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THE SOURCES OF CALVIN'S INSTITUTES OF 1536¹

I

NOTWITHSTANDING the encouraging fact that many volumes relating to Calvin have appeared since the War, particularly in Germany, anything like a thoroughly comprehensive presentation of the Reformer's theology still remains a *desideratum*. That is a lamentable hiatus! Had such been forthcoming, it would scarcely have been possible that views so widely divergent as regards the Genevan Reformer's standpoint could have faced one another, as have recently seen the light in the treatment of the topic of nature and grace between Emil Brunner on the one hand and Karl and Peter Barth on the other.² If, however, a theology of Calvin is ever to be formulated, in order to wear a historical aspect and exhibit the Reformer as he actually was, it must start from an examination of the sources of his principal work, especially its first edition. I mean by "sources" not so much Holy Scripture or the Fathers, the schoolmen or contemporary opponents of the Reformation, important as the study of all these may have been for Calvin. Under that term I refer to the writings of those of his fellow-reformers who, so far as we can learn, influenced the formation of his doctrine.

That a young man little more than twenty-five years of age, who says of himself that he "had just begun to emerge from the darkness of Popery, drawn onward by a scanty taste of sound doctrine",³ should have set about the composition of a treatise of Christian instruction, and a catechism of the soteriological faith of the Reformed Church, was only feasible as he had recourse to forerunners and models with a more or less distinct degree of imitation. He had pursued a like course in the speech that he had wrought up for his friend Rector Cop, at the Allhallows Festival in 1533.⁴

¹ Translated from the original German by Mr. E. K. Simpson, M.A., Lecturer at the Free Church College, Edinburgh.

² Brunner: *Natur und Gnade*, Tübingen, 1934. *Theologische Existenz heute*, Schriftenreihe, published by Barth and Thurneysen, No. 14. K. Barth: *Nein! Antwort ab E. Brunner*, No. 18. P. Barth: *Das Problem der natürlichen Theologie bei Calvin*, München, 1934-5.

³ At the opening of the second Defence against Westphal, 1556. C. R. *Op.* IX, 51. See further below.

⁴ See proofs in my *Bekehrung Calvins*, p. 43, 89. As to the genuineness of the tradition that the speech is really traceable to Calvin, see my *Lebenbild Calvins*, Leipzig, 1909, p. 205, note 36.

Ursinus and Olevianus, both of them almost of the same age with him, subsequently composed the Heidelberg Catechism in the same manner.¹ Has not Calvin indicated sources in this sense, or at any rate dependence on authorities? The answer to this question compels us very briefly to consider the much discussed, but still by no means unanimously settled, problem of Calvin's conversion.

Heinrich Hoffmann, in his short biography of Calvin,² thus summarizes the results of researches so far on this point. "Three main possibilities present themselves: (1) that Calvin became attached to the evangelical faith by a sudden conversion shortly before these events, namely Cop's address of November 1st, 1533, and its sequel (Lang³). (2) That the beginnings of his evangelical belief are of older date, but first came to a head in 1533. A modification of this view would assume that, like so many of his contemporaries in France, he did not openly avow his faith from the start. In that case his conversion in 1533 would be regarded as his decision to confess his belief, his full surrender to its sway (Karl Müller). (3) That Calvin experienced a full conversion to the Reformed faith and planted himself thereupon as early as 1527-8 (Doumergue and Holl). To-day the third possibility enjoys growing acceptance." To this statement we may add that Doumergue's name may in a measure be subscribed to the second assumption along with Karl Müller's. But our chief comment is that the second and third possibilities cancel each other. For either Calvin was from the very outset of his evangelical leanings, which are conceived to have arisen before 1528, a Nicodemite or Protestant Fabrisien (a position which Holl⁴ on most cogent grounds contests), or his religious standpoint between the years 1526 or 1527 and 1533 becomes simply unintelligible when set side by side with the portrait of the later Reformer.

In so far as stress is laid in support of the third supposition on the passage at the opening of the Second Apologetic in reply to the Lutheran Westphal (*Op.* IX, 51),⁵ first of all cited by Doumergue, I cannot find in it any more than formerly a piece of

¹ See my work on the Heidelberg and four kindred Catechisms; Leipzig, 1907.

² Calvin in *die Schweiz im deutschen Geistesleben*: Bändchen 65, p. 11.

³ The bracketed names are inserted from the notes on p. iii.

⁴ Address on Calvin, 1909, Tübingen, p. 39.

⁵ Holl does not do that, but finds upon passages of a similar nature in letters. But Niesel plainly affirms it (*Calvins Lehre vom Abendmahl*, p. 21).

first-hand evidence respecting Calvin's conversion. I can only reiterate what I then said, which has obviously not been duly weighed, that "by that utterance the Reformer aims at showing what great injustice has been done him in dragging him into the sacramental controversy, in other words, in treating him as a Zwinglian. His teaching has never sought the favour of men, but ever been designed *ad placandos animos*, to mitigate dissension. *Ac libenter glorior, quum alii ad alios propius accedere coepissent, eorum consensu, licet nondum pleno et solido, me non mediocriter adiutum.* That is to say, he had identified himself from the outset with the consensus movement in the sacramental question. Then he subjoins: *Quum a tenebris papatus emergere incipiens, tenui sanae doctrinae gustu concepto, legerem apud Lutherum, nihil in sacramentis ab Oecolampadio et Zwinglio reliquum fieri praeter nudas et inanes figuras, ita me ab ipsorum libris alienatum fuisse fateor, ut diu a lectione abstinuerim. Porro antequam scribere aggressus sum, Marpurgi inter se collocuti aliquid ex priore vehementia remiserant, ut si nondum plena esset serenitas, aliquantum tamen discussa esset densior caligo.* In the former of these sentences Calvin himself announces the fact, which is evident in the *Institutio* of 1536, that Zwingli's writings had but slight influence in the formation of Calvin's initial system. But the second sentence, in which the pluperfects are to be noticed, appends a fresh ground for his not having attached himself to Zwingli, and that consequently he ought not to be involved in the same condemnation of Zwinglianism, because at a date before his appearance as an author the Marburg Conference had taken place, and thereby his course had been determined beforehand.

And the whole paragraph evinces that he had never intervened in the sacramentarian conflict except as an advocate of union, in fact, in the footsteps and fashion of Martin Bucer. This appears likewise from the succeeding sentence, in which he disclaims Bucer's weakness, namely the concoction of empty formulae, and appeals to the fact that for a considerable time both sides had acquiesced in his position. From all this it is unmistakably clear that this whole statement has absolutely nothing to do with the Reformer's conversion. How can the conclusion be drawn from this passage that Calvin possessed already before the Marburg interview a "slender taste of sound doctrine"? That is a line of interpretation I cannot make out."¹

¹ *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.*, 1900, p. 321.

At this point however, Holl, without noticing the rejoinder to Westphal, comes to the aid of the supposition, adducing Calvin's letter of September 11th, 1542, to Viret, where referring to Zwingli's works, he writes : *neque enim omnia legi, et fortassis sub finem vitae retractavit ac correxit in melius quae temere initio exciderat. Sed in scriptis prioribus memini quam profana sit de sacramentis opinio.*¹ Holl infers with good reason that Calvin had not read Zwingli's last writings, but only the earlier, and in particular the *De vera et falsa Religione Commentarius*. Holl adds : "Hence it is highly improbable that he first became acquainted with Zwingli's writings after his death. For in that case why should he have bound himself to their historical sequence ?"² In face of this observation we can only exclaim : What a strange method of proof ! Must one be another's contemporary, if one apprizes oneself chronologically of his theological views ? Let it be postulated that Calvin in 1534 took into his hands the Latin treatises of Zwingli, bound in one volume, possibly at the instance of his friend Du Tillet. Would they not have been chronologically arranged therein ? If, then, he began to read the book, but, influenced by Luther's strictures, broke off in the middle, is that surprising ? Or, apart from this, could not some accidental circumstance have led him to read the "earlier writings" first ?³

This example shows us how this, in common with all other attempts to signalize evangelical tendencies of Calvin's prior to 1533, collapses upon closer scrutiny. They should once for all be abandoned, and our efforts be spent in defining correctly the only real personal testimony of the Reformer touching his conversion, and in consulting Cop's address alongside of that. This is all the evidence we have, and a scrupulous historian must content himself therewith.

II

But have I not been losing myself in an undesirable digression ? I think not, for if the forecited utterances of Calvin tell us nothing relative to his conversion, they speak all the more

¹ *Op.* XI, 438 ; Herminjard, viii., 123.

² Holl, l.c., p. 37, note 1. Niesel (p. 31) inadvertently adopts this argument.

³ The same criticism applies to a further argument of Holl, founded on the following passage from a letter : *Quam* (i.e. Zwingli's false sacramental teaching) *cum viderem multo nostratium applausu arripi, ad huc agens in Gallia impugnare non dubitavi* (Herm. v. 318). It is assumed that the *arripi* relates to the moment when that teaching was brought forward. But why so ? If Anabaptism, despite all confutations of its tenets, spread even in France for decades, why not Zwinglianism also ?

distinctly of the way in which he prepared himself for his first theological publication, our *Institutes*. He drew support from the writings of his predecessors, he used "sources". In seeking to elucidate them, I should have to compile a prolix treatise, in order to specify all that could be mentioned. In this article I must restrict myself to a short synopsis of what has been produced by others on this score, supplemented by certain observations of my own.¹

For a long time past the close connexion between the *Institutes* of 1536 and Luther's small catechism has been recognized.² It was, in fact, his immediate object, when he commenced writing, to systematize the rudiments of the faith for his evangelically disposed countrymen, so as to conduct those who were hungering and thirsting after Christ to true piety by means of his simple, unpretentious book. And thus it was often styled a catechism at first in familiar circles.³ What wonder that he took Luther's celebrated tract as his pattern! In many instances echoes of Luther's *Encheiridion* can be substantiated, especially in the exposition of the Ten Commandments⁴; markedly, too, in the first and probably the third article on the Confession. More convincing still is the arrangement of the *Institutes* after the order of the catechism: Law, Faith, Prayer, Sacraments. The amplification of the last section and the addition of both the last chapters concerning the false sacraments and Christian liberty were occasioned, as is known, by the second aim that obtruded itself on the Reformer whilst at work on his book, namely the defence of the French Protestants against the accusations of Francis I. But if in 1536 he proceeds from the

¹ References are: Remarks of the dogmatic theologians: Loofs, *Leitfaden*, 1906, pp. 876 sq. Seeberg: *Lehrbuch* IV, 2, 1920, pp. 556 sq. Ritschl: *Dogmengesch.*, III, 156; so far as these works advance definite statements; finally, Wernle: *Der ev. Glaube*, vol. 3, *Calvin* in occasional expositions. Happily there is excellent material for our purpose in the *Op. Selecta*, issued by Barth and Niesel, vols. 3 and 4 (1928, 1931), namely the continuous information supplied of the literary relations of Calvin's *Institutes* (Book IV is not yet out). It is one of the main aims of the editors to trace and elucidate Calvin's own quotations and the opponents whom he rebuts, and the reminiscences of ancient writers that occur, with those from patristic or scholastic sources, nevertheless there is much that serves our purpose. Cf. the announcement of the editors (III, xli.): "Where words and sentiments depend on the writings of others, we have not attempted to prove that fact, except when such have been accepted as certainties by other scholars, or we have discovered some clear case in the pursuance of our task. No conclusion, therefore can be drawn from the compass of these notes, which is an accidental matter, as to the relation of Calvin to any other writer." So there still remains open, after all their painstaking labours, a highly important field of enquiry, which of course is by no means fully explored by these brief observations of mine. Among smaller publications I may refer as well to Diehl's *Auslegung des Dekalogs in der Inst.* (1536) and Luther's Catechisms (*Stud. u. Kr.*, 1898, p. 141) and to Niesel's *Calvin's Lehre vom Abendmahl* (1930), pp. 21 sq.

² Cf. Stähelin's *Calvin*, I, p. 75; Lefranc, *La Jeunesse de Calvin*, p. 39.

³ Preface to King Francis, *Op. Select.*, I, 121.

⁴ See Diehl, l.c.

exposition of the Law to Faith, whereas later in the Genevan Catechism¹ he preferred the reverse order, it is evident how strongly the authority of Luther affected him at that period.

In what edition had the young Frenchman studied Luther's masterpiece? Barth and Niesel have shown it to be credible that it was a Latin version of Luther's *Betbüchlein* which made him so eventfully acquainted with the small catechism.² In the Latin *Betbüchlein* likewise many another pithy piece from Luther's pen found place (e.g. a short form of the Ten Commandments, the Belief and the Lord's Prayer). Luther's influence on the forthcoming *Institutes* was enhanced thereby. This very fact, however, makes it uncertain whether Luther's large catechism is to be reckoned among these "sources". Probably I might with Diehl postulate that. Whereupon one may almost conjecture that the actual title of Calvin's great work is owing to a suggestion from Luther, when we recollect the first sentence of the shorter and older preface to his *Grosser Katechismus* of 1529.³

The remaining writings of Luther, traces of whose use are with more or less likelihood to be found in the *Institutes* of 1536, are as follows: *De Libertate Christiana*,⁴ *De Captivitate Babylonica*; Sermon on the Body and Blood of Christ against the Fanatics (translated into Latin, 1527); Sermon on the venerable Sacrament of the Body of Christ, 1519 (translated 1524), and the *Kirchenpostille*.⁵ These, as far as I can gather, are the most important.

The Wittenberg influence on the first *Institutes* was increased by many distinct points of contact with Melancthon. In vols. III and IV of the *Opera Selecta* much material has been collected on this head, especially as regards Calvin's use of the *Loci Communes* of 1521-2. All such notifications do not amount to proofs.⁶ However, I might specify the following parallels

¹ *Op.*, VI, 1.

² *Op. Selecta*: III, 129, note 2; 203, note 1; 353, note 2; 392, note 2; 502, note 1; IV, 3, note 1; 13, note 3; 310, notes 1, 4; 316, note 1; 364, note 2; 366, note 2. It is, of course, not altogether easy to verify these notices. For the Weimar edition of Luther's works, in spite of its copiousness, has not printed a Latin version of the *Betbüchlein*, either at Vol. X, 2, or elsewhere. So I have only been able to compare the *Enchiridion piarum precationum* in the modified edition of 1543; but the scrutiny thus obtained sufficed to warrant the judgment passed in the text.

³ *Præsentis huius opusculi sermonem elaboravimus, ut esset institutio puerorum atque simplicium. Hinc apud veteres lingua Graeca catechismus dictus est, quae vox puerilem institutionem significat. Die Bekenntnisschr. der ev.-luth. Kirche*, 1930, p. 545. Cf. also the phraseology of one of the two translators, Lonicer: Lutherus *κατηχισμὸν*, hoc est, institutionem in sacris pro parvulis inscripsit. Weimar Ed., XXX, i., 482.

⁴ Diehl, l.c., p. 157.

⁵ Niesel, l.c., p. 22 sq.

⁶ e.g., III, 238, note 2; IV, 228, note 1; IV, 248, note 3.

between the *Institutes* and the original form of the *Loci* as more than accidental.

1. In the first chapter of the *Institutes*, *De Lege*, after the exposition of the decalogue follow remarks about the command of love as the sum of the Law; that it is to be spiritually construed and presumes Christian enlightenment; and a rejection of the Romanist *consilia* (*Op. Selecta*, I, 53 sq.); as in the *Loci* (Kolde, pp. 117-26).

2. The observations at the close of the second chapter (I, 93 sq.) concerning faith, love, hope, point undoubtedly to the *Loci*, pp. 197 sq.

3. Calvin's treatment of Penance (I, 174-81) strongly confirms his knowledge of the *Loci* (pp. 234-41), especially the citation, common to both, of the *Historia Tripartita*. In which connexion also the characterization, found in both treatises (*Loci*, p. 138; *Inst.*, I, 182), of the Romish sacrament of the Penance, in Melanchthon with regard to the "satisfactions", in Calvin in relation to the confessional, as *conscientiarum carnificina*, could not have occurred without dependence of the one on the other.

4. The three kinds of Christian liberty likewise named at the commencement of the last chapter of the *Institutes* (I, 224 sq.) link themselves in all probability with the *Loci* (pp. 217-19), and supply proof, as the editors of the *Opera Selecta* rightly note (III, lxiv., note 1 and 349, note 5), that Calvin had studied the original *Loci* in the somewhat enlarged edition of 1522-5.¹

At the same time it seems to be an ascertained fact that the Genevan Reformer also knew and used the remodelled *Loci* of 1535. The three uses of the Law, a characteristic feature of Reformed theology (*Inst.*, I, 61-3), were probably formulated by him in accord with *Corp. Ref.* (XXI, 405, sq. 459). Further points of junction approximately certain with the *Loci* of 1535 cannot be detected. Among other of Melanchthon's writings Calvin in all likelihood at an early date made acquaintance with the *Augustana* and *Apology*. But when indications of these are sought for in the *Institutes* of 1536, the passages produced by the editors of the *Opera Selecta* afford only inconclusive traces of relationship.²

¹ Kolde, p. 53, *Corp. Ref.*, XXI, p. 66, number 7.

² The most convincing of them consists of the comparison in the *Apology*, XII, 8, 36, regarding evangelical and legal repentance, with Calvin, *Op.* I, 170 sq. (IV, 58, note 2).

III

Yet if after all the influence of the Wittenberg Reformers proclaims itself so emphatically, how did Calvin nevertheless become the Reformed theologian he was? That he did not emerge from Zwingli's school is proved by his own above-cited testimony from his Defence against Westphal; in fact, it is universally acknowledged.¹ Before 1536, it is true, the French Reformer knew Zwingli's *Commentarius de Vera et Falsa Religione*, and here and there turned it to account, not merely in a negative sense.² The *Op. Sel.* have brought a voucher for that which we can accept.³ But I would rather with Wernle⁴ place the famous opening sentence of the *Institutes* concerning knowledge of God and of ourselves in juxtaposition with the closely similar exordium of Zwingli's *Commentary* (*Op.*, III, 640) which must be pronounced a case of kinship, nay of relative dependence.

Who then, if not, broadly speaking Zwingli, was Calvin's instructor, among the fathers or forefathers of Reformed Protestantism? Was it Faber or Erasmus? Both have been suggested in Germany itself. But it is noteworthy that for Faber no proof whatever is adduced, so far as I know, of any document to which the *Institutes* could have been indebted. For Erasmus the *Opera Selecta* furnish a long list of quotations, but they do not relate to the edition of 1536.

So, according to the present condition of research, there remain only the Strassburg group of Reformers, in particular Martin Bucer.⁵ The editors of the *Op. Selecta* have, of course, not failed to remark some points of contact between the *Institutes* of 1536 and Bucer's *Evangelienkommentar*.⁶ But an impression

¹ Cf. my Life of Calvin (*Verein für Reform. Gesch.*, No. 99, p. 64).

² See Niesel, *Vom Abendmahl*, p. 30 sq.

³ III, 339, note 2 (I, 62, compared with Zwingli, *Op.* III, 710). Other passages in Zwingli are notified III, 367-9, 494. But these are very problematical.

⁴ *Der Ev. Glaube*, III, 3 sq.

⁵ In *Zwingliana*, IV, 285 (Zürich, 1928) notice is taken of a paper of Hastings Eells in the *Princeton Review* (XXII, 402-19), and the remark is made: "The fact that the Strasburg Reformer had no influence on Calvin before 1537 is established." So the first edition of the *Institutes* comes to be "Bucer-free". But how strange is this assertion! For Eells himself writes that he is dealing with friendship or correspondence between the two men prior to November 1st, 1536. Yet Calvin may have read his books. Eells only examines three letters, which have often been canvassed before (e.g. in my *Bekehrung Calvins*, p. 16). Certainly Eells' remarks comprise much that is correct, in spite of the deduction that must be made for a strange error, whereby D(omino) on pp. 407, 410, is taken for Dr. Bucer. But for our purpose, like his later papers in the *Princeton Review* (XXVII, 505), they are of no service.

⁶ III, 372, note 4; 374, note 1, Sabbath; IV, 228, note 2, the Law in general; IV, 58, notes 1, 2, 3; 59 (2); 60 (2); 76 (1 and 2); 78 (3), Confession; IV, 339, Prayer. Niesel (*Vom Abendmahl*, p. 30) has also signalized in C. IV of the *Institutes*, particulars from Bucer's treatment of the Sacrament out of the appendices of my book: *Der Ev. Kommentar Butzers* (Leipzig, 1900), pp. 411 sq. He might to advantage have supplemented his notices by reference to its fifth chapter (pp. 250 sq.).

of the extent of that influence on the *Institutes* cannot be thus gained. Much more would have to be searched into for that purpose than I can explain in this article. Let me set in relief and submit for consideration two points only.

1. A clear instance of Calvin's use of the *Commentary* seems to me apparent in the chapter (III) on Prayer. Bucer's *Enarraticues* contain even in the first edition of 1527 a *locus communis* on that subject, with reference to Matt. vi. 5-13.¹ The whole of chapter III bears a distinct relationship to this section; nor is it confined to the resemblances remarked by the editors of the *Op. Selecta*.² Rather must it be said even on a superficial comparison: (a) The prefatory observations, which both Bucer and Calvin place in front of the detailed exposition of the Lord's Prayer, contain hardly one leading thought which the *Institutio* does not reproduce, of course in a thoroughly independent, frequently improved, shape. Nothing save the section touching the promise of being heard, on which the supplicant rests, lacks its parallel in Bucer; to which may be added Calvin's brief post-script (I, 115-17) to the exposition of the *Paternoster*. On the other hand, the fundamental thought, running through the introduction in the *Institutes*, is that expressed by Bucer: *ipse animus dictator orationis*: genuine prayer flows from the heart, from its knowledge of its own need and of the goodness of God.

(b) Calvin, as is well known, divides the Lord's Prayer into six petitions, as Bucer was the first (I believe) among the Reformers to do. He does not, to be sure, base this on exactly the same grounds as the Strassburg divine³; his subdivision in particular of the petitions differs from Bucer's. (In the one supplications 1-4 *precari*, 5, 6 *deprecari*; the other 1-3 *Dei gloria*, 4-6 *nostri cura*.) But they agree in the palmary point, that the so-called seventh petition hermeneutically pertains to the sixth.

(c) Finally, in the interpretation of the petitions, specially 2-5, close affinities declare themselves. For example, in regard to the last. Bucer observes (I, 199) that "as we forgive our debtors" represents not a *conditio* but a *similitudo*. Calvin

¹ *Enarrationum in Evangelia (tria) Libri duo.*, Strassburg, 1527 (I, 189-206). I make use of the first edition, because that of 1530 is not at hand at the moment. Moreover, it remained almost unaltered, especially in the passages we are concerned with. Cf. my book, p. 70, 89.

² Vd. supra, *Op. Sel.*, IV, 339, note 3.

³ Bucer, p. 195a, Calvin, I, 104. If P. Barth refers to Erasmus's Greek text in Luke xi. 2-4 at this place, let it be noted that the Erasmian text is also borrowed in the *Evang. Comm.* of 1530. See my book, p. 67.

(I, 112) expresses himself precisely thus, except that he replaces the word *similitudo* by *signum*.

2. But in addition to the dogmatically neutral (so to speak) example of prayer, notice should be taken of Calvin's important doctrine of election. Holl writes in connexion with his mention of Bucer's relations with Calvin (l.c. p. 47): "at any rate Calvin's doctrine of predestination is exclusively attributable to Augustine and Luther. We must not forget as to this point how intimately the doctrines of predestination and justification were linked at the outset of the Reformation, and how powerfully Augustine worked beside and through Luther. That applies pre-eminently to Calvin. He has taken over from the *De Spiritu ac Litera*, at that period Augustine's most influential tractate, much that is commonly ascribed to Bucer or even Anabaptism." In face of that assertion I can only repeat what I have already said in my book on Bucer. "It is matter of general knowledge that predestination was a doctrine common to the Reformation as a whole. The subsumption of salvation under the category of election was generally accepted with the renaissance of Augustinianism (p. 189)." Therefore, of course, Calvin has drawn on Augustine's positions; to what extent is a significant question, which cannot be answered here.¹ But if Augustine is made responsible for Calvin's teaching on predestination, that applies more or less to the rest of the Reformers. Yet it has long been recognized that, notwithstanding their Augustinianism, the position allotted by the several Reformers in their system to the doctrine of election was widely divergent. The very diverse treatment and valuation of it subsequently in the Lutheran and Calvinistic theology is explained by this fundamental difference. That being the situation, Calvin's specific phase of the doctrine of predestination cannot well be deduced from Augustine. Nor does it coincide with Luther's conception of it. To whom then was Calvin indebted? Or are we to surmise that it came from his own laboratory? The affinity with Bucer is too strong for that supposition, the relation in fact of his *Commentary on the Gospels* to the *Institutes* of 1536.

Calvin, too, though not so frequently as Bucer, here employs the terms *electi* and *reprobi*, without laying stress on their

¹ In two recent publications (Barnikol: *die Lehre Calvins von unfreien Willen*, and Beckmann: *vom Sakrament bei Calvin*) this matter has been investigated in their special fields of inquiry, with reference to the tracing of his peculiar teaching to Augustine. With what success see my article in the *EVANGELICAL QUARTERLY*, January, 1934.

dogmatic background, simply as synonyms for *pious* and *godless*.¹ But, if these parallelisms are viewed as indecisive, that only confers more importance on the single context, in which his favourite doctrine of later years is treated with any detail, though not expounded at full length. It occurs in reference to the Church, in relation to the fourth article of the confession of faith, according to his numeration. He defines the Church as the *universus electorum numerus*, and takes the opportunity of touching on such an election. To begin with, he notes the order of salvation: election, vocation, justification, glorification; a sequence wherein each one is interlinked with the other like the steps of a ladder, so that anyone who clearly perceives that he has reached one stage, justification, for instance, may draw well-warranted conclusions as to the others, both backwards and forwards. Hence follows the perseverance of the saints; and should the entire globe totter, the salvation of God's elect cannot fall through or be shattered. Anyone, by belief in Christ through His word and sacrament, can arrive at certainty that he is one of God's chosen. Moreover, I should recognize a brother as a true member of the church, in the judgment of charity, till he shows himself not to belong, at least for the time being, to the church by open unbelief or gross sins, that proclaim aloud his lost condition. In that event he ought to be banished from the company of the faithful by excommunication, the necessity of which Calvin already vindicates (I, 86-91) on three familiar grounds.

Now all these thoughts appear in Bucer, especially in his *Gospel Commentary* of 1527, 1528 and 1530, even as regards the mintage of the keywords used. It only remains to furnish single proofs. Suffice it then to compare that passage of the *Institutes* with the corresponding items in my book on Bucer.² May we not infer therefrom that the conceptions of the two men concerning predestination and the church were alike? That impression is confirmed when we remark that, alike in the two editions of the *Gospel Commentary* and the *Institutes* of 1536, a comprehensive presentation of the doctrine of election, particularly the discussion of its Godward side and of the later so-called *decretum absolutum*, is entirely missing. The practical effects and issues of

¹ eg. *reprobi*, I, 73, 83, 99, 109; *electi*, I, 91, 114, 136. More often we read *fideles*, I, 83, 109, 196, 226, 243, or *pii*, I, 99, or simply *Christiani*.

² pp. 171 sq., 176 sq.

predestination alone pass under survey, very much as in the Heidelberg Catechism. How otherwise it is with the *Institutio* of 1539!¹ Not least again on this account, that in the meantime Bucer had furnished a rounded and expanded view of the doctrine of predestination by his *Commentary on Romans*, which was published simultaneously with the *Institutes* in the spring of 1536.² In all decisive points Calvin coincides with that in his chapter of 1539.

I must break off here, much as remains to be specified regarding the relationship of Calvin and Bucer. However, in what I have adduced, I think I have summarized all that, in the present stage of investigation, can be said about the "sources" of the already masterly edition of 1536. Much pains will be required to bring the question to a satisfactory settlement. Yet it is only by this toilsome path of enquiry that we can reach a really historical appreciation of the Reformer's theology.³ For only by this means is he inserted in the framework of his times, and light shed not merely on what he derived from his predecessors, but also on the gifts bestowed on himself and the magnitude of his own labours.

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¹ Cf. the eighth chap. in *Corp. Ref., Op. I*, 861 sq.

² Cf. in my *Bucer*, p. 347 sq.

³ For the conclusions to be drawn from the connexion already traced, see the final remarks in my *Bucer* (pp. 365 sq.), and C iii. of my *Lebensbild*: Calvin as a theologian and religious personality (p. 61 sq.).