

## RECENT GERMAN BOOKS ON CALVIN<sup>1</sup>

SINCE the War a "renaissance of Luther" is spoken of, not without joy and gratitude. Many are seeking in Luther's writings fresh clarity and conviction regarding the foundations of our Evangelical belief, grievously choked up prior to the War by the then predominant "historical" school of Gunkel, Bousset, Troeltsch, etc. Can one talk likewise of a "renaissance" of Calvin and Zwingli? We might refer in this connection to Karl Barth and Emil Brunner and their deep and far-reaching influence on the younger theological generation. I do not propose, however, to speak of the great conflict at present raging on the field of systematic dogmatics, which forces virtually every divine to take up a position either of assent or resistance. I am thinking rather of the more restricted domain of the history of doctrine, of the endeavours to gain a more exact and thorough knowledge of the life and opinions of the Reformers.

In this department German Switzerland, from motives of patriotism, takes Zwingli under its charge, and has made diligent use of the various quatercentenary celebrations, extending to the anniversary of his death (October 11th, 1531), for the purpose of setting that Reformer's person and worth before the eyes of the whole German people. But what about Calvin?

Manifestly far more has been done for him also within the last decade in Germany than before the War, relatively before the Calvin Jubilee of 1909. It is worth while to cast a glance backwards and comprise in brief the chief of these publications. A complete survey is not my design—I omit notice of Barth and Niesel's new edition of Calvin and its attendants—but only to gauge the gain accruing to the study of Calvin from the more recent German volumes pertaining to him.

### I

I begin with H. Bauke, *The Problem of Calvin's Theology*,<sup>2</sup> because it is the sole work which attempts a comprehensive survey and attaches itself with care to the labours of previous investigators. Of course he does not occupy himself with the Reformer's

<sup>1</sup> This valuable article will be published in German in "Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen", 1934.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Probleme der Theologie Calvins*, Leipzig, 1922.

biography or questions emerging therefrom. On the other hand, apart from the Anglo-Saxon literature on the subject, of which very little comes to our notice in Germany, Bauke has taken all that is of real moment touching Calvin's theological system into consideration. On the ground of that material he affirms that an "antagonism" subsists, in the continental views of Calvin, between the standpoint of Ritschl on the one part and those dogmatists whom he influenced, Loofs and Seeberg, and the subsequent (chiefly Reformed) group of enquirers on the other, which includes, beside myself, principally Doumergue, Bohatec, Wernle, Dilthey, Troeltsch, etc. The opposition between the two points of view can be roughly expressed thus:—The former regard Calvin, beside Luther, only as a progeny of the Reformation; the latter as the founder or fashioner of an independent type of Evangelical Reformed Christianity. Bauke in his study of Loofs seeks to lend support to the former assumption by finding the independent element of Calvin's theological position in his great *formal* gift, the best quality of the French genius. His "theology viewed as Reformed is a specific, independent phenomenon because of its peculiar conformation. Every single theological concept of Luther that Calvin reproduces in its content has yet acquired a new character in its new setting through its modified conformation" (p. 98). Certainly there is some truth in this assertion. The grandeur of Calvin's system consists in what Bauke styles the *complexio oppositorum*, the unison of seemingly contradictory conceptions effected by him, the sobriety and breadth of mind with which the Reformer bound together the whole of the soteriology of the Old and New Testaments, and all the effective religious forces of his day that were compatible with the Gospel, not merely from Luther, but also from Zwingli and especially Bucer, and from the Humanists to boot, into a great, coherent body of teaching. That is a religious achievement of the utmost significance. For that reason Calvin has been termed the organizer of Reformed theology, just as he is the organizer of Evangelical church order. But should the independence of Calvin's theological thought be confined to that? For instance, should his declared deviations from Luther's teaching, not merely from the old, but from the young, Luther consist just in a new mode of presentation? Were that the case, how could the distinct stamp of Reformed Protestantism, so often combated by Lutheranism, be explained?

If, then, Bauke's signalization of the importance of the formal element in the Genevan Reformer's system of thought has fixed attention on a peculiarity hitherto too little canvassed or esteemed, yet the author's general conclusion can by no means be endorsed. It is to be regarded as a last effort to save the position of the Ritschlian dogmaticians. Even the close conjunction of Calvin with Bucer and through him with Zwingli, who had none of his French talent for formulation of doctrine, suffices to put Bauke in the wrong. Nevertheless, his work possesses a value of its own, by virtue of its correct general characterization of the study of Calvin, yet accurate in its main outlines, as well as by many fine observations in detail.

Bauke would probably have concurred in this verdict, had he lived to see what kind of consequences have been drawn from his premises. Unhappily he was summoned away by an early death. He had now and then laid psychological data under contribution in support of his thesis. A young Marburger, Dr. Herm. Weber, took these up, and in 1930 published (what no theologian had ere this ventured on) a representation with the title, *Calvin's systematic theology in the light of psychological research*.<sup>1</sup> Following the lead of a Marburg psychologist, he here pronounced the Reformer "schizoid", that is to say, half insane. He appended some observations on various Calvinian tenets which serve to betray the author's ignorance both of the Reformer's works and of the literature of the subject, and wherein, moreover, inspired by a crazy nationalism, he has interspersed comparisons between the "rational basis" of Calvin and of the German Luther. It is lamentable that an inferior production of this stamp should have appeared under the auspices of a German psychologist of reputation, Jaensch of Marburg.<sup>2</sup>

## II

The rest of the works on Calvin falling under notice relate to single points in the Reformer's life and teaching. Let us place at their head a study of Hans Rust with a surprising title, *Kant and Calvin*, contained in an academical *Festschrift* (pp. 131-49) of the University of Königsberg on the occasion of Kant's bicentenary in 1924. He aims at proving that "just as

<sup>1</sup> *Die Theologie Calvins, ihre innere Systematik im Lichte struktur-psychologischer Forschungsmethode*, Berlin, 1930.

<sup>2</sup> For particulars of this tract, see my article, "Was Calvin Schizoid?" in the *Reform. Kirchens.*, 1931, Nr. 19.

the intellectual type of Luther, so also that of Calvin was of decided significance for the inner education of Kant." He therefore compares the character and religious personality of both the great men, the Genevan Reformer and the "philosopher of Protestantism". Undoubtedly there exist noticeable resemblances; but in presence of the vast difference which dissevers their collective thought and action, it is in the upshot just a matter of taste how far weight can be attached to the parallel drawn. However, it was obviously of no small importance for Kant's development of character that his great-grandfather Cant was a Scottish immigrant, and that the philosopher through his mother and the school which he attended "enjoyed a purely pietistic education" (p. 145). In both these ways Kant must have derived so much of a religious heritage from Calvinism that the parallels drawn out by Rust gain a degree of worth and plausibility of likelihood.

The remaining monographs originate from younger men, working often with much industry, but too dependent on their older instructors, who have suggested their studies and determine them in their judgment. To these "prompters" belongs also in a marked degree the well-known former Roman-Catholic Heiler of Marburg, who to-day approximates to the English Anglo-Catholic party. Upon his invitation and that of other Marburg divines such as Otto and Hermelinks came forth K. Fröhlich's volume, *Calvin's Idea of the Kingdom of God*, 1922. It does not deal with the "Kingdom of God" in the stricter sense, but aims at a survey of the Reformer's conceptions generally as to God and His Sovereignty, Christ, Redemption-History, and Soteriology, Eschatology, the World and Culture. A sympathetic effect is produced by representations almost enthusiastically worded concerning the "peculiar rhythm of the religious life" in Calvin, the simplicity and loftiness of his thoughts, the giant power of his wide embracing outlook, his heroic combativeness bent on "subjugating the aggregate of the actual under the actuality of God", and much of the same stamp. "In the conflict of a Deity wrestling with Satan for His own honour, a conflict which must be fought through till it issues in God's complete triumph, in the combat of the elect with the powers of the wicked one, which will end in the subjection of all creatures, the subjugation of all being under God's lordship, thus does Calvin see the Kingdom of God realize itself in the world's history." To this

statement and to many fine passages in this book, we can gladly assent. Yet it is somewhat perplexing to find in the catalogue of authorities at the commencement of the book a perfectly capricious selection. The single biography named is that of Kampschulte, with no mention of Doumergue or of my biographical portrait. On closer inspection the whole representation, taken in connection with this fact, despite its good points, appears lopsided. That aspect of Calvin's thought, for instance, which the Ritschlian dogmaticians viewed as the only one of value, is omitted, as well as that which might be entitled the Lutheran heritage of our Reformer. If mention is made by Fröhlich of the anger, majesty and glory of God (p. 9 sq.), why not also of His love? If the remark is made, "Grace to Calvin is nothing else than election", a more comprehensive study of Calvin literature might have shown him that similar statements had often been advanced before. And just as frequently has the limitation of Calvin's soteriology to a bare dogma of predestination been rebuffed as utterly inadequate. The same thing holds of the proposition, "How can I procure a gracious God? is Luther's question; how may God's honour prevail by my means? is Calvin's" (p. 15). Utterances of that sort must be viewed as misguided; and this is the penalty paid by the author for taking up too large a subject as matter for study. For it is not merely the Kingdom of God in the stricter sense that forms his theme, but at bottom the Reformer's theology in general. Thereupon important queries relating to the former, such as "Is it conceived of as a historical development or eschatologically? And does a distinction exist between theocracy and Christocracy and the like?" are simply ignored, albeit just here a closer scrutiny would in our day be especially profitable.

A more favourable judgment, to be sure, would probably be forthcoming, were we to take into account the recent continuation of the topic in *God's Kingdom, the World and the Church in Calvin's View*.<sup>1</sup> This second work constitutes, together with the first, a whole which was submitted to the Marburg theological faculty by way of dissertation some years back. Had both seen the light at the same time and been fully harmonized with one another, a different picture would have resulted. In the second volume the notices of the literature of the subject, to begin with, are very much extended (pp. 116-20).

<sup>1</sup> *Heilers Sammlung, aus der Welt christlicher Frömmigkeit*, Bd. 11, 1930.

Moreover, Fröhlich expressly states, "It lies far from my intention to seek to unfold the entire theological and practical attitude of Calvin to the Kingdom of God. Calvin's theology is a theology of faith, and it is from that standpoint that his idea of the Kingdom is to be grasped."<sup>1</sup> Fröhlich brings to light throughout, as a fruit of abundant reading, a mass of important passages, some of which have hitherto been overlooked. Evidently he has ransacked the works of the Genevan teacher with much zeal. And he produces here and there things of much value, not, so far as I know, expressly recognized before; for example, the importance ascribed by the Reformer to right administration (*rectus ordo*) in church and state (pp. 40, 80). But most of this is presented, as if Fröhlich had been the first to write about it. He never attempts, apart from quotations which he inserts incidentally, to relate himself to, or supplement, the labours of others. Indeed, he repeats a good deal that had been said just as well by others long before. As already hinted, Fröhlich particularly misses any clear line of demarcation between the Kingdom of God and of Christ, between theocracy and Christocracy. More than once he seems, by virtue of his subject-matter, almost to seize on this distinction (e.g. pp. 40, 75); but a little later it is again ignored. To be sure, the clear partition of both domains of life is not always discernible in the Reformer himself. But in my judgment no one will do justice to what should be of lasting moment in Calvin's theoretical and practical battle for church and state without its help. In spite of these criticisms, Fröhlich's second book, by its painstaking character and zealous solicitude to arouse an intelligent interest in our Reformer, remains a readable and estimable contribution to the study of Calvin.

From a theologian influenced by Heiler and the Marburg group we advance to an author who has passed through Wernle's school, Alfred de Quervain. According to its initial statement (p. 5) this work, *Calvin: His Teaching and Battling*,<sup>2</sup> seeks to bring its reader into touch with the Reformer's system of thought within the narrow space of ninety-six pages, and that "with the living interest of the man of to-day, that he may comprehend

<sup>1</sup> The treatise is divided into the following chapters:—1, The present meaning of the history of the kingdom of God to Calvin. 2, The nature of the Calvinistic *États*. 3, Christian culture and the endeavour to realize it. 4, God's Kingdom and the Church. 5, God's Kingdom and Mundane Politics and Powers.

<sup>2</sup> Calvin, *Sein Leben u. Kämpfen*, Berlin, 1928.

himself and his position more lucidly." What a profitable, important, essential task! After a bird's-eye view of Calvin's life (pp. 6-10), Quervain sets to work to do justice to his topic in four chapters: 1, Catholicism (pp. 11-26), 2, Religious Individualism (pp. 27-56), 3, Authority and Freedom (pp. 57-75), 4, The Church (pp. 76-94). The second section treats of Calvin's encounters with the Anabaptists, a Dutch mystic of the type of Schwenkfeld, and with anti-Trinitarians, especially Servetus. In Chapter 3 Quervain expounds the bondage of the sinful will and Evangelical liberty, as Calvin conceives of them. The reflections comprised in this section became particularly valued by the author; for he has developed them in a larger treatise, in which he explores several related problems, namely *Law and Freedom*.<sup>1</sup> Herewith may be linked a recent work of his that attracted considerable notice, *The Theological Presuppositions of Political Science: Outlines of a Political Theology*.<sup>2</sup> It may be seen that Quervain is a Reformed theologian who, starting from the estimate of Calvin he had received in Wernle's school, desires to gain recognition in our day for more or less definite tendencies which betray a Calvinistic lineage. The titles of the chapters in his first volume noticed above are very adroitly chosen. For who among the younger German divines would not be glad to obtain leading in reference to Catholicism, religious individualism, authority and freedom, and the idea of the Church, if the Genevan Reformer has anything striking to say on these heads? The service rendered by de Quervain consists in this praiseworthy endeavour to post Calvin in the very thick of the questions of the day. But perhaps the real Calvin suffers by this modernizing, actualizing process. At any rate what required to be said concerning his attitude to Roman Catholicism and his ecclesiastical outlook, even in a confined space, fails to be signalized. For example, in handling the church, the theocracy, which concerns more the state, receives treatment, but not the Christocracy. Thus a marked subjectivism pervades the whole book. It may stimulate the study of Calvin; but it would be hazardous for anyone, after perusing this brochure, to imagine that he had fathomed the Reformer's "teaching and battling".

The same thing may be said of a further estimable, yet unsatisfactory, work of a student of the well-known Emil Brunner

<sup>1</sup> *Gesetz u. Freiheit*, Stuttgart, 1930.

<sup>2</sup> *Die theologischen Voraussetzungen der Politik*, Berlin, 1931.

of Zürich, Peter Brunner, entitled *Calvin and Faith*.<sup>1</sup> His aim is to promote "consideration of Calvin's views on faith", not for historical reasons, but "prompted by present-day questions", with a view of helping to clarify "confusion of mind in regard to God, the world and man". Praiseworthy as may be this aim, it does not exempt the reader from the necessity of enquiring whether the Reformer's teaching is correctly reproduced. In this regard it is certainly of value that the author takes pains to set faith in the connection in which Calvin regards it. In the first two sections he discusses "Faith as the critical turning-point in a man's history" (pp. 7-42), and next "the object of Faith" (pp. 43-112), to wit, God, Christ and the Word. Brunner rightly concludes, "With Calvin Faith is a factual relationship, a relationship to the Word, to Christ and to God" (p. 113). So the *fides quae creditur* precedes the *fides qua creditur*. The latter is handled by itself in the final section, "the answer of Faith" (pp. 113-162). This partition of the subject shows that our work carries back the interrogations of dialectical theology to their terminology in Calvin. The advantage of that is that points of view of his which have not been duly weighed, such as the incomprehensible, supramundane Deity and His revelation, are viewed in their bearing on faith. If this is to the good, yet the choice of the matter dealt with must be characterized as exceedingly subjective. P. Brunner himself remarks in the preface that two aspects of the problem are not touched at all, namely faith and ethics, and faith and election. His excuse is that if he had gone into these points, the framework of his quest would have given way. But Brunner thereby passes sentence, as it were, on his work, since it represents itself, as regards any complete canvass of the questions involved, as of a preliminary and superficial kind. The fact is that Calvin's doctrine of faith cannot be treated without having his entire theological system, at least in its main outlines, before one's eyes. Really to grasp his conceptions, we must also pay attention to the succession of ideas in which he takes pains to present the truths of revelation. With the order in which Brunner arranges the matter he deals with, he takes us back at bottom to the first edition of the *Institutes*, which was so materially modified in 1559.

Another defect may be noted. Brunner likewise does not reckon at all with the researches relative to Calvin already

<sup>1</sup> *Vom Glauben bei Calvin*, Tübingen, 1925.



extant. Certainly he lets the Reformer speak for himself, and therefore happily translates in his text the passages cited in the original in his notes. If only his renderings were always accurate or correct! I could not but observe, however, quite a number of warped or unmistakably erroneous versions.<sup>1</sup> Most likely his translations would have been more successful had he troubled himself more with regard to former products of Calvinian investigation. But Brunner has not once drawn upon a work immediately related to his own by Simon Peter Dee, *Calvin's Conception of Faith*,<sup>2</sup> a doctoral essay of the Free University of Amsterdam. He merely remarks in a note concerning Dee, "I am precluded from a closer examination of this work, because a command of Dutch which I do not possess would be requisite thereto" (p. 136); a singular excuse which, fortunately, is not often forthcoming among German scholars! Brunner might have learned from Dee why Calvin after 1539 exchanged Melancthon's definition of faith (*notitia, sensus, fiducia*), on which the well-known Question 21 of the Heidelberg Catechism is grounded, and to which Calvin inclined in the First Edition of his *Institutes*, for the easily misapprehensible statement that faith is *certa cognitio*. He was chiefly concerned for the unconditional certitude of faith (Dee, p. 26). In the certainty and absoluteness of the Christian's standing with his *donum perseverantiae* consists a feature of Calvin's doctrine of faith that cannot be expunged. A still more decided protest must be made against another tendency in Brunner's exposition. In speaking of the "vacuity" of faith (p. 36 sq.), of its merely "suggestive, not directly denotative" character (p. 83), his language is open to misconception. Moreover, he writes (p. 85),<sup>3</sup> "Implantation in Christ relates to a fact to be accomplished beyond the sphere of humanity. The *ego* that is implanted is not the empirical or temporal but the transcendental *ego*. So if the effect of this implantation is depicted by means of the comparison: 'all that belongs to Christ belongs to us', we have to do here not with a visible, empirically verifiable transaction, but with an act strictly and persistently transcendental." I know that is what might be dubbed the orthodox teaching of the dialecticians. But we ordinary folk have hitherto read, and still do read,

<sup>1</sup> pp. 16, 17, 18, 22, 26, 32, 35, 47, 49, 63, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Het Geloofsbegrip van Calvijn*, Amsterdam, 1918.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 154 sq. on the "paradox of faith".

Calvin differently. I quote at this moment only one passage out of his commentary on Galatians: "*Ut anima corpus vegetat, sic et Christus vitam inspirat membris suis. Insignis sententia, fideles extra se vivere, hoc est in Christo* (here is hinted what Calvin elsewhere with Paul explicitly affirms concerning the believer's hidden life with Christ in God). *Quod fieri nequit, quin veram cum Ipso et SUBSTANTIALEM* (so by all means empirically verifiable!) *communicationem habeant. Porro vivit Christus in nobis dupliciter. Una vita est, cum nos Spiritu Suo gubernat atque actiones nostras omnes dirigit. Altera quod participatione Suae justitiae nos donat. . . . Prior ad regenerationem pertinet; secunda ad gratuitam justitiae acceptionem*" (*Op.* 50, 119).<sup>1</sup> How can anyone talk of implantation in Christ as merely transcendental in the face of this testimony, which could be multiplied almost at pleasure from the *Institutes* and other writings of Calvin?

### III

The other volumes which we think of noticing also proceed, mostly in the quality of licentiate essays, from the younger generation. They are so far independently constructed that we cannot in their case assign to them a specific teacher. We mention first a licentiate dissertation of Hermann Barnikol, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Bondage of the Will and its relation to the teaching of the rest of the Reformers and to Augustine*.<sup>2</sup> It is executed with remarkable industry, skill and judgment. After a brief but comprehensive exposition of the general nature of Calvin's doctrine of the will and the first elaborate presentation of it in the *Institutes* of 1539 (pp. 6-12), there follows in succession a conspectus of the teaching of Bucer (pp. 12-38), Luther (pp. 38-58), Melanchthon (pp. 58-82), and finally Augustine (pp. 82-101). Why is Zwingli not named? Next the author supplies a more precise account of Calvin's own conception (pp. 101-37). Barnikol has something notable to say of all these divines. Only here and there does his energy flag. His account of the will in Melanchthon's system as "pure formal ability" (p. 76) is misleading. The interpretation of a passage in the *Institutes*

<sup>1</sup> As the soul enlivens the body, so Christ imparts life to His members. It is a notable declaration that believers live out of themselves, that is, in Christ, which can only be accomplished by holding real and actual communication with Him. Christ lives in us in a double sense. The one life consists in governing us by His Spirit and directing all our acts. The other in making us partakers of His righteousness. . . . The first relates to regeneration, the second to justification by free grace.—Calvin on Gal. ii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Lehre Calvins vom unfreien Willen*, Neuwied, 1927.

(p. 108) has gone yet farther astray. And the last section on Calvin's own doctrine is anything but satisfactory. For the questions which in the foregoing parts have been mooted about the other theologians are not resolved as they might have been, nor as the author at first designed. And an epitome of the gist of the whole work is lacking at the close; so that, despite the introduction, the purpose of the author cannot be distinctly apprehended. It is particularly surprising that Barnikol never notices the primary concern of Calvin (namely the soteriological) with the bondage of the will, which links him so closely with Luther, the principle of man's inability to obtain the mercy of God by his own efforts. The occasion for that bondage springing from the glory and sovereignty of God falls into the second rank compared with that.

But all these criticisms fall into the background in presence of the attempt of Barnikol to view Calvin as a resuscitator of Augustinianism even in his doctrine about the bondage of the will. "It is only from the standpoint of Augustine that Calvin's teaching on the bondage of the will becomes intelligible . . . His ruling ideas of the honour of God and the accountability of man he has recovered or gained from Augustine" (p. 99). Barnikol has probably been prompted to this reversion to Augustine by a previously published work of Joachim Beckmann, *Calvin and the Sacrament*.<sup>1</sup> Beckmann has the credit of having first raised the question of the Reformer's relation to the African church-father: whether, that is, the Calvinistic theology received its characteristic aspect from Augustinianism? Hitherto, as far as I am aware, the study of Calvin has not tackled this problem. We might add that, naturally enough, neither Beckmann nor Barnikol have solved it unexceptionably, even as regards their province of the subject. Yet it is of importance to have shown the urgency of a thorough all-round examination of the relations of Calvin with Augustine.

Beckmann proceeds thus. First of all he brings forward the Reformer's own testimony, the appeal he makes to Augustine in his sacramental doctrine (pp. 7-27). Furthermore, he believes himself able to prove the essential concord of Calvin's and Augustine's views of the sacrament (pp. 28-162). He begins by considering the conception of a sacrament (pp. 28-83),

<sup>1</sup> Full Title: Vom Sakrament bei Calvin, die Sakramentallehre Calvins in ihren Beziehungen zu Augustin: Tübingen, 1926.

then the doctrine of baptism (pp. 84-102), and finally of the Supper (pp. 103-162). He thus formulates his conclusion: "The parallel comparison of the sacramental teaching of Calvin and Augustine has availed to demonstrate their far-reaching practical coincidence. The essential characteristic ideas of Calvin appeared with the same significance in Augustine, and pre-eminently so in the conceptions of sacraments and of the Supper. In their baptismal teaching we met with special differences. Yet even here single consentient ideas work themselves out" (p. 163). We must bear in mind, however, in view of such assertions, that Beckmann announces at the outset of his enquiry: "as we are particularly concerned to present the far-reaching positive side of this relationship, we put aside many obvious differences" (p. 28). Therefore it is evidently only to be understood *cum grano salis*, if he fancies himself in a position to maintain that "the essential thoughts in Calvin's doctrine of the sacraments are derived from Augustine" (p. 6). But there are general considerations which militate against Beckmann's assumption. The entire Reformation is doubtless in a certain sense a revival of Augustinianism. Other Reformers, too, before Calvin, appealed to patristic sources for their sacramental doctrine, certainly not in a simple sense; quite in another at any rate the fathers of the future Anglican Church, who only became conversant with the German Reformers or those beyond Germany in 1535, as they and the Swiss made one another's acquaintance on their side. The question accordingly what attitude Calvin takes up to the church-fathers should have been determined, at least in its broad features, not without reference to the celebrated passage in the dedication of the *Institutes* to Francis I.

Moreover, the proof of the dependence of the Genevan Reformer on Augustine, so convincing to Beckmann and Barnikol, sorely needs verification. For example, if Barnikol deduces thence (p. 98) the psychological freedom of the will, firmly held by Calvin notwithstanding his doctrine of predestination, just the decisive phrases *necessitas* and *coactio* are not coined from Augustine's mint; they meet us, on the contrary, in Martin Bucer, who influenced the Genevan lastingly in so many points. As to the sacramental teaching, Beckmann should have remarked that its earliest formulation in the *Institutes* of 1536, or its popular presentation, limited to the mere essentials, in the tract

on the Supper published in 1541 but probably already written in 1537, contained but few quotations from Augustine. That is certainly not an accident. Other gaps in the process of proof exist, especially in the explanation (p. 66 sq.) of the *res sacramenti*, the divine gift of grace. Here the variance between the Reformer and the Fathers in the matter of justification produces its effect. "The invisible grace mediated by the Holy Ghost" which constitutes, according to Augustine, the whole benefit of a sacrament, signifies to him something different from its purport to us Evangelical Christians. The same thing holds of the alleged conformity touching the Lord's Supper. "To Calvin as to Augustine the essence of the ordinance consists in *communio cum Christo*, fellowship in the Spirit with Christ, and it is the community viewed as the *Corpus Christi* which in the Supper celebrates their corporate fellowship with the body of Christ, and is fed by the Holy Spirit therein with forces of eternal life flowing from their Head" (p. 161). If Beckmann has furnished a string of specious arguments for this view, yet the proposition applies here, "if two say the same thing, yet it is not therefore the same". Our author has certainly done right in curtailing his conclusions in the closing paragraphs of his work (p. 164). The problem of the relations of Calvin to the Father towards whom he felt so warmly is not yet ripe for settlement, nor can it become so through such incomplete researches as those of Beckmann and Barnikol, with their precipitate inferences. But they possess the merit of having directed the study of Calvin to a new object, not without moment for Reformed Protestantism.

If Beckmann's thesis met with response from Barnikol, it was parried a few years after its appearance by the admirable investigation of the inspector of studies at the Elberfeld Reformed Seminary, Lic. Wilhelm Niesel, into a cognate theme, *Calvin's Teaching on the Supper*.<sup>1</sup> In fact, almost in the same sense and on the same grounds as those I have advanced above. By his expositions it is patent how much Niesel has learnt by his collaboration in the new edition of Calvin for the historical comprehension of the Reformer. Particularly valuable are the sections of the first part entitled "The historical starting-point of Calvin's doctrine of the Supper" (pp. 21-33), and "Calvin's

<sup>1</sup> *Calvins Lehre vom Abendmahl*, München, 1930. Forschungen zur Geschichte u. Lehre des Protestantismus, 3 Reihe, Bd. 3.

demarcation-line against Zwingli and the spiritualizers" (pp. 33-40). Thus is the road struck for the chapter on the Supper, the path, that is, which promises the most return in exploring the development of the Reformer's ideas, namely, the examination of the *Institutes* of 1536 in their sources. Unfortunately Niesel has not gone far enough in this direction. He has not noticed at all the fact that Bucer, contemporaneously with Calvin,<sup>1</sup> took the most essential step in the refutation of Zwinglianism, whilst maintaining his figurative interpretation of the words of institution. In this point beyond question a connection subsists between the two Reformers, of which detailed evidence, free from cavil, might have been furnished. If these points had been thoroughly canvassed, still more might in all likelihood have been said of the positive aid that Calvin got from Bucer in the ascertainment of his doctrine. However, the question of the Reformer's indebtedness was only a subsidiary one to Niesel, since he had another end in view in his researches. He desired to promote the "present-day conference between the two Confessions about the Supper", by endeavouring to clear up the essence and differentiation of Calvin's position as distinguished from its opposite (p. 4). This opposite he finds in the "true-blue" Lutherans, such as Westphal and Hesshusius, who kindled the second controversy on the Supper. Consequently the main part of his work is devoted to the demarcation in contrariety to the irreconcilable Lutherans (pp. 56-90), and to the exact discrimination over against them, of the Christian fellowship, as set forth in Calvin's doctrine of the Supper. That is a useful and laudable task, but it leaves out something even from the purely historical standpoint, the sections e.g. in the *Institutes* of 1559<sup>2</sup> which embody the Reformer's final reply to Westphal (p. 7 sq.). But I cannot by any means concur with the long-refuted opinion, revived first, if I remember rightly, by Doumergue, and now repeated by Niesel, that Calvin's conversion took place before the Marburg conference (pp. 21-32). The passage from the Second Defence against Westphal,<sup>3</sup> on which this notion is founded, must in my judgment be otherwise construed. This by the way. Much more important to me is the lamentation that Niesel himself has to make at the conclusion,

<sup>1</sup> His earlier commentary on Romans appeared with the *Institutes* at the spring *Messe* of 1536.

<sup>2</sup> *Opera*, IV, 17, 20-34.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* IX, 51.

“We have not touched on much that pertains to Calvin’s doctrine of the Supper. We have not dwelt on the fact that the Supper secondarily intimates thanksgiving and confession of faith . . . nor have we unfolded how to him it is a meal of the community, and so have not shown its significance for its life and discipline” (p. 102). In any case these matters, to which the liturgical development of the observance of the sacrament in particular should be added, played no part in the discussion between Westphal and Calvin. No doubt through Niesel’s assiduous ransacking of the arguments exchanged on both sides our Reformer’s meaning is made clearer, and misconceptions are averted. That Niesel intended, and that goal he has reached. But I confess that to me those other uncanvassed points seem far more important for our present-day position than the renewal of the polemics with the champions of the second sacramental controversy, so fatal in its outcome.

#### IV

The last book we have to consider is once more a dissertation of a pupil: Erwin Mülhaupt, *Calvin’s Preaching, its History, Form and Contents*.<sup>1</sup> We have to do here with a scholar of the late K. Holl of Berlin and Hirsch of Göttingen, to whom the writer pays utmost deference throughout, and in one place expresses his dependence on them (p. 162). The topic is a praiseworthy suggestion; for we had scarcely anything in German on Calvin as a preacher until now. We are grateful to Mülhaupt for labouring with so much diligence to fill the hiatus. Among the abundance of the Reformer’s extant sermons he has carefully reconnoitred those printed in the *Opera*, the *Corp. Ref.*, and quoted a number of important passages. But the object designed as the recompense of his labours is involved in singular obscurity. Apparently two ends of his research and production were conjointly sought, and at which of them he aims it is difficult to see. Is the work meant to be a contribution to the history of preaching, or to the study of the Reformer’s theology, specially his doctrine of faith? This query will arise; for to attain both aims at once—the idea that seems to have haunted him—exceeds the author’s abilities. Indeed, we ask ourselves whether both the one and the other have not suffered by their combination.

<sup>1</sup> Mülhaupt, *Die Predigt Calvins, ihre Geschichte, ihre Form, and ihre religiösen Grundgedanken*, 1931, *Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte*, Bd. 18.

For the special object sought, the characterization of the Reformer as a pulpiteer, Mülhaupt supplies much gratifying material. After an introduction in which he has taken account of various earlier, mostly French, writings on this subject, he touches on "the external details of Calvin's preaching" (pp. 1-24), "his theory of preaching and its structure" (pp. 24-38), and "the images in Calvin's sermons" (pp. 39-63). The observations are in general excellent; many new facts come to light: how Calvin in his continuous exposition of Scripture now and then left out less profitable passages, and how the ecclesiastical year was not entirely slighted by him. Only Mülhaupt ought to have given his thoughts clearer expression. When we read, "If Calvin's sermonizing can be classed with the homily in its textual style, yet there is a certain character about it transcending that of the homily, and just in that lies Calvin's own idiosyncrasy" (p. 38), we ask whether there is a homily at all which, in spite of freedom of form, could dispense with an inner unity. But that is a small matter in comparison with the observation that in these three sections nothing like what would be needful by way of explanation for a thorough survey of Calvin's preaching is touched on. Mülhaupt might have already recognized that from the earlier literature referred to in his Introduction (p. 15). Even in what is said in Chapter 2 as to the theory and structure of preaching, many points remain unsettled. And besides the "images" the whole style of the preacher should have been depicted more in detail,<sup>1</sup> and more should have been adduced than a quotation from Cruvellier (p. 9) respecting the auditory under his pulpit. And it was absolutely indispensable to trace the causes of the powerful attraction and effect of the Reformer's predications more particularly than has hitherto been done. Thus the nature of his practical exegesis, and withal the shape in which he presented to the people his doctrinal and ethical instruction, would have been topics to be handled.

All this, however, has been sacrificed to the second aim which the author has set before him. And if we ask what furtherance Mülhaupt's treatise has brought to the comprehension of the Reformer's theology, it may be granted that he has collected much solid material, passages that henceforward must not be overlooked. Indeed, he has not engaged to do more. He remarks in his introduction (p. 10):—"The accompanying

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Doumergue, *Calvin le prédicateur de Genève*, p. 10 sq.



work seeks neither to lend support to the present-day study of Calvin, nor to secure any remarkable new results, . . . but to help to trace, with the aid of Calvin's preaching, some part of the living unity of his thoughts, which scarcely disclose themselves, as history proves, to the student of his *Institutes*." Nevertheless, a distinct conception of the Reformer's fundamental ideas appears to haunt him, as the selection of Calvin-literature specified in his introduction and his judgments thereon demonstrate. But before he set his hand to this second part of his work, he should have settled with himself how far sermonic phraseology has dogmatic validity for Calvin. With a somewhat less arbitrary disregard of that portion of the subject which he reckons inconsiderable, he might have gathered from my examination of the Genevan Catechism<sup>1</sup> that it was not niceties of theological doctrine, but the severest limitation to general religious truth that Calvin desiderated, at any rate in a catechism. Must not the case have been similar in preaching? The brief remarks in the introduction about this point can hardly decide the matter. How readily we can be misled by a failure to recognize the distinction between pulpit expressions and a circumspect, carefully drafted exposition of doctrine, a comparison between the treatment by Mülhaupt of the satisfaction of Christ (p. 129 sq.) and the *Institutes* (II, 16) manifests. A further consideration suggests itself here. Whence does he derive his principle of division for the "outstanding religious topics of Calvin's preaching"? He devotes five sections to them:—(1) Benefits (principally, attitude to nature), (2) The Creator and His Law, (3) Sin, (4) Justification, (5) Idea of God. Why this sequence, this selection in particular? A similar subjectivity rules in the details furnished in the above-named sections. One occupies much space, another is not treated at all, or only flimsily.<sup>2</sup> No contribution to the theology of the Reformation can be discovered here, for this reason. The plenteous material for future interpretation and collocation is of no slight value, and it is enhanced by many specific, noteworthy observations. The impression, it must be admitted, suffers from the fact that Mülhaupt's style, in its straining after precision, not seldom grows tortuous, not to say unintelligible. One has frequently to peruse Calvin's simple, pellucid language

<sup>1</sup> Vd. *Heidelberger Katechismus u. 4 verwandte Katechismen*, 1907, Einl. p. xxxviii.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. Predestination receives notice only on pp. 31, 120, 127.

first of all in the quotation given in a footnote, ere he can grasp Mülhaupt's reproduction of it in the text.<sup>1</sup> On the whole his work, in consequence of an ill-defined and overwrought objective, has not borne the fruit which it might have deserved *per se*, considering the marks of diligence it bears and the affluence of thought it evinces.

When we try to conclude our survey with a few comprehensive remarks, we find that in the present-day study of Calvin zeal and vitality are reflected, but also the bizarre, almost chaotic condition of German theology to-day. There has hardly been a decade in which so many notable attempts have been made by German divines to explore the spirit of Calvin. But a steadfast foundation of common convictions is wanting; and it is only from such a ground that an advance into the thought-world of the great Genevan can be undertaken with more active energy and lasting success. In spite of Bauke's work, the earlier studies of Calvin are little regarded; every enquirer starts, as it were, afresh, and handles a segment of Calvin's system of thought not only at his discretion, but according to his own prepossessions, nay, after his own method, without rendering more than subjective account to himself of his right to pursue such a course. Obviously, research as a whole is more hindered than furthered by this process. Yet even this onesided preoccupation with Calvin is better than the indifference with which, in the last century, people contented themselves, in regard to the Genevese Reformer, with a couple of paragraphs in a history of dogma and with—Kampschulte. As soon as the combats in the arena of systematic theology, which at present chiefly engross German theology, have led to a less complicated situation, opportunity will probably occur, even in Germany, for perfecting the long-contested and still pitiably lacking delineation of the Reformer's theology in a satisfactory and convincing manner. Till that day the monographs just enumerated possess their value, although their conclusions, as we have shown, cannot be utilized without reserve and amplification.

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<sup>1</sup> e.g. Calvin says (*Op.* XXVI, 196 sq.) simply in the words of the Heidelberg Catechism that "not only to others, but to me", the promise of God avails. Mülhaupt makes of this:—"Where a will expressing itself and really embracing my situation as a sinner speaks" (p. 124).