

CHAPTER 52 : SWITZERLAND 1648-1775

The reformed cantons of Switzerland, though relatively small in size in the world, were greatly used of God during the Protestant Reformation. But not all of Switzerland's cantons embraced the Reformation. Of its 13 cantons (viz. *Berne, Zurich, Schaffhausen, Basil, Lucerne, Unterwalden, Uri, Switz, Friburg, Zug, Soleure, Glaris, and Appenzel*), some remained Roman Catholic.

For many years the Swiss cantons had been under the dominion of foreign powers. They had originally been subdued by the Romans, and they continued in subjection to that power till the empire declined, when they became a part of the kingdom of Burgundy. After that they fell under the dominion of the Franks, then of the Germans; but being oppressed by the latter, they threw off the yoke, and erected several states and republics, which, at the treaty of Westphalia in 1648, were recognized as free and independent.

With respect to the government and constitution of these cantons, some of them were aristocracies and some democracies. In the former, both the legislative and executive power was lodged in the burghers or citizens of the capital of each canton; and of these there are seven, viz. Zurich, Berne, Basil, Friburg, Soleure, and Schaffhausen. In the others, the legislative power was lodged in the whole body of the people; and every male above 16, whether master or servant, had a vote in making laws and in the choice of magistrates. For what concerned the whole Helvetic body, there were diets ordinary and extraordinary: the former were held annually, and the others upon particular emergencies; and both were summoned by the city of Zurich, which appointed the time and place of their meetings. Besides the general diets since the Reformation, there were particular diets of the reformed and Romish religions, at which all public affairs of consequence that regard the two parties were treated separately. A sense of their common interest motivated them to maintain the league and union, yet the differences between them motivated them also to maintain separate diets. The annual general diets were held always at Frauenfeld or Baden, principally to regulate the affairs of the common bailiages. Lucern took the lead of the Roman Catholic cantons, being the most powerful of that denomination; but Zurich (the canton in which Zwingli had ministered), though less powerful than that of Berne, took the precedence of all the other cantons, both Protestant and Popish. The cantons did not make one commonwealth, but were so many independent states, united together by strict alliances for their mutual defense. The extraordinary diets or congresses were held at Aldorf. Each canton usually deputed two envoys both to the ordinary and extraordinary, to which also the abbot and the town of St Gall, and the town of Biel, sent representatives as allies.

The language generally spoken in Switzerland was the German, in which also all public affairs were transferred. But in those parts of the country that border on Italy or France, French or Italian prevailed.

The two predominant religions of Switzerland in the aftermath of the Protestant Reformation were Reformed (or Calvinism) and Popery. Of the former were the cantons

of Zurich and Berne, the town of St Gall, Geneva, Mulhausen, and Biel, the principality of Neufchatel, the greater part of Basil, Schauffhausen, the country of the Grisons, the Thurgau, Toggenburg, Glaris, and the Rhine valley; the frontiers of Appenzel, with a small part of Solothurn, and some places in the countries of Baden and Sargans. The rest of the Swiss cantons, allies and dependents, were Popish.

For the education of youth there was a university at Basil, and academies at Zurich, Berne, Lausanne, and Geneva, besides gymnasiums and scholæ illustres, both in the Popish and Protestant cantons. There were also societies among them for the improvement of the German language and sciences.

Geneva was the most influential of all the reformed communities and cantons in Switzerland, in no small measure due to the excellence of its reformed academy. The city was remarkable for the number of learned men it produced. The reformed doctrines of religion were very early received in Geneva, being preached there in 1533 by William Farel and Peter Viret of Orbe, and afterwards finally established by the celebrated John Calvin. It was by the assiduity of this celebrated reformer, and the influence that he acquired among the citizens, that a public academy was first established in the city, where he, Theodore Beza, and some of the more eminent first reformers, read lectures with uncommon success. In previous chapters we outlined the careers of John Calvin and Theodore Beza, who labored in the Genevan academy. A later illustrious theologian was John Diodati. Diodati, an Italian Protestant, sat in the chair of Calvin and Beza at the Genevan Academy. Diodati was prominent in the Synod of Dort and the Convention of Saumur; at the latter of which he so succeeded in pouring oil on the waters of controversy, that the Queen of France thanked him repeatedly. Now let's consider the Turretin family in Geneva, especially the illustrious Genevan theologian Francis Turretin.

The family of the Turretins, or Turrentini, as it is still written and pronounced in Geneva, is of Italian origin. It belonged to the ancient nobility of Lusea, and appears to have given a number of *gonfalonieri* and *anziani* to that republic. One of these *gonfalonieri*, or chief magistrates, was Regulus Turretin, who about the year 1547 became the father of Francis, afterwards distinguished as the first Protestant member of the family. For the sake of his new faith, Francis renounced his home and prospects, and became a voluntary exile. After being driven from place to place by adverse fortune, he finally settled in Geneva, where in 1627 he received citizenship, and in 1628 was made one of the Council of Sixty. Soon after he died, leaving behind him a large sum for public charities, a blameless reputation, and a number of children, the oldest of whom was Benedict Turrentini.

Benedict Turrentini was born at Zurich, November 9 1588, and died in March 1631. He was a celebrated pastor and professor of theology. In 1620 he assisted at the Synod of Ales, of which Peter du Moulin was moderator. He was noted for his piety, his love of union, his resolution, his learning, his gentleness, and his eloquence. Pictet speaks of him as the glory of his church and school. No man of his day was more honored, but his career was cut short just as he was entering middle life. He had six children, of whom the third in order was Francis Turretin, son of Benedict and grandson of Francis.

The Genevan theologian Francis Turretin was born in 1623, the same year in which Mornay du Plessy, Father Paul, and Pope Gregory XV died, and in which the great Synod of Charenton was held. From his earliest years young Turretin gave tokens of genius. When his father found himself dying, he caused Francis, then eight years old, to be brought to his bedside; and said, with faltering lips, "This child is marked with God's seal:" *Hic sigillo Dei obsignatus est.* Francis greatly distinguished himself in his academic course, and seems to have been remarkable for the eagerness with which he attempted diversified branches of study. Upon devoting himself to the study of theology, he enjoyed the advantage of eminent instructors. The most noted of these was John Diodati.

Another instructor of Turretin was Theodore Tronchin, also a member of the Synod of Dort and a noble defender of the truth. Tronchin lived to a venerable age, and contributed much to the theological celebrity of Geneva. His family, originally from Provence, long continued to be prominent in the little republic, one of whom, the excellent Colonel Tronchin, was known far and wide among evangelical Christians as late as the end of the eighteenth century. Another celebrated instructor of Turretin was Frederick Spanheim.

After finishing his curriculum at home, Turretin went to Leyden in the Netherlands, then, and long after, a center of learning and theology, where he maintained theses in the schools with great eclat. In Holland he enjoyed the lectures of such men as Polyander; the saintly Rivet, equally known by his voluminous works and by the record of his death; Salmasius, one of the most learned men of his age; Heinsius, Trigland, Voet, Hoornbeek, and Golius, the linguist. At Utrecht he became acquainted with that prodigy of her age, Anna Maria Schureman. In 1645 he proceeded to Paris, where he resided under the roof of the immortal Daille; met with Falcar, Drelincourt, Albertini, and Blondel; and pursued physical and astronomical studies under Gassendi. Next he visited Saumur, the little city on the Loire, famous for its Protestant university. There he heard Placaeus, Amyrauld, and Capellus; men whose learning, subtlety and peculiar views in theology (e.g., the Amyrauldian heresy), were fully presented in the *Theses Salmurienses*. He even went as far south as to Montauban, then, as now, the seat of a Protestant university, where Carolus and Garisson were at that time flourishing.

Returning home in 1648, Francis Turretin became a pastor of the church of Geneva, and preacher to the Italian congregation, such a service being required by the great number of refugees from Italy who sought an asylum in Geneva. When he began to preach, such were the flow of his discourse, the solidity of his matter, and the majestic gracefulness of his eloquence, that immense popularity attended him. In 1650, the chair of Philosophy was several times offered to him by the government. After the death of Aaron Morus at Leyden, Turretin was called to supply his place as pastor. He accepted the invitation, and remained at Leyden about a year; but the Genevese would not endure his absence longer. The venerable Tronchin having outlived his capacity for public service, Turretin was called to fill his place. He complied with the call, and assumed the theological chair in 1653. As a public teacher he was faithful and undaunted, daily inflicting severe blows upon Popery, Socinianism, and Arminianism. From the pulpit he thundered against prevailing immoralities, while with many tears he besought sinners to be reconciled to

Christ. His eloquence was of the most persuasive and irresistible character. Pictet celebrates his benignity, his pity to the poor, his care of the widow and the orphan, his hospitality, and his edifying discourse.

In the year 1661 he was summoned to a new service. The people of Geneva were unable to bear the expense of fortifying their walls; they therefore appealed for aid to the States-General of Holland, and deputed Turretin as their commissioner for this purpose. His father had been sent by them on a similar errand forty years before. Passing through Basle, he was received with honor by Wetstein and others of the great men of the university there. In Holland he obtained great distinction, being complimented by the authorities with a gold chain and medal. Earnest but fruitless efforts were made to detain him, both at Leyden and the Hague. On his way home, he passed through Paris and Charenton. At the latter place he first met Claude, and preached before the vast Protestant assembly there, of which Pictet speaks with singular admiration.

After his return he renewed his labors with redoubled zeal. In the year 1664 he published against the Papists and in vindication of the Reformed; and two years afterwards, his disquisitions concerning the satisfaction of Christ. In 1674 he published his sermons, which were received with great applause. In the same year he issued his great work on Theology, *Institutio Theologiae Elencticae*. It is said that he was very reluctant to give this work to the press, and finally did so only in compliance with numerous letters from the learned in all parts of Reformed Christendom. In 1687 he published on the necessity of secession from Rome, and on other important points.

In 1669 Turretin was married to Isabella, daughter of John de Masse, lord of Sauvet, whose ancestors had held the Marquisate of Saluzzo. Four children were the fruit of this union, of whom only one survived, viz., John Alfonso Turretin, who was born in 1671, and ordained to the ministry about the year 1694. He became a preacher of unusual power, held successively the chairs of Ecclesiastical History and of Theology in Geneva, and was one of the greatest writers of the age upon natural religion and the external defenses of Christianity. Inferior to his father in vigor, he was his superior in elegance; and his copious and classical diction gave a charm to his writings, which secured perusal and applause beyond the pale of Calvinistic bodies.

Turretin's later years were embittered by the distresses of his Reformed brethren in Piedmont and France. In the latter country, in consequence of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in 1685, hundreds of churches were demolished, and Protestantism was driven from the kingdom. Many of these French Protestants sought refuge in Geneva.

But for these distresses of a sympathetic soul, he may be said to have had a happy old age, being scarcely ever ill except from a few attacks of acute disease. On the 24th of September, 1687, he was suddenly seized with violent pains. To Professor Pictet he expressed his readiness to die; but said that the severity of his pain did not suffer him to pray as he would, yet he knew in whom he had believed. He repeated many passages of scripture, among them the words from the 38th Psalm- " O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger," which he had a few days before expounded to the Italian congregation. Upon his

only son he solemnly enjoined four things: the care of the Church, if he ever should be called to it; the love of truth; humility; and charity. To his relative, Dr. Michel Turretin Pastor and Professor, he declared his faith and hope, and committed the solemn care of the Church. His charges and exhortations were numerous. His countenance was expressive rather of triumph than of death. When, as his agony increased, some of those who stood by reminded him of his last sermon, on the words, Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, he cried, as if impatient, Eamus, eamus! Shortly after he slumbered, and so died without a struggle, at the age of sixty-four years.

It is not necessary to dwell upon the character of Francis Turretin as a theologian. His adherence to the received doctrine of the Reformed Church is so uniform and strict, that there is no writer who has higher claims as an authority as to what that doctrine is. His distinguishing excellence is perspicuity and discrimination. His intellect admirably fitted and trained for perceiving and stating the real principles involved in theological questions; so that he was a remarkable illustration of the maxim, *pi bene distinguit, bene docet*. To this primary excellence he added an admirable judgment, which is evinced in the characteristic moderation of his opinions, and the general soundness of his arguments. His method is simple and logical. Under every head he begins with the *Status Quaestionis*, and, with discriminating accuracy, frees the subject in hand from all adventitious matter, and brings out the precise point to be considered. Then follow his arguments in numerical order, each distinct and in logical succession, in support of the position which he advocates. To this series of arguments succeeds the *Fontes Solutionum*, or answers to objections, which often furnish examples of as pithy and discriminating replies as are anywhere to be met with. There is scarcely a question which most divines have been discussing, which the student will not find settled, or at least considered, in the perspicuous pages of Turretin.

So even after the era of Protestant Reformation Switzerland, and especially Geneva, continued to be blessed by godly and wise theologians like Francis Turretin and his son. And even in the aftermath of the Protestant Reformation Geneva- as well as the other reformed territories in Switzerland - were rightly intolerant of false religion. Only the reformed faith was tolerated in these territories. Even the public exercise of the Lutheran religion was not permitted in the territories, just like most Lutheran territories at the time did not permit the public exercise of the reformed faith in their territories.

The city of Geneva at the time was divided into nine parishes. It was by far the most populous town in Switzerland, having about 30,000 inhabitants, of whom, however, 5000 are generally supposed to be absent. It had a small district dependent upon it, but this did not contain above 16,000. In John Calvin's day all of the residents of Geneva were required to pledge in oath agreement with the reformed confession of Geneva, just as in Hezekiah and Nehemiah's day the whole population were required to covenant to follow God according to the scriptures. This was the safe and proper policy, but in after years in Geneva people were allowed to reside who had not so covenanted. So in the eighteenth century the inhabitants were distinguished into four classes, viz. citizens, burgesses, inhabitants, and natives (after the revolution in 1782, a fifth class, named *demicilius*, was added, who annually received permission from the magistrates to reside in the city). The

citizens and burgesses alone, however, were admitted to a share in the government; those called *inhabitants* were strangers allowed to settle in the town with certain privileges; and the *natives* were the sons of those inhabitants, who possessed additional advantages. The citizens and burgesses were members of the established reformed church of Geneva, and hence covenanted to its reformed confession. But the inhabitants and natives were not necessarily so. As we shall see, in later years, allowing such a house divided in Geneva would prove destructive.

The people were very active and industrious, carrying an extensive commerce. God blessed them economically.

As Enlightenment philosophy gained credence in Geneva, an increasing number of the populace became resentful of the religious aspects of Genevan government. Genevan born Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was principal among the malcontents of the time.

Jean Jacques Rousseau was born in Geneva, Switzerland, into a Protestant family of French refugees. His mother died shortly after his birth. Rousseau's father, who was a watchmaker of unstable temperament, fled from Geneva after being involved in a brawl. The young Jean-Jacques was cared for in childhood by an aunt and a maternal uncle. Rousseau received very little regular training, and never adopted ideas of rigorous discipline. He was sent for a while a school in the country, kept by a retired pastor, and later he was apprenticed to an engraver (1725-28).

At the age of 16 Rousseau left Geneva to travel. The next 20 years he spent traveling, studying, and adventuring. During his years, it would seem, Rousseau had no problem launching and maintaining love affairs, and had no qualms in bedding married women with absent or distracted husbands. Rousseau's upbringing had been Calvinist, but under the influence of his benefactress and eventually his mistress, the Vaudois Madame de Warens, he became a Roman Catholic. From 1731 until 1740 Rousseau lived with or near Madame de Warens. At her country home, Les Charmettes, near Chambery in Savoy, Rousseau began his first serious reading and study.

After moving to Paris Rousseau earned his living with secretarial work and musical copying. In 1741 he met Thérèse Le Vasseur, a dull and unattractive hotel servant girl, with whom he stayed for the rest of his life in sin, never marrying her. They had five children out of wedlock. Rousseau -- this man who wrote of man's natural goodness and the corrupting forces of institutions -- assigned his five children to a foundling hospital instead of properly parenting them.

In 1743-44 Rousseau was a secretary to the French Ambassador Comte de Montaignu to Venice, and first came into close contact with political life and institutions. Back in Paris he was introduced through the wicked philosopher Denis Diderot to the Encyclopedists. His own contributions to *The Encyclopedia* were mostly on musical subjects, although he wrote one on political economy. Rousseau's new musical notation had been pronounced

by the Academy of Sciences "neither useful nor original," and his opera, LES MUSES GALANTES, had failed.

Rousseau's life changed on the road to Vincennes when he noticed an announcement in which the Dijon Academy was offering a prize for the best essay on the subject 'Has the progress of the arts and sciences contributed to the purification or the corruption of morals?' "All at once," Rousseau wrote, "I felt myself dazzled by a thousand sparkling lights; crowds of vivid ideas thronged into my head with a force and confusion that threw me into unspeakable agitation; I felt my head whirling in a giddiness like that of intoxication. Rousseau won at the age of 38 the prize for his essay "Discours sur les sciences et les arts", and gained fame. The development of the arts and sciences, he wrote, did not improve man in habits and moral. Far from improving human behavior, the development had promoted inequality, idleness, and luxury. "If the sciences really better'd manners, if they taught man to spill his blood for his country, if they heighten'd his courage; the inhabitants of China ought to be wise, free, and invincible. - But if they are tainted with every vice, familiar with every crime; if neither the skill of their magistrates, nor the pretended wisdom of their laws, nor the vast multitude of people inhabiting that great extent of empire, could protect or defend them from the yoke of an ignorant Barbarian Tartar, of what use was all their art, all their skill, all their learning?" (from *Discourse on Arts and Sciences*)

Around 1750 Rousseau began to promulgate the romantic unrealistic conception of the noble - or innocent - savage. The theme was elaborated in Rousseau's second essay, "Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes" (1755), where he maintained that only the uncorrupted savage is in possession of real virtue.

In Rousseau the feeling of 'discomfort with culture' became a target of serious study for the first time. The cultured man is degenerate, Rousseau thought, and the whole history of civilization a betrayal. Rousseau's naturalism was in great contrast to all that his contemporary Voltaire considered the quintessence of civilization. Taking seriously his thesis, Rousseau decided to "reform" and live the simple life. He returned in 1754 to Geneva, reverted to Protestantism, and regained citizenship. In 1756 Rousseau moved to a cottage near the forest of Montmorency.

"With Rousseau the wider classes of society, the petty bourgeoisie and the undifferentiated mass of the poor, the oppressed and the outlawed, found expression for the first time in literature... Rousseau is the first to speak as one of the common people, and to speak for himself when he is speaking for the people; the first to induce others to rebellion, because he is a rebel himself." (Arnold Hauser in *The Social History of Art*, vol. 3, 1962)

During the next six years Rousseau wrote *The New Heloise* (1761), *Emile* (1762), a treatise on education, eventually turning into a *Bildungsroman* about the ideal education of the innocent child, and *The Social Contract* (1762), which starts with the opening declaration, "Man is born free; and everywhere he is in chains. One thinks himself the master of others, and still remains a greater slave than they." Its catchphrase 'Liberté,

Égalité, Fraternité', inspired the French Revolution. Rousseau argues that only by surrendering to the general will, can an individual find his fullest freedom. The general will, essentially directed toward common good, Rousseau believed, is always right. The citizens of a united community exchanges their natural liberty for something better, moral liberty. In this theory political society is seen as involving the total voluntary subjection of every individual to the collective general will; this being both the sole source of legitimate sovereignty and something that cannot but be directed towards common good.

Rousseau's JULIE; OU, LA NOUVELLE HÉLOÏSE (1761) was an 18th-century best-seller, although profane. It was born of the aging author's dream of finding a perfect love with a kindred soul. The story depicts the passionate love of the tutor Saint Preux and his pupil Julie, their separation, and Julie's marriage to the Baron Wolmar. The theme of sexual passion is in the end transformed into an account of a social utopia on the Baron's country estate.

Emile paved way for the liberal modern educational experiments. It stated that experience should come not from books but from life. Rousseau's theory of education rests on two assumptions: that man is by nature good and that society and civilization corrupt the native goodness. Only through proper education in youth could the "natural man" come to being. Children should be kept from books until the age of 12 and youth should be taught "natural religion" only. Girls were to be trained solely as wives and mothers. Of course, Rousseau's assumptions and conclusions were quite misguided although highly influential.

After its publication, *Emile* was banned both in France and Switzerland. The French parliament ordered the book to be burned, and in 1762 Rousseau was condemned for religious unorthodoxy. He fled to Switzerland, first to Neuchâtel (1762-65), then to Bienne (1765). When the government of Berne ordered Rousseau out of its territory, he visited England. Rousseau's misanthropy and growing persecution mania led to quarrels with his new friends, among them David Hume, and he went to France, where he lived for a time in disguise. In 1768 he married Thérèse, and in 1770 he was officially permitted to return to Paris - if he did not write against the government.

Rousseau's later works include *The Confessions*, the first "romantic" autobiography, which was composed between 1765 and 1770. Rousseau starts with his uniqueness. "I am not made like any of those I have seen; I venture to believe that I am not made like any of those who are in existence. If I am not better, at least I am different." The book was part of his immersion into self-observation, also exemplified in *Rousseau Judge of Jean-Jacques* (1776) and the *Reveries* (1782). In 1778 Rousseau moved to Ermenonville. He died of apoplexy on July 2, 1778. Rousseau's remains were placed with Voltaire's in the Panthéon in Paris in 1794.

Remarkably, the world actually accepted the philosophy of this dissolute philosopher and rejected the doctrines of scripture. His philosophy corrupted human thought in Switzerland and beyond. These were the ideas that were changing men's minds, even

though no political revolution had yet occurred to change the political structure set in place during the Reformation.

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Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* (Logos Research Systems, Inc.: Oak Harbor, WA, 1997). (see electronic version at <http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/history/About.htm>)

J. Parnell McCarter, *Sabbath Bible Survey Tests and Assignments* (PHSC: Grand Rapids, MI, 2003). (see electronic version at <http://www.puritans.net/curriculum/>)

J. Parnell McCarter, *Let My People Go* (PHSC: Grand Rapids, MI, 2003). (see electronic version at <http://www.puritans.net/curriculum/>)

The on-line resources of Historicism Research Foundation at <http://www.historicism.net/> also proved invaluable for my understanding of Biblical prophecy. Biblical prophecy concerning Christian church history, especially as revealed in the book of Revelation, serves as the foundation upon which all church histories should be based.

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