be reduced to such a condition that they would curse the hour in which they emerged from the rule of monachism; and that they (the ministers) should take care lest as much should be done to them as was done to the Canon Vernly of Fribourg." The last passage was equivalent to a threat of death.

¹⁴⁰ The former canon, Jacques Gruet, of dissolute manners, of licentious and perverse doctrine, constantly opposed to the ministers, and intolerant of all rule in the Church as in the State, had lain under the imputation of having been the instigator of the attempt at poisoning Viret in 1535. – *Histoire de la Suisse*, vol. xi. p. 364.

It was, however, a different hand; but while they were turning over his papers, much was discovered that was not less capital. There was a humble petition which he had designed to present to the people in the Assemblies, in which he contended that no offence should be punished by the laws but what was injurious to the state; for that such was the practice of the Venetians, who were the highest authority in the matter of government; and that in truth there was danger, while this city submitted to be ruled by the brain of one man of melancholy temperament, of a thousand citizens being destroyed in the event of any outbreak. Letters were also found, chiefly written to André Philippe, and to others. In some he named me; at other times, he had enveloped me in figures of speech, so clumsily contrived, however, that one could lay his finger on what he meant to conceal. There were, besides, two pages in Latin, in which the whole of Scripture is laughed at, Christ aspersed, the immortality of the soul called a dream and a fable, and finally the whole of religion torn in pieces. I do not think he is the author of it; but as it is in his handwriting, he will be compelled to appear in his defence, although, it may be, that he himself has thrown into the form of a memorandum, according to the turn of his own genius, what he heard from others; for there are mutilated sentences, crammed with solecisms and barbarisms. I know not whether Jacoba, whose sister is the wife of Des Gallars, has been apprehended. There is, indeed, a decree of the Senate [for that purpose.] What Vandel's sentence will be is still doubtful; but he is in

considerable danger.¹⁴¹ Such was the state of things when I wrote. You know that our Syndics have little enough judgment, otherwise the Senate is exceedingly well disposed to the cause.

The brethren have replied to me regarding Sonnier, that they mean to make no change in their former resolution; for I relaxed, as I had abstained from writing, with a view to spare him. He eagerly made reference to the minister De Coppet, who also wished to change his place. I advise you to examine whether there is any truth in this.

The statements contained in Bucer's letter regarding those two victories are quite certain; for a friend of mine¹⁴² passed through this, who had ascertained the truth of the whole matter. He also informed me that tidings of a third victory had been brought away within two hours before he left Strasbourg; but he did not venture to assert this for certain. He further mentioned to me, that when the Landgrave had come to Leipsic on the strength of the promise made to him, he returned without accomplishing the matter, and in despair, and that he was collecting a new army. The name of Henry¹⁴³ was erroneously given in Bucer's letter; for the Landgrave still keeps him in fetters, or at least

¹⁴¹ Pierre Vandel, one of the chief of the reprobate children of Geneva. Handsome and brilliant, he loved to exhibit himself surrounded by valets and courtezans, with rings on his fingers, and his breast covered with gold chains. He had been imprisoned on account of his debaucheries, and his insolent behaviour before the Consistory.

¹⁴² Doctor Chelius, in the handwriting of Calvin.

¹⁴³ Henry of Brunswick.

closely imprisoned. But Bucer was speaking of Erich,¹⁴⁴ who professes the same doctrine with ourselves, and yet hires himself to the tyrant in disturbing the Church. I wish that your Senate could be induced to take the initiative in the stipulated treaty; for Pharaoh wishes to be asked, and thinks it unbecoming his dignity to solicit the weaker parties.¹⁴⁵ But let them look to these and other matters, that are now in course of arrangement. I desire nothing to be done, unless what I judge to be fitting and useful to you.

Adieu, brother and most sincere friend, along with your wife and your whole family. May the Lord always direct you and be present with you. You will salute the brethren respectfully in my name. I and my wife salute thee and thine in the Lord. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

¹⁴⁴ The personage here designated is doubtless Erich, hereditary prince of Sweden, who ascended the throne in 1560, and was deposed in 1568.

¹⁴⁵ A common interest at that time conciliated the King of France and the Swiss. The ambassadors of Henry II., Brissac and Marillac, assured Geneva of the friendship of the King, and took in charge letters of Calvin to the Helvetic Churches. – *Histoire de la Suisse*, vol. xi. p. 358.

CC. – To Monsieur de Falais

Solemn lessons afforded by the sad occurrences in Germany – troubles in Geneva – energetic attitude of Calvin

This 14th of July 1547.

Monseigneur, – From what you have written me, I am certainly of opinion that our brother, Master Francis de la Rivière,¹⁴⁶ should withdraw at least for a season. For should it so be that it suited him to return hither, he would not have to make a long journey: and bringing with him some recommendation from Bâle, he might make application at Berne to be sent to Lausanne, with some provision in the meantime. I should not however have come to this resolution, unless your letter had helped me to it. I have merely told him that you would be glad of his coming, in order that your family might receive instruction from him several times in the week. For I desired to avoid any more definite engagement, that you might remain at perfect liberty in that matter.

With regard to the house, I beg you will inform me what you

¹⁴⁶ The minister Francis Perucel, called La Rivière.

wish me to do about it. But let me have your letter by the middle of August. For according to the use and wont of the town, I have leave to renounce the bargain for the following half year, giving intimation to that effect six weeks before the term. By doing this, you will not be burdened with needless expense; while I fear that by holding it for a longer period, you may incur outlay without return.

I believe Saint André has told you what we have done with *the Apology*. The printing shall not be delayed for want of copy. As for the money, I am not of opinion that you ought to withdraw any of it merely to avoid the murmurs which might thence arise, but rather, that enjoining those who have the charge thereof, to apply it as they ought – correcting abuses, if there be any, you should depute some one to act for you in the matter. However, you will determine that according to your own discretion. But I did not like to withhold what occurred to me, seeing that you have been pleased to consult me on the subject.

We have had no news from Germany since the capture of the Landgrave,¹⁴⁷ who has been suitably rewarded for his baseness. In the present position of affairs, I recognize our God's intention utterly to deprive us of a triumphant Gospel, that he may constrain us to fight under the cross of our Lord Jesus. But let us be content that he return to the early method of his dealings,

¹⁴⁷ Intimidated by the defeat of the Elector of Saxony, the Landgrave of Hesse had submitted himself to the Emperor, and only obtained his pardon by imploring it upon his knees, and surrendering his person and states into the power of this prince.

in the miraculous preservation of his Church by his own power, without the help of an arm of flesh. The trial is hard, I confess; but our fathers have had the like, quite as depressing, and have never been shaken in their stability. Now is the time to put in practice the proverb, "Let us hope and we shall see." Besides, we need not be astonished that God has corrected us thus roughly, considering the life we have led. But as you say, may those who have not hitherto been touched, take note of such examples, that they may humble themselves, and by that means prevent the hand of the Judge.

There has been some want of consideration on the part of the commissioners from this town, in not informing me of their departure. However, I do not give up the expectation of tidings from you by them. I do not know whether any report of our troubles has yet reached you, but they talk of them so loudly throughout the neighbouring country, that it would appear all is over with us. More than that, they have often had me dead, or at least sorely wounded. Be that as it may, I feel nothing of it myself. And in the town we are not aware of the hundredth part of what is said. There have, indeed, been some murmuring and threats on the part of loose-living persons, who cannot endure discipline. Even the wife of him who was to go to see you,¹⁴⁸ and who wrote to you from Berne, rebelled very proudly. But it

¹⁴⁸ Amy Perrin. His wife, daughter of a rich burgess, François Favre d'Echallens, and reprimanded incessantly by the Consistory, was the implacable enemy of the ministers and of Calvin.

has been necessary that she should betake herself to the country, feeling herself but ill at ease in town. The others, indeed, lower the head, in place of lifting up the horn; and there is one of them who is in danger of paying a very heavy reckoning; I know not even whether it may not cost him his life.¹⁴⁹ The young people think that I press them too hard. But if the bridle were not held with a firm hand, that would be the pity. Yea, we must look to their wellbeing, however distasteful to them it may be.

Monsieur, having humbly commended me to your kind favour and that of Madame, I pray our good Lord that he may have you always in his keeping, strengthening you by his Holy Spirit to resist all temptations, and making you abound in all well-doing to his honour. And seeing that the time of the trial of Madame draws near, we shall remember her in prayer for her happy delivery. My wife also presents her humble remembrance to both of you.

Your servant and humble brother,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

¹⁴⁹ Jacques Gruet, formerly a Canon, and a man of licentious and irregular morals, impatient of all restraint either of Church or State. Severely censured by the ministers on account of his debaucheries, he had uttered threats of death against them, which he even ventured to affix to the pulpit of St. Peter's Church. His trial, conducted with all the rigour of that period, terminated by a sentence of capital punishment. Condemned for sedition, blasphemy, and atheism, he perished on the scaffold the 26th July 1547.

CCI. – To Viret. ¹⁵⁰

Indecision of the Seigneurs of Geneva – inflexibility of Calvin

Geneva, 24th July 1547.

There is nothing new in our affairs. The Syndics protract the case of Gruet against the will of the Senate, which does not, however, as would be proper, utter any protest against the delay. For you know that few of them are judicious. I exercise my severity in dislodging common vices, and principally the sources of corruption among the youth. I conceal all sense of the dangers which good men from several quarters allege to exist, lest I should appear over solicitous about myself. The Lord will give the issue in the way that may please himself. Adieu, brother, and most

¹⁵⁰ Subjected to torture, Gruet admitted his guilt, and as well on the ground of his impious and blasphemous productions, as of a letter written to a private individual, in which he exhorted the Duke of Savoy to turn his arms against Geneva, he was condemned to death. It appeared, according to the letter of Calvin to Viret, of which a fragment is here reproduced, that this sentence was not unanimous, and that Gruet reckoned up to this time, in the councils of the republic, friends or accomplices who were desirous of saving him. This did not prevent his execution on the 26th July 1547, and the example threw terror into the ranks of the party of the Libertins. On the trial of Gruet, see the various historians of Geneva, – Spon, Picot, and the *Histoire de la Suisse*, vol. xi. pp. 364, 365.

sincere friend, as also your wife and family. May the Lord Jesus continually direct you, and be present with you. You will convey best greetings to the brethren, and to your wife in my name. My wife salutes you and your family. Yours,

Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 106.*]

CCII. – To the Faithful of France. ¹⁵¹

State of Germany – details regarding the struggles of the Reformer in the cause of the truth at Geneva

This 24th of July 1547.

The electing love of God our Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, rest always upon you by the communion of the Holy Spirit.

Very dear lords and brethren, I doubt not that you have daily much news, as well from hence as from Germany, which might prove a stumblingblock to those who are not overmuch confirmed in our Lord Jesus Christ. But I trust in God he has so strengthened you, that you shall not be shaken, either thereby or by any still greater marvel which may yet arise. And verily, if we are indeed built upon that solid stone which has been ordained for the foundation of the Church, we may well sustain more boisterous storms and tempests without being foundered. It is even expedient for us that such things should happen, that the firmness and constancy of our faith may be approved.

As for the state of Germany, our Lord has so abased the

¹⁵¹ *Entitled:* To our very dear lords and brethren who desire the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

worldly pride of our people, and given all power and authority to him from whom we can look for nought but ill, as that it indeed appears that he means himself to maintain his spiritual kingdom wheresoever he had already set it up. It is very true, that according to the carnal mind it is in danger; yet in commending to himself the care of his poor Church and the kingdom of his Son, let us hope that he will provide for all, beyond what we can think. The danger hitherto has been, lest human means might have dazzled our eyes. Now, however, since there is nothing to prevent our looking to his hand, and recalling to mind how he has preserved his Church in time past, let us not doubt but he will glorify himself in such sort that we shall be amazed. Meanwhile, we must never grow weary of fighting under the ensign of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for that is worth more than all the triumphs of the world.

As regards the rumours of our troubles which have flown abroad, they seem, the greater part of them, in the first place, to have been improvised; because, were you upon the spot, you would not see a tenth part of what is told at a distance. True it is, that we have many hard-headed and stiff-necked rebels, who on all occasions seek only to raise themselves, and by riotous courses to dissipate and abolish all order in the Church, and these, indeed, as well young as old. And the state of our young people, especially, is very corrupt; so that, when we will not allow them every license, they go from bad to worse.¹⁵² Of late, they

¹⁵² Ils font des mauvais chevaux à mordre et à regimber.

were sorely enraged under cover of a small matter. It was because they were not allowed to wear slashed breeches, which has been prohibited in the town for these twelve years past. Not that we would make overmuch of this, but because we see that, by the loop-holes of the breeches, they wish to bring in all manner of disorders. We have protested, however, in the meantime, that the slashing of their breeches was but a mere piece of foppery, which was not worth speaking about, but that we had quite another end in view, which was to curb and to repress their follies. During this little conflict, the devil has interjected others, so that there has been great murmuring. And because they perceived in us more courage than they could have wished, and more determination to resist them, the venom which some of them had concealed within their heart burst forth. But this is nought but smoke; for their threats are nothing else but a splutter of the pride of Moab, who is powerless to execute what he thus presumes to threaten.

Howsoever that may be, you need not be astonished. There have been greater commotions stirred against Moses and against the prophets, although they had to govern the people of God; and such exercises are needful for us. Only beseech our Lord, that he would vouchsafe us grace not to flinch, but that we may prefer his obedience to our life if need be, and that we may be more afraid of offending him than of stirring up all the fury of the wicked against ourselves, and that at length it may please him to allay all the tumults which might otherwise break the courage of the unsettled, for it is that which down-weighs me more than all

the rest. This grace our Lord has vouchsafed us, that we have a right good will to remedy the evil, and all our brethren are well agreed to go forward earnestly in that which is our duty, so that there is the same constancy in all. Nothing is needful, except that this good Lord continue to conduct his own work.

I entreat of you, my dear brethren, continue steadfast on your part also; and let no fear alarm you, even although the dangers were more apparent than you have seen them hitherto. May the reliance which God commands us to have in his grace and in his strength always be to you an impregnable fortress; and for the holding fast the assurance of his help, may you be careful to walk in his fear, although, when we have made it our whole study to serve him, we must always come back to this conclusion, of asking pardon for our shortcomings. And inasmuch as you know well from experience how frail we are, be ever diligent to continue in the practice which you have established, of prayer and hearing of the holy word, to exercise you, and to sharpen and confirm you more and more. Let nothing turn you aside, as sometimes there are many colourable pretexts adduced to justify the remission of such duties. I am convinced that it would be much better that all those who desire to honour God should assemble together, and that every one should call the others thither as by sound of trumpet. But yet, it is much better to have what you have, though it be but a part, than nothing at all. And so, watching well against declension, seek rather to advance in the way of proficiency, and make use of what God gives you, –

edifying one another, and in general all poor and ignorant ones, by your good life, that so, by the same means, the wicked may be put to confusion. In so doing, you will perceive the hand of God upon you, to whom I pray that he would increase in you the graces which he has put within you; that he would strengthen you in true consistency; that, in the midst of dogs and of wolves, he would preserve you, and every way glorify himself in you; after having commended me affectionately to your kind prayers.

Your humble brother and entire friend,

Charles d'Espeville.

[*Fr. copy – Library of Geneva. Vol. 107.*]

CCIII. – To Monsieur de Falais

Thanksgiving for the happy deliverance of Madame de Falais – false reports concerning the state of Geneva – details regarding the publication of the Apology – indisposition of Calvin, and his regret at being separated from Monsieur de Falais

From Geneva, this 16th of August 1547.

Monseigneur, – Two days after the arrival of M. Budé, I received your letter, which you had delivered to James Dallichant; so that all of them have been delivered. Thinking to find a messenger, I have twice since then been disappointed; and I was also in doubt whether to undertake the journey. For notwithstanding the hindrances which might detain me, I was afraid that I had no sufficient excuse. But the tidings which have since reached us, have removed that doubt. I return thanks to our Lord, and all our friends along with me, for the happy delivery which he has granted to Madame, praying that he would so bless the offspring which he has given you, that you may have a twofold comfort in them in the time to come, as I do also hope. We shall look for a letter from you shortly. It is enough in the meanwhile

to know that all is well as to the main point.

In reply to all that you have sent to me, I had requested Gallars to translate the *Apology*, promising to revise it finally myself. But he has been so negligent, that Master Francis Baulduin¹⁵³ came just in time to begin it. I send you, therefore, his translation, which we have revised together, not to polish it very highly, but merely to see whether the meaning had been truly rendered, at the same time with the French copy in the handwriting of Saint André.

In the Latin epistle of Dryander,¹⁵⁴ I have corrected what appeared to me to be right; you can follow that which shall seem best to yourself. I hope that you will understand who has induced me to write many things, which I did not object to, but which appeared to me to be superfluous, or at least that they would be of no weight with the individual to whom they were addressed.

You will see the answers which I have made in the name of

¹⁵³ Francis Baudouin of Arras, a distinguished lawyer, fled to Geneva on account of religion. He became the friend and the secretary of Calvin, whose opinions at a later period he attacked, and betrayed his confidence by robbing him of his most precious papers. – (See Drelincourt, *Defence of Calvin*, pp. 251, 252.) Called successively as Professor of Law to Bourges, to Strasbourg, and to Heidelberg, Baudouin died in 1573, leaving the reputation of one of the most learned men of his time, and of a most versatile spirit in matters of religion. It has been justly said of him, that he was a Roman Catholic in France, a Lutheran at Strasbourg, and a Calvinist at Geneva.

¹⁵⁴ See note 1, p. 111. Dryander seems at this period to have filled the office of secretary to M. de Falais. He carried on at the same time a correspondence with Calvin, expressing the highest esteem for his character and talents. – *Library of Geneva*, Vol. 110. One of his brothers, John Ensinas, had been burnt at Rome in 1545, a martyr to the Protestant faith.

Mademoiselle de Wilergy, and may give effect to, if you think they are the right thing. I speak drily enough to the Abbess, because of the suspicion, which is very strong.

If it please God to settle a church there, it will be a great comfort to your family. But the blessing will extend much further, and will have the effect of removing many stumblingblocks. It is a great pity the scattering of the handful who met at Vezel.¹⁵⁵ Our Lord, I fear, must have been disposed to punish that excessive moroseness, which could only arise from a despising of his blessing. However, I hope that, after having punished the fanatics and crack-brained persons who have been the cause of all the mischief, he will yet set up again his little flock which remains, and will hold out a hand to them, to lead them always in the right way.

What moved me to urge you about the house, was my fear of the shame I should feel if perhaps you did arrive here and should not find a lodging ready. Besides, the repairs which the landlord thought of making thereon, would not make it fit for your occupation. Thus the rent you are paying for it, would be so much money lost, unless we should fall upon some remedy for it. Although I have taken it for three years, it was at my option to be quit of the bargain at the end of the half-year, on giving intimation three weeks before the term. At this time we shall

¹⁵⁵ Some Flemish and French refugees had already formed a community at Vezel, which was enlarged in 1553 by the dispersion of the foreign congregation of London, and which was constituted as a church by the minister Francis Péruzel, called La Rivière.

be foreclosed of that liberty. If you could have decided upon coming, I would have desired the whole to be put in proper repair, that you might be exempt from annoyance. But seeing the matter stands as it does, it is very unadvisable indeed to charge yourself with a house here; only I could have wished to cause you no needless expense. But since you have allowed this half year to pass away, we shall need to take care between this and the end of January, so as not to enter upon the second year.

I perceive that the troubles which we have had here are also exaggerated with you as well as elsewhere. At Lyons they have had me dead in more than twenty ways. Everywhere throughout the country they tell of wonders, of which, God be thanked, we perceive nothing. It is very true Satan has here very many firebrands; but the flame passes off with a blaze like that of flax. The capital punishment which has been inflicted upon one of their companions,¹⁵⁶ has laid their horns in the dust. As for your landlord,¹⁵⁷ I know not what face he will wear towards us when he returns. He appeared to go away on friendly terms, at least manifesting more compunction and respect towards me than formerly. Meanwhile, however, his wife has played the she-devil to such a degree, that she has found it necessary to gain the open country. It is already about three months that he has been absent. He must needs walk softly upon his return. Up to the present time, we have got on very well, considering the

¹⁵⁶ Jacques Gruet. See p. 128.

¹⁵⁷ Amy Perrin.

condition of the servants of God. Had we not been so depressed, we should have been too much at our ease. I believe, indeed, that he may have opened the letter, and that that may have given boldness to Valeran, and to that worthy man with whom he was lodged, to take a second look into them. However that may be, in complaining about it as he does, he must at once avow himself to be a breaker-open of letters, which is certainly the act of a lawless man. As for his wrongs, they weigh no more with me than his person in the scale of importance, which is a little less than a feather. Moreover, it is evident that he was drunk, or at least seeing double, when he thus wrote. Provided he does not go the length of throwing stones, our patience, yours and mine, will not find it very hard to bear with his abuse. We are not better than David, were we even called to bear further injury, and he is at least quite as worthy as Shimei. In that and in greater things, let us pray God that he may vouchsafe us grace to call us to his light, despising the calumnies of those who judge in darkness. I am more sorry than for aught else to see him gone so far astray.

If there is no pressing hurry, or if there might be more hope of reasonable despatch in the absence of the protonotary, I think that it would only be right to await his return, as well that nothing may be done by halves, as to avoid the suspicion he might take up, that you had watched the opportunity, or anticipated the complaint he meant to make, in terms of his letter, which was not a little dissatisfied. But should there be any *damnum aut periculum in mora*, this consideration ought not to hamper you,

so at least methinks. Otherwise the better way will be, to wait for an opportunity to get rid of the whole at once.

As for the book-mark – your own arms, as well as the motto, everything will be liable to be blazoned abroad by those who, without good ground, are, nevertheless, always open-mouthed in speaking evil of us. Howbeit, I find nothing amiss, neither in the one nor in the other. Even had there been no diminishing of the expenses, there could be no harm in putting the arms at the beginning, and the motto at the end. But I am much puzzled which of the two methods to choose, unless you were to put your armorial bearings with the saying underneath, – *Qui recedit a malo prædæ est expositus*, with the citation of the chapter.¹⁵⁸

As regards the marriage,¹⁵⁹ for my part, I would by no means consent to it. You see how confidentially I reply to you. 'The family is very poor indeed. The noblesse of Savoy is very different from that of your country; the man himself is well enough, but not so steady as to withstand evil counsels; subject to illnesses, arising chiefly from a sanguine temperament, – (you fear one reproach; I am afraid of a quite different one, which I would only mention if I desired to be put out of the way, &c.) You had been rash in entertaining his proposal.' Pardon me if I am too forward. I would like better to take the other whom I know, if it fell to me to decide. But it is full time for me to pull up, having certainly exceeded due bounds.

¹⁵⁸ Isaiah lix. 15.

¹⁵⁹ Of Mademoiselle de Wilergy.

Before I have concluded, a cough has seized me, and hits me so hard upon the shoulder that I cannot draw a stroke of the pen without acute pain.¹⁶⁰ There is a letter to Wendelin, to which I would much desire to have a reply, because there is some inquiry regarding the Commentaries on St. Paul, of which several persons urge the printing. I hope that it shall be profitable, otherwise I would not have composed them. Seeing that the present bearers are not quite certain of going so far as Strasbourg, and that even if they do go, I could not be sure to have an answer by them, I beg you kindly to charge some one of your servants to convey the letter in good time, and to procure the answer.

Monsieur, having heartily commended me to your kind favour, and that of Madame, and also presented to you remembrances from my wife, I pray our Lord that it would please him to have you in his holy keeping, to preserve to you the blessing he has bestowed, that you may even see the fruit of it, so as to derive more full consolation and joy; and, in the meanwhile, to help you in everything, and that continually. I am sorry that I cannot be with you for at least a half of a day, to laugh with you, while we wait for a smile from the little infant, under the penalty of bearing with his cries and tears. For that is the first note, sounded as the key-note, at the beginning of this life – the earnest of a better, that we may smile from the heart when we shall be about to depart from it.

I entreat of you to bear with my indisposition, commending

¹⁶⁰ The conclusion of the letter is in the handwriting of Francis Baudouin.

me to the goodly company.

Your servant and humble brother,

*John Calvin.*¹⁶¹

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

¹⁶¹ The signature of the letter is autograph.

CCIV. – To Farel

**False report of Calvin's death – proposition (query)
by the wife of Amy Perrin – calumnious accusation
against Idelette de Bure – journey of Farel to Geneva**

Geneva, 21st August 1547.

I am more grateful to you than words can readily express, for having spontaneously transferred to us your credit and service, when you thought that we were pressed by great difficulties. In this, however, you did nothing that was novel or unexpected. The reason why I did not avail myself of your offer, was that various rumours were everywhere flying about which I thought had been extinguished, but which would have been the more increased had I summoned hither you and Viret. You know with what sort of men we have to deal, and how eager they are for an opportunity of speaking against us. Letters were daily arriving, especially from Lyons, from which I learned that I had been more than ten times killed.¹⁶² It was therefore proper that the

¹⁶² "M. Calvin has represented that letters have been written to him, as well from Bourgoyne as from Lyons, to the effect that the children of Geneva were willing to give five hundred crowns to have him put to death; he does not know who these are." – *Registers of the Consistory*, 1st September 1547.

ungodly should be deprived of the occasion of talking. The senate is now quieted, and is favourably disposed to the good cause. Amy, our friend, is still in France.¹⁶³ His wife is with her father, where she carries on her revels in her usual fashion, and yet we requested the Senate that all past offences might be forgiven her, if she shewed anything to warrant a hope of repentance. That petition has not been granted, for she has gone so far as to have cut off all hope of pardon for herself. As the day of the [Lord's] Supper draws near, I may meet with Penthésilæa. Froment lately made a movement about a reconciliation, but he wished the matter to be settled according to his own arbitration. I replied that our church was not so destitute but that there were brethren competent to undertake that duty. We shall make every effort. And yet she has cruelly wounded me. For when at the baptism of our child James, I had admitted the truth about the fault of my wife and her former husband,¹⁶⁴ she calumniously asserted among her own friends, that my wife was therefore a

¹⁶³ Charged with an important mission to the court of King Henry II., Perrin, on his return, was subjected to the accusation of treason in the carrying out of his commission. The King of France had said that he would give two millions to be master of Geneva. Perrin was accused of having replied, that two hundred horse would be sufficient to conquer the city. – *Hist. de la Suisse*, vol. xi. p. 361. It could not however be proved, that he had contracted secret engagements with France. He was nevertheless imprisoned, afterwards released at the request of the Seigneury of Berne, and stripped of his offices. – *Registers of Council*, September and November 1548.

¹⁶⁴ Idelette de Bure is known to have espoused in her first nuptials an Anabaptist, Jean Storder. According to the doctrines of that sect, which denied the authority of the civil power, the marriage to be legitimate had no need of the sanction of the magistrate.

harlot; such is her bold impudence. I shall treat her not according to what she deserves, but according to what my office demands. Add that N. had invented a most calumnious fable, – to the effect, that I had received a severe reprimand from you and Viret, on the ground that, having been placed here by you in your room, and by way of deputy, I abused my precarious authority. You will now, however, come at a much more opportune time than you would have done before. You would hear everything that cannot be committed to writing. You might apply your hand to wounds that are not yet well healed. We might consult together about the remedying of occult diseases. You will therefore see whether you will have any leisure. I have commenced work upon the Fathers of Trent;¹⁶⁵ but the beginnings proceed slowly. The reason is, I have not an hour that is free from incessant interruptions. Adieu, most sound-hearted brother, and matchless friend; salute respectfully fellow-ministers and your family in my name. May the Lord be always present with you, direct you, and bless your labours. Amen. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Calvin's Lat. Corresp.* – Opera, vol. ix. p. 240.]

¹⁶⁵ Allusion to the work which Calvin was at that time preparing against the Council of Trent, and which appeared at the end of the year. – See the Letter to Farel of the 28th December 1547.

CCV. – To Viret

Mention of a letter from M. de Falais – Emmanuel Tremelli – a book by Viret – journey of Budé and Nicolas des Gallars to Paris

Geneva, 29th August 1547.

Before bringing to a conclusion the matter of Beat, it seems proper to wait the return of Textor, who I know will be here in a short time, unless some new obstacle intervene. For he had been compelled to remove from Macon, when Claude the dyer lately returned from that quarter. The letter from Bâle contained absolutely nothing of interest to you or me. There was but one letter of Falais to me, in which he mentioned the birth of a daughter,¹⁶⁶ of whose death he spoke in a second letter to Maldonado. He had besides sent a copy of the letter of recommendation which the Landgrave had obtained from the Emperor; but I had read a translation of it by Pagnet fifteen days before. I send it to you in case you should not have seen it. I had forgot the epistle of Valeran, in which that wretch so unblushingly insults a perfect nobleman, that I am ashamed

¹⁶⁶ See the letter to M. de Falais of the 16th August, p. 132.

to read it. Budé strongly solicited me to exert myself to bring Emmanuel¹⁶⁷ hither, if it could be accomplished on any ground. His services could be of no avail to us, unless in the professorship of Hebrew; and this office is filled by Imbert. I wish you would excuse me to him, if you have no objection, that he may at least understand that I am not guilty of neglect. Girard has not yet brought the preface, although I reminded him that he should do so to-day. Send the book on the Church and Sacraments.¹⁶⁸ I would read it with pleasure, even although you did not impose that task upon me. Only I request your permission to consult my own convenience; for I never had less leisure than at present. The long nights, however, will presently afford me somewhat more. Des Gallars has left for Paris, along with Budé, as he could not otherwise satisfy his mother; and he could not have had a better opportunity than now, in the absence of his father-in-law. Besides, he has it in view to bring his sister along with him; a modest girl, I hear, and who is harshly treated by her step-father. I wished you to know that. Adieu, most sound-hearted brother and friend, with your wife and brothers, all of whom you will salute in our name. May Christ be ever present with you.

But I have forgot about Vernon. Sulzer obtained from the Senate a supplement for him, so long as he should be sick, to meet

¹⁶⁷ Emmanuel Tremelli, a learned Hebraist of Ferrara, disciple of Peter Martyr, at that time in retirement at Strasbourg.

¹⁶⁸ The book, – *De la Vertu et Usage du Saint Ministère et des Sacremens*, Genève, 1548. Senebier, *Hist. Litt.*, vol. i. p. 156, Art. Viret.

the unusual expenditure; and also half stipend for Maigret.¹⁶⁹ Lest that arrangement should displease me, Sulzer charged him to return to terms of friendship with me. After asking me to come to him, he made a long enough petition for forgiveness. I replied as I was disposed, and as I was bound to do. The result was that he promised amendment, and I fraternal affection, if he changed his course of life for the better. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr.* – *Library of Geneva*. Vol. 106.]

¹⁶⁹ The minister Antoine Maigret, who was shortly afterwards deposed from his charge.

CCVI. – To Monsieur de Falais

Dedication of the *Apology* – mention of M. de Montmor – Sickness of Maldonado

From Geneva, this 10th of September 1547.

Monseigneur, – By your last, I perceive, that I have not yet satisfied you concerning the *Apology*. Although the three points which you have noted need not retard the publication, the excuse may be made in three sentences; because should we enter somewhat further on explanation, we must touch upon rather ticklish matters, which it would be better to let sleep. I do not know to whom it would be well to address it at present, considering the temper of the times. She has already played a principal part: I cannot think of any of the other persons who would be suitable. To dedicate it to the noblesse of the Netherlands, would be a hateful proceeding. In Germany, what states would you choose? I would therefore prefer that no change be made in the beginning. Touching the conclusion, although there is plenty of material, and that very pertinent, that might be added, even as it stands it is not incomplete. Hereafter, should occasion call for it, you will consider whether you should add thereto, or make some other distinct publication. However, I

refer the whole to your discretion, and merely express to you my opinion.

Concerning the party you inquire about, I fear that you suppose I build marriages in the air very much at random. But why so? for indeed I believe that I have some foundation of reason and sound confidence. Eight months ago, the son of M. de Montmor, with whom I was brought up in my childhood,¹⁷⁰ informed me that he would desire above all else to retire hither, and he continues of that mind; for it is not merely on one occasion that he has so written. He is a young man; at least he is of the age of thirty-four years, good-natured, very gentle, and docile. Though he has drunk deep of youthful follies in earlier life, now that God has given him a knowledge of himself, I believe he will be quite to your mind. I have made diligent inquiry of Nicolas Loser, and Nicolas Picot his son-in-law, who have spoken to him, whether there was any taint of disease about him, such as young men acquire in their dissolute courses. They have replied to me in the negative. My desire has thereupon led me to build an expectation. Should he come, as I expect, I would send him at once to yourself; and then you can consider whether he would be a suitable person. If he does not come within a month, I

¹⁷⁰ We read in the Life of Calvin by Theodore Beza, "From his youth he was all the better, and liberally brought up, – at the expense of his father, however – in the society of the children of the house of Montmor, whom he also accompanied as the companion of their studies at Paris." It is to one of the members of that noble family, Claude de Hangest, Abbot of Saint Eley, that Calvin dedicated, in 1532, his Commentary on Seneca's Treatise *De Clementia*.

know not whether I ought to expect him. But I think he will come, to communicate to me, and forthwith return to expedite his departure.

We have been like to lose the good Maldonado, for he has been at the point of death: and the fever even now confines him to bed, but not with imminent danger, so far as we can discern, by the favour of God. I have prepared some verjuice, enough for a year's provision, which awaits you, if perchance you come. It is the produce which you have got from your garden for the bygone year.

In conclusion, Monsieur, having humbly commended me to your kind favour, and that of Madame, I pray our good Lord to have both of you in his holy protection, to lead and direct you, to send you whatsoever he perceives to be needful for you.

Your servant and humble brother,

John Calvin.

[*Fr. orig. autogr. – Library of Geneva. Vol. 194.*]

The title would appear to me to read well thus: *Excuse composed by M. Jacques de Bourgoigne, &c., to clear himself towards his Imperial Majesty from the calumnies laid upon him on account of his faith, whereof he makes confession.* For the word *Apology* is not used in French.

CCVII. – To Henry Bullinger

Comments by Calvin on a work by Bullinger – state of Germany and Italy – policy of the Cantons

[Geneva, 19th September 1547.]

It is now six months since I returned your book, with annotations, such as you had requested me to make.¹⁷¹ I am surprised that I have received no reply from you since that time. When I was in your quarter, you reminded me that there was to be frequent interchange of letters between us. In the meantime, I have heard of some of your townsmen having at different times passed through this place; I have had no one going to you, so

¹⁷¹ Bullinger had submitted his book on the Sacraments to Calvin, (*Absoluta de Christi et ejus Ecclesiae Sacramentis Tractatio*), in which he departed slightly from the doctrine of Zwingle, with the view of approximating to that of the French Reformer. Still, however, the mystery of the spiritual presence of Christ, under external and material symbols, was not expressed in it with sufficient clearness. Calvin had fully criticised this book in a letter, or rather in an extended memoir, the original of which is preserved at Zurich, under the title, *Censura Libri Bullingeri de Sacramentis*, Geneva, 27th February 1547. This memoir, written with a brotherly freedom, concludes with these words: – "You thus have what in your book I desire to see corrected, that it may meet with absolute approval. I make no note of the parts that merit commendation. I have discharged the office of a friend, by complying with your wishes, and freely admonishing you; it now remains for you to take my liberty in good part. This I am confident you will do." – *Library of Zurich. Coll. Hottinger*, M. F. 80, p. 338.

far as I remember. Should an opportunity of writing be at any time afforded you, I earnestly request you will not allow it to pass without availing yourself of it.

I am compelled to hear more about the disaster of Germany than I could wish; and yet nothing is said of the condition of Constance, which remains deeply fixed in my mind. There was great trepidation at Strasbourg when it was supposed that the Emperor would winter there. Moreover, even to this day, they assert that the gates will not be opened to him, if they receive support from any other quarter. I do not know what the Helvetic cities may think. For a short time, indeed, all rumours of a war to be waged against them have ceased, on account of the Italian commotions. But what if all these cities, struck with terror of him, do not venture upon any movement? He already occupies Placentia and Parma, – Peter Farnese¹⁷² having been put to death as some suppose, or at least, quite prostrated; and so great a success may possibly be the means of bringing Italy into a state of peaceful subjugation in the course of this year. Were he to enter Strasbourg, he would, you perceive, occupy an encampment whence he could invade us. Would there then be time, my Bullinger, for you to deliberate? For by keeping silence, do you not, as it were, present your throat to be cut? On this point,

¹⁷² Peter Farnese, son of Pope Paul III., had in truth been recently assassinated at Placentia, and that city had opened its gates to Charles V. But Parma remained under the power of the Pope, who in vain sued for justice from the Emperor on account of the murder of Farnese, and the dispossession of his children. – Robertson, *History of Charles V.*, B. ix.

however, I have no good reason for making an appeal to you, for I know that your fellow-citizens will be so wise as to desire to apply a remedy. The neighbours [Bernese] are manifestly acting the part of fools, in withstanding the adoption of any measures for curbing this wild beast.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, as they are of their own accord bent on destruction, may the Lord direct his own elect by the spirit of wisdom, to make a seasonable stand against the dangers. There are many things which ought to deter you from the French alliance. But just as, on the one hand, it is by no means expedient that you should be wholly bound up with him [the French king], so, on the other, I do not see that you are to shun all connection with him.

As to the rest, the boy who has delivered my letter to you, is the son of a senator with whom I am on terms of the greatest intimacy. He has, in virtue of our friendship, requested me to give his son a letter of introduction to you. He lives with your treasurer, as far as I understand. But it is his father's design that he should prosecute the study of letters, of which he has acquired the rudiments. He is of a teachable disposition and fond of study. I therefore beg of you to recommend him to the masters of your school, in your own as well as my name, not simply in the ordinary fashion, that greater attention may be paid to him than

¹⁷³ The Catholic cantons having engaged to take no step that should have the effect of connecting them with the Emperor, the Reformed cantons, with Berne at their head, bound themselves to the strictest neutrality, and informed the German princes, that they could give them no aid without throwing the half of the confederate states into the hands of their enemy. – *Hist. de la Suisse*. Tom. xi. p. 291.

if he were unknown. This service will be highly gratifying to me.

Adieu, illustrious sir, and highly revered friend in the Lord, along with your fellow-ministers and brethren, all of whom you will salute in my name and in that of my brethren. May the Lord be continually present with you, and bless your labours, I also wish well to your wife and children. – Yours,

John Calvin.

[*Lat. orig. autogr. – Archives of Zurich. Gallicana Scripta. p. 4.*]

CCVIII. – To Monsieur de Falais

Return of Nicolas Des Gallars – stay of Farel and Viret at Geneva

From Geneva, this 29th of September 1547.

Monseigneur, – Since my last letter nothing new has occurred, except that our brother Des Gallars has returned, and has also brought with him the present bearer for your service, seeing that M. Budé did not find the person ready of whom he had spoken to you. I think and feel assured, that this man will quite suit you; he is so loyal and serviceable, and knows well what is good breeding, so as to demean himself becomingly. I have advised that he should come hither along with you as soon as possible, and chiefly because I do not know whether you have resolved to undertake the journey. I have had no tidings of the individual about whom I wrote to you,¹⁷⁴ only I have heard that some disturbance had broken out at Noyon, which may possibly have delayed him, because he was to have been accompanied by a steward of his own, who must have been detained along with the others.

Master William Farel and Master Peter Viret have been here

¹⁷⁴ M. de Montmor. See note, p. 141.

for a week: your presence alone was wanting to complete the festival. Everything goes on as usual. May God of his grace correct whatever is defective, and increase whatever little good there may be. The good Maldonado cannot raise himself up; so that there is no hope of his being of service to you for the present. But when you have work for my brother to do, he will make up for the former failure.

Monsieur, having presented our affectionate remembrances, all, as well to yourself as to Madame, I pray our good Lord to have you always in his holy keeping, to govern you by his Holy Spirit, to bless and to help you in every way.

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