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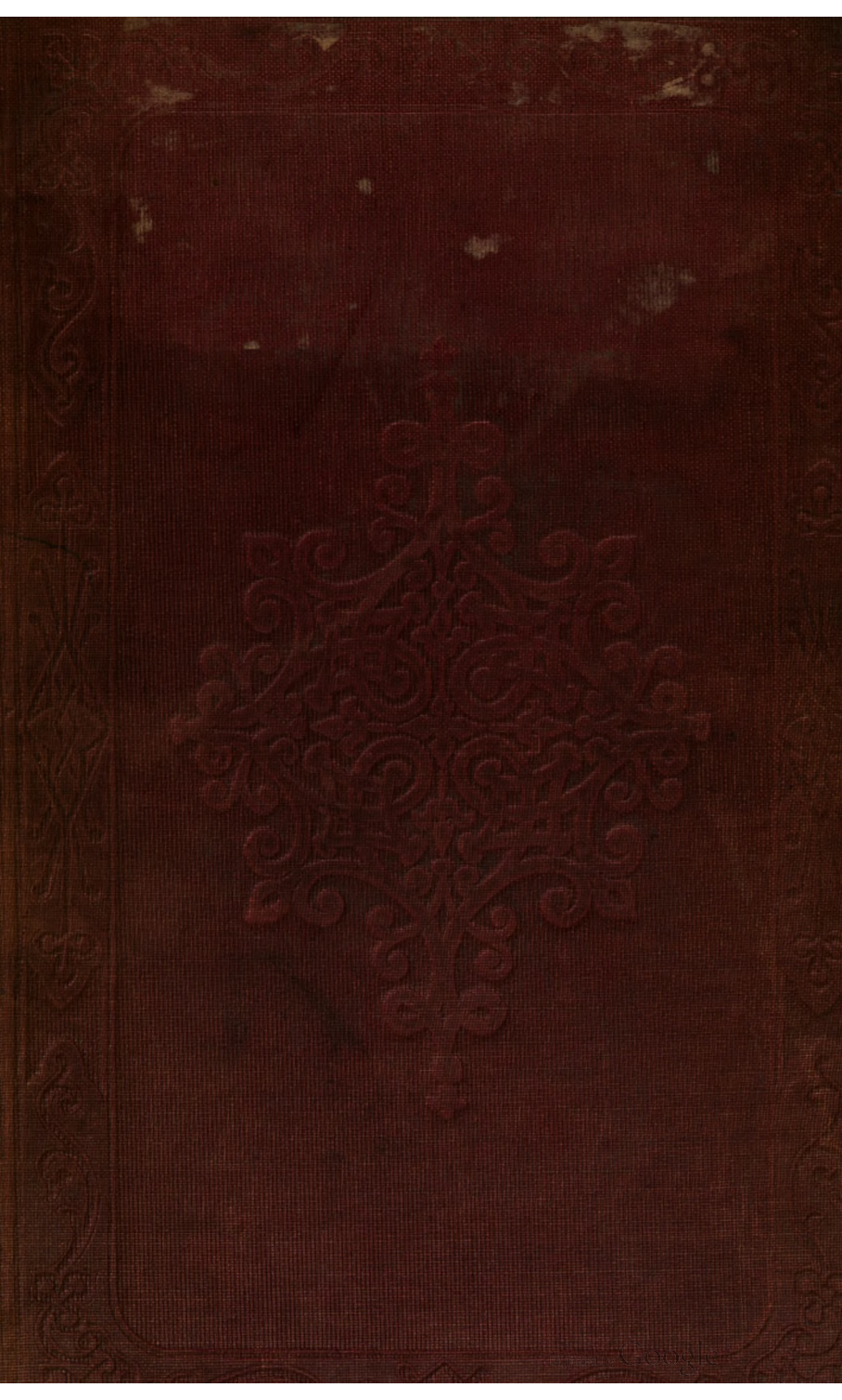
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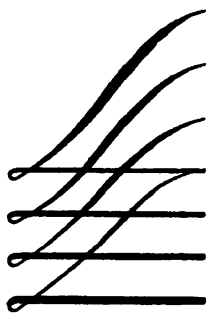
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CORNELIUS AGRIPPA.

CORNELIUS AGRIPPA.

THE LIFE

OF

HENRY CORNELIUS AGRIPPA
VON NETTESHEIM,

DOCTOR AND KNIGHT,

Commonly known as a Magician.

BY HENRY MORLEY,

AUTHOR OF "PALISSY THE POTTER," "JEROME CARDAN," &c.



IN TWO VOLUMES.

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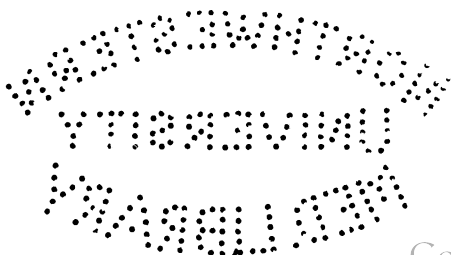
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CORNELIUS AGRIPPA.

CHAPTER I.

UP THE HILL OF LIFE.

THE scene of the labours of Cornelius Agrippa for two or three years before and after the date (1516) which we have now reached, varies only within the limits of Geneva, Burgundy, Piedmont, Savoy, and Lorraine—a region intersected by the Alps—everywhere, either within or about the borders of the German Empire, Italy and France. Friends made at Dôle, at Geneva, and while he was attached to the Italian camp, furnished him with new friends from among their own connexions; thus, therefore, it happened that the district above specified had come to be the ground on which Agrippa had the greatest chance of prospering.

The Marquises of Monferrat were bound by various relations, all of them friendly with the neighbouring ducal house of Savoy. The two families intermarried more than once. The Monferrats owned Turin before

the Dukes of Savoy had it for their capital, and when the line of Palæologus failed, not very long after this date, the Duke of Savoy was among the candidates for a succession to the Marquisate.

To the Duke of Savoy, Cornelius Agrippa seems to have been successfully commended by his patron when, prompt to hope, he wrote a few lines to his friend Rosati¹, saying that, "Never man could have been rescued for better fortune from the utmost peril." There were friends in sundry places, knowing both his merit and his need, who were exerting themselves to procure for him another start in life, but the first offer was that from Savoy. It had a double promise in it. Not only was there the ducal favour, but there was a proposal made by a reverend dignitary of the Church at Vercelli, not Augustine Ferrerius the bishop, but a most illustrious Hannibal, who must have held high rank in the town, to take Cornelius into his service, giving him a pension of two hundred ducats and a house of his own choosing². He made this offer, after having seen the little treatise upon "Knowledge of God," and made many inquiries about its author. He desired also that the fact of his having proposed anything should be kept as secret as possible, and Agrippa's friend at Vercelli, when writing to state his offer, was to add that any arrangement consequent upon acceptance of it could not take effect immediately. He would say in a few days when Agrippa was to come. Agrippa's friend, however, told him that if he found it most convenient to come at

¹ Ep. 53, Lib. i. p. 719.

² Ep. 54, Lib. i. pp. 719, 720.

once, he had much better do so and leave him to procure a due arrangement with the reverend lord. The proposed patron saying nothing more upon the subject for a week, the friendly scholar who took charge of Agrippa's interests considered it imprudent to be troublesome; but in the mean time he advised Cornelius to come, himself offering a home until every arrangement was perfected and a house was ready. There was also Lodovico Carnole¹, a nobleman in Vercelli, offering to place his palace at the disposal of Cornelius Agrippa and his family. So stood the matter on the 4th of March, 1516. On the 8th of March, Agrippa's friend, bound to Vercelli by his duties as a preacher, was glad at the prospect of a visit from Casale². From Casale to Vercelli is a distance of not more than about thirteen miles. Vercelli is a populous town which belonged sometimes to Savoy, sometimes to Milan, and was used by the Dukes of Savoy when they had it—as they had at this time—as a place of occasional residence.

Cornelius spent a few days with his friend, who thereafter urged his prompt return; he had promised to be in Vercelli again before the end of the month, as Father Chrysostom was witness³, and they were desiring him as harts desire the water brooks. In every one of these letters Agrippa's wife is mentioned with the kindest remembrance, as indeed she was by nearly all his correspondents.

¹ Ep. 55, Lib. i. p. 720.

² Ep. 56, Lib. i. p. 720.

³ Ep. 57, Lib. i. pp. 720, 721.

In the mean time the Lord Hannibal had made up his mind; he had been showing the treatises on Man and on the Three Ways of Knowing God to a great Theologian of the Dominicans, and the Theologian had spoken with such extreme praise of these works, that the illustrious and reverend Lord Hannibal desired to have Cornelius for client a hundred times more than before¹. Agrippa's friends were looking out a house for him in Vercelli, but had not found anything suitable, therefore it was urged that he should accept Lodovico Cernole's liberal offer of his palace till the house was found, unless he preferred profiting by the hospitality of a noble widow, friend of Agrippa's correspondent, who would be glad to spare, for a few days, part of her house to the philosopher, his wife, and children. This was on the twenty-second of March.

But the illustrious and reverend Lord Hannibal was lukewarm in the business. He might be stimulated now and then to energy, but he does not seem to have carried out his offer in the spirit that alone could make it acceptable. On the second of June², Agrippa's friend, the monk at Vercelli, hindered by his preachings, and the patron's not having come to the city, had not quite arrived at a right understanding with the magnate, but intended speaking to him when he saw him next. The end of the matter was, that for that year, Cornelius, who had brought his family about him at Casale, stayed there under shelter of Monferrat's friendship. He had made

¹ Ep. 58, Lib. i. p. 721.

² Ep. 59, Lib. i. p. 722.

also a warm friend at Rivolta in the senior preceptor of St. Antony's Monastery, John Laurentin, native of Lyons¹. In September, too, there was Landulph, after a vain ramble in search of better fortune, bringing his wife Penthesilea back to Rosati's house at Lavizaro, and thence writing to tell his friend that there he was, and that he was there waiting to see what he could do for him with Monferrat².

There is something pleasant to consider in the friendship of these two men, tossing helplessly with wives and families about an adverse world, and looking faithfully for help to one another. If the one who has the stronger mind, takes, as is usual in such cases, the leader's tone, we do not see that practically Landulph either seeks or gets help that he does not give. At Dôle, he loyally prepared the way before his friend, and we throughout find him not less prompt to be helpful than be helped. So it is pleasant to consider such a friendship formed in early years, acquiring strength through trouble; to read letters from the man to the man not less affectionate than those which the youth wrote to the youth. Landulph begins his note, just mentioned as having been sent from Lavizaro to Casale, with the words, "My Agrippa, who art as a dearest brother," and it ends, "Farewell, with your beloved wife." Let us add this, too, to the incidents of life most surely testifying to the true worth of Cornelius: he

¹ Ep. 3, Lib. ii. p. 723. *Oratio* iv. p. 2092. In *Art. Brev. Lullii Commentarii*.—The Dedication.

² Ep. 60, the last in the first Book.

maintained, through good and ill report, not only the complete love of his wife, but also the unbroken attachment of a faithful friend.

Early in the next year (1517), the unlucky philosopher was still labouring to find a new position by help of Monferrat, and was labouring to help, not himself only, but several of his associates and friends. Succeeding letters in his correspondence¹ represent the fate of scholars broken in their fortunes by the war, labouring on behalf of themselves and of each other, looking up to Monferrat, and expecting some aid through Agrippa, who enjoyed the best share of the great man's favour. There is nothing, in such letters, of abject beseeching. Each writes as if mutual assistance were a duty recognised among them, either as common members of the republic of letters, or as equal friends.

One of these friends dates from Turin, the Duke of Savoy's capital. Landulph, who settled down eventually as a professor at Pavia, joined the soldiers for a little while, and wrote to his "Dearest Henry" on the fourth of May, from the camp at La Rochette², a small town of Savoy, near the banks of the Isère. By the third of August in the same year, the position of the two friends was much altered. Cornelius Agrippa had joined formally the Ducal Court, and was, probably as a physician, in the pay of Charles III. of Savoy, called the Gentle, half-brother and successor to that Philibert whose death had left Margaret of Austria in truth a widow. He was still, therefore, mo-

Ep. 1, 2, 3, 4, Lib. ii. pp. 722, 723.

² Ep. 5, Lib. ii. p. 724.

rally within the strictest limits of his old allegiance. Landulph, on the other hand, was by that date at Lyons¹, where he had revived old friendships, found patronage, and whence he was summoned to the court of Francis. An Italian by birth, it would have been hard for him to name the prince to whom he owed a natural allegiance. He was as ready to be helped in France as he would have been willing to take help in Germany; and he would go to Paris, he said to Cornelius, as his precursor. There was peace then between France and Germany. Maximilian had, in the preceding year, made an abortive effort to avenge the capture of Milan; had brought an army into Italy, lost time in taking little towns, and finally retreated from before Milan itself, distrustful of the Swiss in his own ranks. He had deserted his army and gone home to Germany, leaving the troops to become disorganised, and to disband themselves at their discretion. King Ferdinand died; and among subsequent arrangements was a pacification, of which one of the terms was Maximilian's abandonment of his claim to Verona. The Venetians were left as they had been before the league of Cambray was devised to crush and plunder them. During the years 1517 and 1518, there was a cessation of hostilities; Agrippa might, therefore, have gone to Paris. Of his situation at the ducal court, Landulph spoke slightly: "I do not praise it," he said; "you will be offered little pay, and get it at the day of judgment. I have sent repeated letters to the governor of Grenoble, by

¹ Ep. 6, Lib. ii. p. 724, 725.

the hands of his own nephew, and am hoping soon to get an answer ; after which, if you permit me, I will arrange and settle everything. In the mean time, so manage with the Duke of Savoy as not to close your way to richer fortune."

While Landulph was expecting to find for his friend an opening at Grenoble, on the Isère (distant about a hundred miles from Turin), Cornelius prepared to act as doctor of medicine, lawyer, or divine, and really acting perhaps as a physician, had been inquiring of a friend the composition of a plaister¹. Either by physic or by law, he was, and had been since the overthrow of his fortunes by the entry of the French into Pavia, winning a slender income upon which he and his family contrived to live. By labour in either faculty, and sometimes by repaying with work of the brain the liberality of any patron, he could earn all that he ate². At Cologne, it had been long settled that he was killed in the Italian wars³. He sent home for no money ; he made himself chargeable on no one ; and was even ambitious to enjoy the more completely his domestic happiness, by living as a private man, no longer at the beck of any prince. Nevertheless, his friends seek for him anything that they can find.

In three weeks Landulph wants him at Lyons⁴; he is still only expecting a reply from Grenoble ; but is, personally, on such good terms with the governor that he has no misgivings. He commends himself warmly to the dear wife

¹ Ep. 7, Lib. ii. p. 725.

² Ep. 18, Lib. ii. p. 784.

³ *Orationes*, iv. pp. 2091, 2092.

⁴ Ep. 8, Lib. ii. p. 725.

of Cornelius, and his only son: "I will bring you good fortune," he adds; "I cannot rest till I have paid you the service I so much desire." This design, however, led to no results. The reverend preceptor of St. Antony's, at Rivolta, through the influence of a brother-in-law¹ residing there, had, in the mean time, opened a new prospect of official employment in the town of Metz; and, two months afterwards, Landulph wrote², "Most renowned Agrippa, your fame, I am told, has reached even to Avignon:" for he had to tell him of an offer from the Pope's legate at Avignon, to receive him into service, and allow an ample stipend. There were some clerical friends from Italy at Lyons, who agreed with Landulph that this opening was to be preferred to that concerning which negotiations were in progress with the magistrates of Metz: "Do you, therefore, follow our advice. Having considered everything, write back to me all you desire, and I will not be wanting, whom you shall find always a faithful man and special friend. Commend me to your dear wife and son. Lyons, October 20."

By the sixteenth of November³, a question of settlement in Geneva has been added to all these discussions; and the necessity of coming to some final decision has been made apparent. The Duke of Savoy has made an offer of pay, by which the poor scholar has felt humiliated. With the pride of a gentleman, he has refused, therefore, to receive a single ducat at the great man's hands. A friend at

¹ *Orationes*, iv. p. 2092.

² Ep. 9, Lib. ii. p. 725.

³ Ep. 10, Lib. ii. pp. 726, 727.

Geneva writes to him in a consolatory strain, and "does not think that he did quite wisely in refusing to accept the pay offered him by that ungrateful man, especially considering his own very straitened fortunes. It seemed to him an absurd revenge which gave reward to the committer of a wrong, and inflicted damage upon the laborious and deserving. It would have been more prudent, laying aside pride, to have claimed that money, little as it was, which the hand of injustice at last offered." Such wise friends have we all to help us keep our souls in due subjection. But the concern on behalf of Agrippa and his family was laudable, and this Geneva correspondent was most honestly rejoiced at the chance of having as a townsman and a neighbour one so noble and so learned as Agrippa. He was ready to assist Eustochius Chappuys, the chief friend of Cornelius in the town, in looking for a house, and making other preparations, if that able doctor should adhere to his proposal of a settlement in his wife's native city.

Probably the disrespect suffered at the hands of the Duke of Savoy had caused Cornelius in his resentment to regard even the slenderest tie between patron and client as a state of bondage. He and his little family had already been for some time living on the insufficient produce of his industry and talent. Instead of depending again upon service to one man for a more ample subsistence, might he not find it more consistent with the liberty he cherished to obtain a wider field for private practice, whether of law or medicine, in a community

that would respect his independence. His wife Louisa may have had faith in her own town of Geneva, fancied an opening there, and pleased herself with the idea of re-visiting the old familiar ground after so many turmoils and sharp trials upon foreign soil, loyally borne. Agrippa would be influenced directly by a wish of hers, as she was prompt to second any wish of his.

“Where there is a true and whole love,” the young husband had preached, on the excuse of Plato, to the learned men of Pisa¹, “there is all modesty, all justice; there is no scorn, there is perpetual peace. The love of peace is God; peace is by lovers venerated. Where there is true love, there is security, there is concord, there is happiness, and there are all things common. Against it there is no force in danger, wiles, dissension, misery; in strife, theft, homicide, or battle. Moreover, what laws almost numberless and the whole scope of moral philosophy are striving to effect, and scarcely compass after all, love alone, in the shortest time, secures. Love is enough to turn you from the evil and the base, to set you on the track of what is good and just. Without love, justice is a cause of war, fortitude is not free from anger, prudence from malice, temperance from impatience. Where love is present, all the virtues are brought into concord. . . . Love² itself is the moderator of celestial movements and influxes, the ruler of the elements, and the preserver of all creatures. This is the root of life, the promoter of

¹ H. C. A. in *Prolectionem Convivii Platonis, Amoris laudem continens*. Orationes, i. Op. Tom. i. p. 1066.

² Ibid. p. 1068.

safety; it extinguishes indolence, revives the perishing, illuminates the wise, instructs the ignorant, leads back the wanderers, soothes the angry, humbles the proud, consoles the oppressed, helps forward the destitute. Let us all love, therefore¹; let us love, first, God; next to God, let the love of a wife stand before all things. Let us love our country, for which always the wisest and holiest men have willingly and with alacrity met death itself. Let us love the prince who is the author of justice; let us love parents, relations, benefactors. Let us love each other, for before all things this Christ teaches in the Gospel, saying, This is my commandment, that ye love one another. Let us love, all of us, the most noble female sex. But of the pre-eminence and nobility of woman I am unwilling to speak largely, as I am about to issue a small book upon this special theme." (Some years have elapsed, however, and it still remains unpublished.) "The woman's lover labours to do well that he may please her. One man is trained in arms by love, another trained in letters; every one labours to act that he may be praised before the face of her who loves him."

In this spirit Cornelius is just now toiling up a very steep bit of the hill of life, and very naturally, when he seems to have the world before him, turns his eyes, for his wife's sake, in the direction of Geneva. A more certain prospect of a livelihood, that promised not less independence, being elsewhere offered, we find, on the sixteenth of January, that Agrippa's friend at Geneva writes in some-

¹ Ibid. p. 1071.

what ludicrous despair, because that man whose wisdom and whose "inborn goodness¹," and whose oratory are so precious to him, has announced his acceptance of the post of advocate and orator to the free town of Metz.

Metz, in the duchy of Lorraine, claimed in those days to be free, and knew how to maintain its freedom. In as far as it paid any allegiance at all, it paid it to the Emperor of Germany, but it would have nothing to do with the German Diets, and not long before the arrival of Cornelius, its magistrates had sent after a citizen who had set out for Worms to get some private litigation settled, brought him back, and fined him for proposing to acknowledge a strange jurisdiction. As for the Dukes of Lorraine, they were obliged to live at peace with the town that could afford to hold its own upon their soil². Some five-and-twenty years before Agrippa went there, René, Duke of Lorraine, had declared war against it. The townspeople gave to the Duke's herald half a dozen florins out of their own mint, as tokens of their independence, and waged war for three years so stoutly, that when peace was made they had in the town sixteen or seventeen thousand of the Duke's people as prisoners.

In Metz, Cornelius Agrippa found a town that was in several main respects not very much unlike his own Cologne. There was in spirit, though not quite in form,

¹ Ep. 11, Lib. ii. p. 728.

² *Histoire Générale de Metz, par des Religieux Bénédictins de la Congrégation de St. Vannas*. Metz, 1775. This history, in six thick quartos, provides ample store from which I draw what little minute knowledge is necessary to the narrative.

the same municipal supremacy, the same sort of social history, the same mastery of the religious power by the civil, and withal the same glut of monks, making intolerant use of what authority they had.

Before assuming his new office, Cornelius went to his parents in Cologne. They had been told of his death among the Swiss in Pavia; all his friends in Cologne also believed that he had fallen. In his actual presence they received the first assurance of his safety¹. Of their mourning for his supposed loss he had not known. Having no pleasant news to send, he had despatched to Cologne no messenger. In the days of his poverty he had refrained from pressing upon the resources of his parents; but as soon as the way of life seemed clear again, and he could tell them good news of himself, he did not write, but went himself to them, and turned their mourning into joy.

¹ Ep. 15, 18, and 19, Lib. ii.

CHAPTER II.

ADVOCATE AND ORATOR AT METZ.

METZ is a very old town, standing between streams where the Seille flows into the Moselle. It was entered in Agrippa's time by many bridges, one to each of the old gates. Within the walls it was overfilled with monasteries and churches. As you entered by St. Thibault's gate on the side furthest from that bordering the Moselle, you soon came to the monastery of the Celestines, facing the market space, which was adorned by the public gallows and a scaffold¹. Many a barbarous execution the Celestines saw. Beyond the Celestines, other monks were predominant in every quarter. The large monastery of the Dominicans was on the other side of the town, near the Moselle, and not very far from the fine cathedral at which, when Cornelius Agrippa went to Metz, the building works were coming to an end. I mention only the religious houses of the Celestines and Dominicans, because they

¹ The pictorial plan of Metz, sketched not long after this time in Braun's *Urbes Mundi*, shows a man hanging on the gallows as a public ornament.

only concern us. One yielded to Cornelius a friend, and one a foe.

Metz was a town, the capital of a district, even in the old days of the Gauls, and a town, as I have said, able to assert its independence. The Romans preserved its Gallic constitution, giving to its magistrates, elected on the ancient system, the name of Decurion, and the name of Decurion having been translated into Deacon, in Agrippa's time the ancient form of independent government existed still. Its Master Deacon was its mayor, or chief magistrate. In the thirteenth century the Bishops of Metz had endeavoured to assert civil supremacy, but they had, as at Cologne, been resisted violently, and there had been a season of internal strife, resulting finally in the complete restriction of the Church authority to matters of religious discipline. The town would obey none but townsmen of its own appointment, and had for its first article of customary law that "All are free; there is not one of servile condition."

The town was governed by a master deacon and a council of the other deacons, aided by a body called the Sworn Thirteen¹. Soon after Agrippa's time there existed a parliament formed of a body of ecclesiastics, nobles, and deputies of the commons, called "People of the Three Estates of the city." When it met it was not the bishop but the master deacon who convoked it, and the master deacon who presided over its discussions.

¹ The constitution of the government of the town is fully detailed in the *Histoire Générale de Metz, par des Religieux Bénédictins*. Tom. ii. pp. 318-393.

The Master Deacon was elected annually by six persons, namely, those who happened to be masters of the cathedral and five specified abbeys. In order to maintain the dignity of the town, it was incumbent upon its chief magistrate to obtain a knighthood before Whitsuntide, during his year of office. It was his function to treat with the council of twelve ordinary deacons, and with the Thirteen; he was to provide for vacant offices and so forth. The twelve other deacons were all chosen on the nomination of the master deacon until the year 1600, and the Deacons, with their Master, formed a sovereign court of appeal from the sentences of the Sworn Thirteen, in civil matters.

The Thirteen were said to be sworn because, having tried offences, they made report on oath concerning the offenders, and, when they did so, were believed against all contradiction, their sentences of fine or other punishment being considered final. In doubtful cases, however, they reported their opinion only, not confirming it by oath, and it was then liable to be outweighed by sworn testimony on the part of witnesses for the accused. The Thirteen were changed by a general election once in eight years, conducted upon a peculiar system, which, however, excluded no citizen from participation in the suffrage. Such details of municipal government as now fall commonly to the lot of a town council were attended to by the Thirteen; and as the municipal government was also imperial, they might be said also to resemble ministers in various departments of the state. Three formed a

committee in charge of the gates; three others were the ministry of war; one took the oversight of hospitals; another was lord of the treasury; one presided over the cleansing of the highways, and so forth. Then again six of them formed also a court of arbitration for the hearing of incipient causes, and the amicable settlement of matters in dispute. The Thirteen assembled in chamber every Tuesday and Wednesday in the morning, all the year through, meeting at seven in the morning between Easter and the first of October, and at eight between the first of October and Easter, liable to fines against each member who was late or absent.

It was by the Master Deacon that Cornelius Agrippa was invited to accept the post of Town Advocate and Orator at Metz¹; having accepted that office, he became subject to the order of the Council of Deacons and the Thirteen, but of no one else. He became also a citizen, and free among the free.

But if Agrippa served only the civil government, his way of life and thought concerned the ecclesiastical. We must needs know also how that was constituted.

In the year 1484, successor to a bishop who was good and zealous, and worked holy miracles, Henry II. of Lorraine became bishop of Metz. He lived and died at a country seat in Champagne, belonging to his brother Duke René, and all that he did for his see was to govern it in the interests of the house of Lorraine. This state of things led to intrusions on the part of René, which the citizens of

¹ *Oratio* iv. p. 2092.

Metz put down by force of arms; it was then—eight-and-twenty years before Agrippa went to live among them—that they made the Duke's herald a present of some florins out of their own mint. Not very long after the war ended, in 1494, Henry of Lorraine proposed the appointment of a coadjutor in his bishopric, and he thought at that time of an able man, Raymond, cardinal of St. Agatha, legate in Trèves. His brother René approved of the choice, but when afterwards a second son was born to himself he changed his mind, and thought it well that if one son inherited the dukedom, the other should possess the wealthy bishopric of Metz. Therefore, although much had been formally done to assure the coadjutorship of Raymond, on the third of November, 1500, the chapter of Metz agreed to accept a sucking bishop in the person of the Duke's infant, Jean de Lorraine, though he was then little more than two years old, and in those days it was common not so much as to wean a child before the age of three. The Pope limited Jean's privileges by a bull. He was not to enter actively upon the administration of affairs until he reached the age of twenty, and he was to take full episcopal rank at the age of twenty-seven. While Bishop Henry lived he was to do the necessary work; and if he died during the minority of his coadjutor, the episcopal administration was to pass into the hands of the chapter. The chapter, governing for the bishop, was to divide the revenue into three parts, of which one only was to be the portion of Prince Jean. Now Bishop Henry of Lorraine died in 1505, when the coadjutor was but seven and a

half years old. The chapter, therefore, occupied the bishop's palace, and managed the ecclesiastical affairs of Metz up to the time of Cornelius Agrippa's first arrival in the city.

The chapter had been working very hard at the cathedral. In the last years of Bishop Henry's life, after a year of plague (and plague-years in Metz were frequent), labour upon it had been actively resumed. The ancient choir and chapel of St. Nicholas had been pulled down, and to expedite the reconstruction, Henry, not many months before his death, had granted remission of all sins by excess, rapine, and usury, to those who gave subscriptions to the building-fund. After the bishop's death, when a large part of the ecclesiastical revenues became, for a series of years, available for pious works, one of the two thirds of his income withheld from the bishop was devoted annually to the payment of costs on account of the cathedral, which was finished very soon. At the time when Cornelius first went to Metz, the young Bishop Jean had just arrived at his majority, and the last touches were being put to the cathedral, which, however, was not open for public worship until 1522. The chapter had also established a strict rule in matters of religion, even to the appointment of a cruel Dominican as Chief Inquisitor, though there had by no means been at all times inquisitors in Metz,—nor had there been at all times public orators. It so happened, however, that not very long before the civil power gave to a fit man, Cornelius Agrippa, the post of town advocate and orator, the ecclesiastical power had

entrusted to a fit man, Nicolas Savin, the office of inquisitor¹. No place was made so intolerable as Metz to the Jews, and how heresies of the Christians fared there, we ere long shall see.

Bidding farewell then once more to his parents at Cologne, one of them never to be seen again in this world, Cornelius, in the year 1518, his age being thirty-two, travelled to Metz with wife and son, and having arrived there, founded what he hoped might prove a quiet and a settled home. As soon as possible after his coming he presented himself before the assembled magistrates to report his arrival, thank them for the honour they had paid him, and submit himself to their commands. His speech² was brief, the first half an eulogium of the free town of Metz, the last an explanation of his own position. He should not waste their time with ornamented sentences. His presence was a witness of his honesty, and if they needed more assurances, his birthplace was not obscure, his race was not ignoble, his family none to be ashamed of, his home not sordid; no man had blamed his morals, and his life was free from crime, his reputation was without spot among the justest men, and he had aforetime not been held unworthy to receive words of confidence and thanks from the Supreme Pope, the Emperor, and many prelates and religious men, who called him son and friend, who had received him at their tables, who had honoured him

¹ *Histoire de Metz*, Tom. ii. p. 720. *Corn. Agr. Ep.* 59, *Lib. ii.* p. 776.

² *H. C. A. ad Metensium Dominos, dum in illorum advocatum, syndicum et oratorem acceptaretur.* *Op.* Tom. ii. pp. 1090-1092.

in private and in public letters, and whose witness to his praise was dearer to his heart than money, of which he never was an eager seeker, or an avaricious owner. But after he had taken a wife, he went on to tell them, he had proposed to abstain from a familiarity with princes who were above his humble state, and in the seeking of whose friendship there was more ambition than tranquillity, and thereafter, he adds, "I lived by my own industry, and remaining content with my lot, and with but narrow means, I bore with an unbroken mind various twists of fortune, burdensome on no man. But after your highness" (he speaks to the master deacon as chief of the council) "had by sundry letters, and at last by the sending of your secretary, required me for your Orator, and the Lord Preceptor of Rivolta himself, and his brother the Preceptor at Metz, together with the great baron their father, to all of whom I owe much, had urged my consent with many prayers, I thought it amiss to refuse the prayers of so many men to whom I was indebted, and to contemn your favour. . Therefore, neglecting all other prospects, and the great titles, of which some were at that time offered me in Piedmont and Savoy, with fixed deliberation I have devoted myself to you, trusting that I shall so manage as not wholly to destroy the most excellent opinion of me you now hold. But that I may not weary you by a too long discourse, and occupy the time proper for business of more moment, nothing remains except that with all possible respect, devotion, and religious earnestness, I promise and give you my assurance that I will fail

you in no matter, whether of counsel, fidelity, or secrecy, or in the other debts and duties of this office, whatever chance may hap. I will do now, therefore, what I ought: accept what is your due. You have me here whom you have for some time sought. I take the title of your Advocate and Orator. I acknowledge you to be my certain and indubitable lords, I pay to you all reverence, obedience, and faithful duty that an orator, admitted to participation in the counsels of your republic is expected to pay, and whatever course you instruct me to take on the republic's behalf, I will with all pains pursue, examine, labour in, affect, and perfect, nor will I ever be wanting in faith, industry, or diligence. Behold I am in your hands, knowledge, mind, and body. I have said these things briefly, trusting that your prudence will perceive much within the little, and entreat your pardon if I have spoken thus extemporaneously not in a way suited to your worth, but to my weakness and the worth of time."

We know enough, by this time, of Cornelius, to be assured that in his promise of fidelity and diligence, he spoke with a true heart to the Deacons of Metz and the Thirteen, and that after having thus plighted his faith he returned to his wife in their new home, determined to do all that an honest man could do for the assurance of prosperity and peace to the small household of which he was the head. Metz had its social troubles. It was at that time besieged by banditti under a Captain Francisco, who made all the approaches insecure, ravaged outlying fields and villages, and proved themselves a plague so fierce

and so indomitable, that the town was obliged to buy them off¹.

Of the kind of work done by Cornelius Agrippa for the town of Metz, we have a trace in these orations that survive, clear, brief, and closely keeping to the point in hand. One is a speech before the neighbouring Senate of Luxembourg², upon the subject of some new claims made against the citizens of Metz by the farmers of the Luxembourg tolls. The Senate of Luxembourg had, in consequence of repeated representations by the aggrieved parties, given counsel or command at various times to their farmers of tolls which those persons resisted, and asserting the legality of their proceedings, they had opposed an action brought against them by the deacons of Metz in the courts of their own town. The suit had been more than a year in existence, and was undecided still, when Cornelius Agrippa was sent to apologise to the Senate of Luxembourg for troubling them so often on the matter, and to tell that body with all courtesy and high consideration, that it would do well to expedite the movements of its court of law, and bring the question of tolls to a settlement, because, although the town of Metz had abstained carefully from any retaliation, if the unusual demands made against citizens of Metz were much longer persisted in, Metz would begin to act in a corresponding spirit of exaction towards citizens of Luxembourg. The other

¹ *Histoire Générale de Metz, par des Religieux Bénédictins.*

² *H. C. A. Oratio ad Senatum Lucenburgiorum pro Dominis suis Metensibus habita.* Op. Tom. ii. pp. 1092-1094.

two orations are the formal greetings which the town then offered, accompanying them with some substantial gift, to every visitor of note who came within its gates. One of these speeches is to a prince bishop¹, and the other, to some great lord²; both are of commendable brevity, Cornelius explaining in one of them that many words belong rather to an insincere greeting, than an honest, independent welcome; that many words are only good to cause more weariness to travellers, or worry to the man of business. His compliments, it may be said, are not the less well turned, as they must assuredly have been the pleasanter, for being brief.

During the first quiet months of residence at Metz, Agrippa found amusement in the writing of an uncertain opinion on a disputable problem in Theology—the nature of Original Sin³. In the treatise on Man written for Monferrat before that on the Triple Way of Knowing God, he had argued that the race of man in a state of innocence would have been maintained by immaculate conception⁴. The whole theory is worked out in the essay on Original Sin, of which he suggests, by many curious and most ingenious arguments, his opinion that it came by the fall, in this respect, from the quickening of the spirit

¹ *Oratio in salutatione cujusdam Principis et Episcopi, pro Metensibus scripta*, p. 1094.

² *Oratio in salutatione cujusdam magnifici viri, pro Dominis Metensibus scripta*, p. 1095.

³ *Henrici Cornelii Agrippæ de Originali Peccato, disputabilis Opinionis Declamatio*. Opuscula (ed. 1532, Mense Maio—no pagination), fol. sig. H vii.—I vii.

⁴ *Ibid. ad fin.*

to the quickening of the flesh. "It is opinion," he says, "not belief, not knowledge; so that if my opinion be wrong, I am not parted by it from true belief and uncontaminated Christian wisdom. Upon such conditions I may express opinion freely, and if (as I am a man of immature age, and of small wit or learning) I do not justify the sense I give by as many witnesses of Scripture as the thing requires, some doctors may follow, not displeased with this opinion of mine, and able to give vigour to it with more valid reasoning." A copy of his "short and compendious declamation" Agrippa sends to the old friend of his family, Theodoric, Bishop of Cyrene¹, who replies from Bedbar² that he is glad to find his Cornelius alive, contrary to the reports current for some years in Cologne, glad that he has a good wife and children who may inherit his own virtue and learning, glad that he has succeeded in escaping to so large an extent from subjection to secular duties, and won time to devote to sacred letters. As for the question of Original Sin, it is an old puzzle. He will only say that all have been agreed that it cannot exist were there is no rational soul. "But enough," he adds, "of this. I wish we could be together who are now parted by distance, and the fierce raging of perils (I speak of epidemics) in which I wonder vehemently that you offer,—as you write,—yourself, your wife, and your whole family, to the help of your neighbours. You will reply, perhaps, that you are not timid about this disease, and perhaps some Apollo guards you with a special antidote,

¹ Ep. 17, Lib. ii. p. 784.

² Ep. 18, Lib. ii. pp. 784, 785.

or preservative. If you have any such thing, I beg you not to hide it from your friend: or if any one has told you of a prescription against plague, discovered by any thinker, send it written to the physician in my house, that it may reach my hands, so you will bind the tie of love between us with a tenfold strength." The bishop ends with a pleasant doubt lest a correspondent whom he knows to be so pure in thought should find corruption in his letter, and begs that, if so, it may be covered by his age, his fatherly relation to his friend, and his capacity of bishop. This letter was addressed to the noble and strenuous Knight, Doctor of each Faculty and of Medicine, Henry Cornelius Agrippa, Chief Counsel to the Senate of the town of Metz, his most beloved son in Christ, by the reverend Father in Christ, and Doctor in sacred Theology, Theodoric, Bishop of Cyrene, Rural Dean at Cologne, and elected President of the Chapter¹.

Cornelius, when he replied to this letter, sent with his reply, for the use of his venerable friend, a paper of instructions, detailing both the preventives and the remedies against the plague, which he had compiled for his own use, and that of others, from the best authorities. There can be little doubt that his exposure of himself and family to the infection for the benefit of his neighbours at Metz arose out of the skill as a physician which it became him in the time of need to exercise. He told Theodoric that the best remedy was flight, and a return, not too speedy,

¹ See letters prefixed to the paper *Contra Pestem*, *Opuscula* (ed. May, 1552), sig. fol. I vii. K.

after the cessation of the pestilence. For himself to leave Metz was impossible, and as for the Securest Antidotes against the Plague, he forwarded an account of them in a little medical paper, so headed, which is to be found among his published works¹.

First, as to general regimen in time of pestilence, his rules are to avoid as much as possible heat and heating things, external or internal; to avoid violent exercises, violent passions; to avoid eating or drinking to repletion, but to avoid also hunger and thirst; not to sleep too much, especially by day. With food, and especially with fresh fish, such condiments as tormentilla, gentian, sandal-wood, and roses should be taken; also vinegar should be used, especially vinegar of roses; and citron, orange, or lemon-juice, sorrel-juice, and all vegetable things of that kind which resist the poison of the plague. They may be tempered with sugar, if too sharp taken alone. Pepper may be eaten, coarsely pounded, and it is good also to take such herbs as onion and chicory. The place of residence and clothes should be purified with a blazing fire, of say juniper or pine-wood; they should also be sprinkled with rose-water and vinegar; sweet herbs and flowers should also be scattered about, and used in fumigation. With rose-water and vinegar, also, it is well to wash often during the day both face and hands. When walking abroad, have

¹ Opuscula (I give this title to the collection of small works beginning with the *De Nob. et Præcell. Fem. Sex.* and all named on the title-page of the first edition of them published at Cologne, in May, 1532), fol. K iii.-K vi. *Henrici Cornelii Agrippæ contra Pestem Antidota securissima.*

a little ditany root or aromatic confection in the mouth, and a sweet apple in the hand at which to smell. It is best, also, before leaving home, to burn rue, beaten in vinegar, upon hot iron plates, and inhale the vapour, as well as allow it to pass over the whole body and clothes. This is the household regimen which, in seasons of pestilence, Cornelius Agrippa enforced in his own family, and used his influence to recommend.

Of preservative antidotes, the best, in his opinion, and those which he himself used, were a draught in the morning, and at times during the day, chiefly composed of vinegar of roses and white wine, or old malvoisie, with citron-peel, bole armenian, and zodoary-root infused, and a little saffron added, with perhaps some sugar and conserve of roses. There was a pill in common use, and called a Pestilence Pill, which Agrippa would have to be taken digested in honey-water. A medicine not less sublime is this: Take of treacle two ounces, myrrh three drachms, camphor two drachms, over which pour a pint of rose-water. In two or three days distil in well-sealed glass vessels, and take some of the distilled water every morning. The ancients prescribed also an electuary of walnuts, rue, and salt, with other things, and there is an egg electuary made of saffron roasted within a blown egg-shell, and pounded afterwards with mustard. Many subsequent additions to the egg electuary were made, and are described to Theodoric. When used as a medicine, it must be given within the first twelve hours of the disease. By way of precaution, Pestilence Pills should be taken once or

twice a week, the aloes and myrrh in them being omitted, and a little camphor substituted in hot weather; but in cold weather they are to be taken as usual. There are other directions given for varying, according to season and constitution, their aperient quality.

Whoever feels himself to be smitten with the plague, if age and strength permit, should promptly be bled. Then also within the first six hours, and while help and advice is being sought, let there be prepared for him as a remedy six white onions, with their hearts scooped out, and filled with old treacle, in which has been put powder of ditany and tormentilla-root; cook them wrapped in moist paper under ashes, and, when cooked to softness, use a part pounded as poultice to the sores; nothing is so able to draw out the poison: mix the rest with an ounce of citron-juice and a little vinegar, squeeze and strain. Let the sick person have three ounces of the expressed juice, cover him up warmly in bed, and let him remain to perspire for six hours without food and drink. There may advantageously be mixed with such a dose a little of the egg electuary. A patient unable to bear bleeding should be purged according to his strength. But of all remedies, the best is Adam's earth, or the first matter of creation, whereof Agrippa promises elsewhere to speak.

Such was considered the best treatment of plague in days when plague was rife, and such was the advice sent by his friend at Metz during a plague year to the Bishop of Cyrene. At the same time (1518), a correspondence

arose between Cornelius and a young lawyer at Basle¹, who had heard of his rare powers, and wrote to him for counsel. He gave the counsel that he had himself obtained from Abbot John of Tritenheim, to embrace the widest field of study, and to pay especial heed to the divine writings. "He who studies law," said Agrippa, "will build up his neighbour in the state, and he who studies sacred letters will build up himself in God." He repeated the proverb he had himself received from Trithemius, about the heavy footfall of the wearied ox, and improved to his own use a pleasant interchange of letters, by requesting his new friend to make inquiry about the Commentaries on Paul to the Romans, and the other papers said to have been saved in battle for him by one of the pupils he had taught at Pavia, Christopher Schilling, of Lucerne. Recurring to this time, he expresses his old admiration of the polished life of the Italians, who were acknowledged chiefs of civilisation. "I exhort you, when you have seen Germany and France, and all the rabble of our barbarians, to go at last to Italy, which, if any one regards with open eyes, he will see that any other fatherland is base and vile compared with it. But all this, and what else I have above written, take in good part." All his Italian misfortunes have not changed his taste; still he feels that he should have thought no business in life so welcome as that of a professorship at Pavia. As for Schilling, he is at Tübingen now, studying under Reuchlin;

¹ Ep. 12-16, Lib. ii. pp. 728-734.

and Agrippa, reading Reuchlin's book on Accents, meets with Schilling's name, and is rejoiced that so worthy a disciple has found a preceptor of an excellence so rare.

A sudden journey from Metz to Cologne interrupts the course of the town advocate's every-day life¹. He has not long returned before a despatch from Theodoric encloses for him a letter from his mother, to inform him of his father's death². His father's illness was most likely the occasion of his journey. Either there was a limit to his leave of absence, or there was sufficient hope of the sick man's recovery; Cornelius did not remain to see his father die. "I grieve," he says, "most vehemently, and find but a single solace for this grief, that we must yield to the divine ordinance; for I know that God bestows upon men gifts, not indeed always pleasant, very often even of adversity, yet always useful to assist us here, or in the heavenly fatherland. For God acts in accordance with His own nature, His own essence, which is wholly goodness; therefore He ordains nothing but what is good and salutary. Nevertheless, such is my human nature, that I vehemently grieve, and the depths are stirred within me."

They are his first tears for the dead. He is thirty-two years old, and has seen many troubles, but this trouble never until now, in a year of pestilence. He writes to the Bishop Theodoric as to a loving father, whose kind

¹ Ep. 15 and 16, Lib. ii. p. 733.

² Ep. 19, Lib. ii. p. 736, in which the letters are referred to, but they are not themselves published.

words temper his grief. What words, in the honest mother tongue, Agrippa's mother wrote to her pure-hearted son, how he replied to her, these were the secrets of his inmost life, and they form no part of the revelations of the scholar.

In another part of the long letter to Theodoric, in which he pours out many thoughts of his heart to a venerable and well-trusted friend, Cornelius speaks of his new and more complete devotion to a study of Theology. He had aforetime especially delighted in researches into nature, which Theodoric seems to have stigmatised as seductive and diabolical; taught by the *Speculum* of Albertus Magnus, he had made instruments and had experimented upon nature, at much cost to himself, and with no gain but the discredit of his sin. But after he had taken in the usual way the cap and rings, as Doctor of each Faculty and of Medicine (to satisfy the wish of his own family, who thought more of the cap than of the brains¹), he had devoted himself, though late in life, wholly to the pursuit of sacred letters. In so doing, he was no doubt, by the energy of youth, likely to be led astray into erroneous theories, and he desired nothing better than that the good and wise Theodoric should be his censor and adviser, who would show him when he erred, fulfilling in that way a bishop's office, and so keep him safe within the Church's fold. At the close of this letter, though he has not been a year at Metz, Agrippa looks forward with some longing to a possible time when, in the home of his forefathers, he may

¹ Ep. 19, Lib. ii. p. 737—"qui me doctorem malunt quam doctum."

pursue, Theodoric for helper, the studies that are worthiest; and he commends himself affectionately to a liberal and learned friend, of whom we shall hear more hereafter, Hermann Count of Neuwied.

This Hermann was the son of William II. of Neuwied and Walburgis Manderscheid. He was a canon of Cologne, and afterwards in higher dignity, had charge of the cathedral, was in a later year archdeacon, and at last chancellor of the University. Hermann V. of Wied, whose sister was this Hermann's sister-in-law, had become, only in 1517, Archbishop of Cologne. The Hermann to whom Agrippa sent affectionate remembrance was a priest but twenty-seven years of age, a scholar, an author, and a little prince. He was a man sought by all the learned in his neighbourhood, who kept an open house and table to all poets, historians, critics, and sophists¹. Cornelius, when at Cologne, enjoyed his hospitality and won his friendship; to him, therefore, he sends affectionate remembrance. It may be said here that this Hermann died at the early age of thirty-nine, having written eleven books of poetry, history, and medicine.

There was nobody at Metz with poets' tastes and a true love for the society of learned men to exercise a splendid hospitality. With a physician and counsellor of the town, who wrote afterwards part of a treatise "Upon English Sweat," John of Niederbrück—Nidepontanus²—and with

¹ *Bibliotheca Coloniensis*, Hartzheim (4to, Colon. 1747), p. 137.

² See dedication to *Def. Prop. de Monog. B. Annæ*.

a pious Celestine friar, Claudius Deodatus¹, with a few more also like these, there were friendships formed ; but otherwise outside the walls of his own home Cornelius looked vainly for sympathy among his fellow-citizens. Ere long, indeed, he was engaged in battle with a powerful and bitter enemy among them. War was declared between Cornelius Agrippa, Public Orator and Advocate of Metz, and Nicolas Savin, the Chief Inquisitor.

¹ Ep. 20-25, 27-31, Lib. ii.

CHAPTER III.

RELATES A GREAT DISPUTE WITH THE DOMINICANS OF METZ: TELLS ALSO HOW AGRIPPA SAVED A VILLAGE GIRL ACCUSED OF WITCHCRAFT FROM THE CLUTCHES OF THE CHIEF INQUISITOR, AND LOST HIS OFFICE OF TOWN ADVOCATE AND ORATOR.

DINING sometimes, in the year 1519, with his friend Father Claudius Deodatus at the religious house of the Celestines in the market-place, Cornelius Agrippa used to discourse much at table on the state of man before the fall, the fall of the angels, and other matters¹. Except Father Claudius and the prior and one studious youth, none of the monks diverted their attention from their dinners to take more heed of the earnest scholar than to note that he often spoke with respect of theological inquirers who were not considered to be sound by the stationary party in the Church². They were critical times in which Cornelius Agrippa had devoted himself to the study of Theology. Luther's stand against corruption was then in the first years of its strength, and many writers who abided by the Church were labouring to clear

¹ Ep. 20, 21, Lib. ii. p. 740.

² The same; also Ep. 24, p. 742.

it of its grosser errors. Cornelius was of one mind with these. He had as yet read nothing of Luther's; no writing of his had found its way to the strict town of Metz; but what the spiritual scholar heard about the undaunted Reformer pleased him, and he was not afraid to say so openly¹, and to speak with contempt of the priests known as Luther's foremost enemies. Cornelius had read also and enjoyed all that he had met with of the writings of Erasmus. He quoted Erasmus freely, and was also just at this time seized with admiration of a venerable and gentle theologian whose reforming tendencies had made him hateful to his brethren of the Sorbonne, Jacques Faber d'Etaples, better known as Faber Stapulensis.

Now Cornelius Agrippa, whatever dignity he had received at Dôle, never became, in the eye of the world, a scholastic theologian. He was a layman and a husband. At Metz he was an advocate and a physician. Father Claudius was half won to love him, because he had consulted the wise doctor, who helped souls and bodies equally, upon his own physical infirmities. Claudius was troubled with delusions of the sense and great failing of memory, from which infirmities he was, to a very great extent, released by following the counsels of Agrippa. Such being the public life of the Town Orator and Advocate, his devotion of himself in particular to the study of Theology was in itself a matter of suspicion. It implied a dangerous tendency to the use of independent judgment. He spoke with honour, when at dinner with the monks, about sus-

¹ *Def. Prop. de Monog. B. Annae*, ad fin.

pected men,—maintaining the opinions by which they had been brought into suspicion. Matters appeared worse in the eyes of the Celestines when the friendship between Claudius and Cornelius strengthened, and it was a common thing for Claudius to spend hours in Agrippa's house, his guest and his disciple. It was to be feared that they were studying heresies together; and after Father Claudius had paid one day his usual visit, taking the youth with him who had listened to Agrippa's talk with earnest eyes, they forbade repetition of his visits. Cornelius wrote to inquire the cause of his unwonted absence, fearing that he had been affected by the malicious scandal of those who had so loudly murmured against their frequent intercourse together. Father Claudius returned a kind reply, enclosing in his parcel certain works of Erasmus and of Faber Stapulensis that Cornelius had lent him. "These teachers," he said¹, "together with yourself, I have resolved to accept and follow, for I see them to be walking in the sincere truth of Sacred Writ. Your conclusions I have copied with my own hand in stolen hours (for I am too much occupied, and get almost no leisure), nor have I ventured to depute this task to anybody, because our brothers are loutish and idiotic, persecuting enviously all who love good literature. They decry not a little Master Jacques Faber, also you and me; so that some of them have attacked me with no trifling insults. Therefore I have thought best to hide your conclusions, lest their hatred become wilder. Only the

¹ Ep. 24, Lib. ii. p. 742.

father prior and that youth who was with me when last at your house, congratulate you in the matter. The madness of the other ignorant men condemns unread, even unseen, that book of Master Faber, and all those who believe in it or follow it. There is another reason why many who are harsh and unlettered rise up against you, because you have been sharply and firmly defending a woman accused of heresy and witchcraft, and have taken this prey away from the Inquisitor. But be you constant still in the defence of what is true, and of strong heart against the insane hate of the unlearned, that the truth may shine."

Here are two battles, both of them perilous, fought at one time, and in each case the man with whom our brave Agrippa grapples is a dangerous Dominican. In one case the antagonist is Claudius Salini¹, prior of their monastery at Metz; in the other case, it is Nicolas Savin², their master, a bloodthirsty man, who wields the powers of the Inquisition as a scourge of heretics. Bitter experience has changed Agrippa's tone in dealing with this sort of men. He thunders human wrath against them now; they are to him as Pharisees.

The battle first commenced was that over the book of Faber d'Etaples upon Three and One, in deprecation and refutation of the common legend about St. Anne, the mother of the Virgin Mary, which declared her to have had three husbands in succession, and by each husband a daughter, and each daughter a Mary. This legend

¹ Ep. 25, Lib. ii. p. 743.

² Ep. 40, Lib. ii. p. 755.

Faber declared to be founded upon no proper authority, and to be one of the corruptions that had in course of time been suffered to obscure the true beauty and purity of the lives of the Saints. Agrippa thought the legend an exceedingly unclean one, and adopted gladly Faber's reasoning upon it¹.

The venerable Jacques Faber, born at Etaples, in Picardy, was a man of the gentlest disposition, and at that time eighty-three years old. He was very small in stature, but endowed with a great wit. When in early life he commenced studying in Paris, the example of his industry, together with his kindliness, caused more than a slight improvement in the habits of the other scholars; after studying successfully Philosophy and Mathematics, he had devoted himself to Theology, and became a doctor of the Sorbonne, but very soon fell into disfavour with the Sorbonne for his free criticism of the theological writings issued under its authority. In the year 1519 he was known to be watching with a favourable interest the efforts made by Luther. The character of his life cannot be better expressed than by a glance forward toward its end. Old as he was, he survived by two years the young Cornelius Agrippa. For his well-speaking of Luther he was ejected from Paris, and formally deprived of his doctorate by the Sorbonne. He found shelter at Nerac, and lived a quiet life, cherishing privately his own opinions. At the age of a hundred he went to Strasburg to talk with Bucer on religion, and he is said to have died

¹ *H. C. A. De B. Annæ Monog. Propositiones.*

at the age of one hundred and one, in the manner following: When dining one day at the table of his friend and protectress, Margaret of Navarre, it was observed that he was weeping. He was asked the reason of his tears, and replied that he was afraid to meet God at the judgment-seat, because of his faint advocacy of the Gospel. He had lived at ease instead of bearing witness to the persecuted truth. Then he asked that, except his books, whatever he possessed should, when he was dead, be given to the poor, and presently retired. He went unnoticed to his chamber, and to bed. There, turning his face to the wall, God only being near, he yielded up his spirit. Against this good man now no Christian will be disposed to echo his last words of self-reproach. Faber d'Etaples bore such witness as became his nature. He was averse from strife. Enough for him that he did not flinch from following the light he saw; that when tried, he was found true to his convictions. Actively to assert them against error scarcely was in his nature as a young man, and was hardly to be asked of him in his old age, for it was in his old age only that there came for Europe the necessity of a religious struggle. Moreover, his books were not inoperative. Here, for example, we find that, through them, he has helped a worthy student, and has won the reverence of the pure-hearted Agrippa.

Upon the subject of the monogamy of Anne, the mother of the Virgin, Cornelius was led to dispute chiefly by the violence of those who maintained an opposite opinion. He had been expressing Faber's views upon the subject

to one of the Deacons of the town, Nicolas Roscius, in the course of private conversation¹. Roscius maintained the popular opinion, and the two friendly controversialists agreed to submit their argument to umpires. At about the same time Agrippa's business carried him for a few days away from Metz; he may have been sent on a mission by his chiefs, or have gone to Cologne to assist at the family arrangements consequent upon his father's death. When he returned, he found that at least three priests had constituted themselves umpires in the discussion between the Town Advocate and Deacon Roscius, that they had denounced their fellow-townsmen violently from their pulpits, and had attacked also the venerable and most gentle Faber with a fierce invective. First there was² a brother of the convent of St. Francis of Observance, named Dominic Delphinus, second to none in virulence and insolence of speech, who had reviled the modest Faber Stapulensis as a fool, an insane blockhead, without faith and ignorant of sacred letters, and had spoken of his books as reprobated and condemned, erroneous in doctrine, hostile to faith and the Church, writings to be read at peril of the soul, and proper only for the flames. Nicolas Orici, of the convent of the Minorite Friars or Cordeliers, was almost as vehement; but the most prominent denouncer was Claudius Salini, prior of the Dominicans,

¹ *H. C. A. De Beatissime Annæ Monogamia ac unico Puerperio, propositiones abbreviatæ et articulatæ, juxta disceptationem Jacobi Fabri Stapulensis in libro de Tribus et Una.* Op. Tom. ii. p. 588.

² Ep. 25, Lib. ii. p. 748, for the following.

who had lately been invested with the doctorate at Paris. Few dared, few cared to resist the authority of these reverend fathers; thus it was then that when Cornelius returned to Metz he found himself regarded almost as a public criminal. He wished, he said, he could have been upon the spot to rebuke these arrogant men to their faces. As it was, however, he did what he could; that is to say, he drew up and promulgated a set of propositions¹, flatly contradicting all that had been said and done, and to these he invited answer, promising a full reply upon the argument against him.

There is no gentle spirit of expostulation here: it is all hot denunciation with a quickened pulse and a flushed cheek. These monks appear now to Agrippa the rude clog upon all progress and the soil upon all purity. They darken heaven for him with their sensual legends, and they preach a gospel of foul passions. He glows with a just anger against the wrong done to a virtuous old man, whose worst fault is his love of peace; he resents, also, what seems to him the lewdness put into the story of a saint whom in that time many pious scholars honoured for her purity, and in whose honour his old friend Trithemius, among others, had written a special book²; nor was the private grief the least that stung him to a passionate retaliation; he had been a second time made by this class of men the object of denunciation in the house of God.

¹ Their title is cited in the last note but one; they are on pages 588-593.

² *De Laudibus Sanctissimæ Matris Annæ*. Moguntini, 1494.

I do not mean by this class of men the monks, but a certain section of the monks. Everywhere in the monasteries there were pious people, and there were many learned, a few wise. If Agrippa found his enemies among the monks, out of the same community he chose also the greater number of his friends. His views upon monastic life were not contemptuous; he honoured it above all others, in ideal, and for that reason was the more incensed at those by whom it was dishonoured. His opinions upon this subject are fully stated in a declamation written by him for an abbot¹ who was to address his brotherhood. They are summed up in a contrast between an active and a contemplative life, typified respectively by Martha and Mary, Martha troubled about many things, but Mary chooser of that better part. The true monk's life Cornelius regarded as a life of spiritual aspiration. His whole training as a scholar led him to admire and reverence it; but the true monk, according to his theory, was bound to make it his whole business to become like-minded with his heavenly Master, and there would be no true monk, he said, who was not poor, and chaste, and humble. Men who fed daily on rich meat, were lewd and arrogant, who preached a gospel not of peace and mercy, seemed to him, therefore, only the more hateful for the profession they had made, as brethren vowed especially to Christ. How widely the monastic system was corrupted in the days of Luther I need not describe; it was not the system, it was

¹ H. C. A. *Sermo de Vita Monastica, per venerabilem Abbatem in Brouuiller habitus*. Opuscula (ed. 1583), sig. fol. K vii.-L v.

only the corruption in it, that Cornelius denounced. It did not enter into his philosophy to see how naturally one had bred the other.

How the Dominicans or Preaching Friars by wild antics worked upon the people, we have read elsewhere, and need suspect little exaggeration when Cornelius relates¹ that the Prior Claudius Salini had worried him from the pulpit "with mad barkings and marvellous gesticulations, with outstretched fingers, with hands cast forward and suddenly snatched back again, with grinding of the teeth, foaming, spitting, stamping, leaping, cuffing up and down, with tearing at the scalp and gnawing at the nails." You can only, he said, quell such men with invective; and apologising for his own rude tone in a dedication of what he had written in the controversy to his friend John Nidepontanus, he cites the old proverb, that you can only match a mad dog with a wolf. To the reader he says, that the recent martyrologies and professed legends of the Saints are full of such prodigious lies, that they make Christianity a laughing-stock in the eyes of the Jews, Turks, and Infidels. The story of the Blessed Anne's three husbands and three daughters Mary, is one of them. It is false, says his first proposition. "Jacques Faber d'Etaples, gymnosophist of Paris," says his second, "has written a book called *On the Three and the One*, upon the single marriage and the single childbirth of St. Anne. Whoever," adds the proposition following, "tells the people in public assembly that this book ought to be burnt, and

¹ In the prefatory letter to the *Propositiones de B. Anna Monog.*

wishes every copy of it in the fire, is a presumptuous man, judging falsely, and an evil-spoken detractor, doing atrocious wrong to that book and its author, and all literature. He who is offended by the book is unlearned and obstinate in ignorance, because the book itself is lustrous with the authority of Scripture and of reason. He who is scandalised by the author, is a wicked hypocrite, because that author is gentle and of humble heart. But if any one ventures to come into the lists against that book armed with Scripture and with reason, him I will judge to be a brave and a strong man, worthy to be met in conflict (for the sake of truth, not of vainglory) by some learned champion. Whoever speaks against that book in other fashion, is a slanderer and foe to truth."

Lies in his throat, in fact; for here we have a doughty soldier challenging to argument in the true tournament style, and his intention is to deal rough blows at his opponent. The precise opinion which he proclaims "scandalous and impious," is that St. Anne first married Joachim and gave birth—though by immaculate conception—to the Virgin Mary. Then she married Cleophas and gave birth to another Mary, that Mary marrying Alphæus and becoming mother to James the Less, Joseph the Just, and Simon Judas. Thirdly, St. Anne married Salome and gave birth to another Mary, that Mary marrying Zebedee and becoming mother to James and John the Evangelist.

This opinion, he asserts, is contrary to evidence of Scripture,—of the types, the prophecies, the Gospels—contrary to ancient Eastern custom, contrary to the pos-

sibility of nature, contrary to all probability, and calculated to bring into contempt the purity of her who was the mother of the Virgin. It is unscriptural, unspiritual, and tends to the debasement of believers, not to edifying. The true doctrine is that St. Anne being past the age of child-bearing, she was married to one man, and became the immaculate mother of one daughter, the Virgin Mary.

Upon the statement of this case in eighteen Propositions, Salini the Dominican replied, and against his reply Cornelius issued a not very short Defence of his Propositions¹, arguing each of the eighteen points in detail, and attacking in detail Salini's efforts to refute them. The tone in which Agrippa carries through his refutation of Salini, is precisely that which Milton used against Salmasius. He attacks him scornfully for everything,—for his spelling, and his grammar, and his Latin style, as well as upon all points of his reasoning, and of course always for his insolence. He attacks him as a Thomist, treats him as a dog, and calls him dog. The Dominicans nearly all of them belonged to the school of theology called Thomist, after Thomas Aquinas, hotly opposed by the Scotists, and afterwards by the Franciscans and Jesuits. The word is much used as a reproach by Agrippa in this argument, because it was one part of Thomist doctrine that the Virgin Mary was conceived and born in sin.

Of Salini's argument we may content ourselves with

¹ *H. C. A. Defensio Propositionum prænarratarum contra quendam Dominicanum, illarum Impugnatorem, qui sanctissimam Deiparæ Virginis matrem Annam conatur ostendere polygamam.* Op. Tom. ii. pp. 594-668.

two short glimpses. He argues against the book of Jacques Faber, and has lately been to Paris, yet he does not rightly know the name of the Parisian doctor, and alludes to him only as Peter Faber¹. He counts up the advantages supposed to be derived from St. Anne's two supernumerary husbands, and says, "surely it is better for the Church to have had John, the two Jameses, the Apostles Simon and Jude, than the widowhood of Anne²." In Agrippa's argument there occur two declamatory passages which show distinctly the views taken by him of the strife arising in the Church. In this one of his works there occurs also a brief narrative of his career, given in reply to Salini's assertion that he is unlettered—one of those useful little autobiographic fragments common in the works of writers who belonged to that free-spoken time³. And now, here is free speech to the Dominicans⁴: "I am not ignorant that in the Gospel and in the administration of the Church you are not set apart, but that you occupy yourselves for the sake of lucre with the Pope's indulgences, the business of preaching, the confessional, burial rites, and other offices of the Church. If these assemblies and these ministrations brought you poverty instead of property, I know you would not thunder your hyperboles in church, you would not bind the people with your power over purgatory by so many prodigious fables, so many ghostly portents, so many markets for indulgences, so many monopolies of alms, and financial laws. You would not scent like vultures the corpses of the rich, and come so craftily

¹ Ibid. p. 662.² Ibid. p. 626.³ Ibid. p. 596.⁴ Ibid. p. 600.

about them; you would not, through the secrets of those who are admitted to the confessional, fleece a rude population more than by the tyranny of Phalaris." Agrippa dwells upon more extortions, and upon their playing upon women's fears. "I speak," he says, "from knowledge and experience, speaking not of all, but many who being vowed to poverty are overcome by avarice and greed, and convert alms into taxes, and seem to have given up their own goods only that they may impudently beg the goods of others. I may say this, too, that I can think of no easier way, no more deceitful, cunning, secret way of collecting cash, goods, worldly wealth, than by abuse of these indulgences, joined to luxurious beggary."

Elsewhere he writes in the same work yet more emphatically as a man whose sympathy is with the Reformers. He writes of those, who like Salini, "towards God false¹, and towards man unjust, have slandered the truth, and desired to bring hatred down on its promoters. So did of old time Celsus against Christ, Julian the Apostate against the Gospel, Diotrephes against John the Evangelist, Apollophanes against Dionysius the Areopagite, Ischyrras against Athanasius, John of Antioch against Cyril of Alexandria, Grapaldus and William of Ware against Saint Bernard. The same has been done in our times by some poor little bishop (whose crudities I once read, though his name does not occur to me) against Giovanni Pico, Count of Mirandola, and Jacob Hochstraten,

¹ Ibid. pp. 660-661.

of the order of Dominicans, inquisitor at Cologne, against an old teacher of mine, most learned in each faculty, Peter of Ravenna. The same brotherkin, with Arnold de Tungris and other sworn calumniators of Cologne, insulted the most upright and learned man, Reuchlin of Pfortzheim, and spread the most wicked lies about the world to their own everlasting infamy. So did Wigandus, the beginning and the support of the Dominican heresy at Berne; so did that Dominican brotherkin and Thomist doctor against the illustrious doctor in each faculty, Sebastian Brand, now chancellor and councillor at Zurich, as well as against other famous doctors, being and speaking evil. So did Sylvester Prierias, though master of the palace to the Pope at Rome, brotherkin of the same order of Dominicans and Thomist doctor, inveigh against that most combative doctor, Martin Luther of Wittenberg, not without giving proof of his own ignorance. Even John Eckius, although an erudite man, and with scholastic learning, battled against the same Luther, and against Andrew Bodenstein of Carlstadt, with ill-success and to his own mishap. Nor are there wanting envious and pestilent detractors who join you, Salini, in calumny against Erasmus of Rotterdam, and Jacques Faber d'Etaples, whom certain theologists of Paris, because he denied that crude translation of the New Testament, which you, and sophist fellows like you, call Jerome's, to be Jerome's, and proved by arguments that it was not Jerome's, have wished to condemn as a heretic, blackening themselves eternally and universally with their own ignorance and malice,

not without also bringing ignominy on the whole Sorbonne."

Bold speech like this could only invite persecution, and this, as we shall see presently, was not the only way in which Cornelius was making himself odious in a town noted for bigotry. Metz was most cruel to the Jews, and met alike by cruelty and treachery the first efforts of the Reformers to obtain hearing within its walls. The German Lutherans desired much through Metz to introduce the leaven of their bold opinions into France. At first they were met by direct persecution, and years afterwards, when it was politically requisite to promise them a chapel, and they went out to worship on the faith of such a promise, they were cruelly betrayed to slaughter. Jean le Clerc, the first man who dared to preach the Reformed doctrine in Metz, not long after the date of Agrippa's battling with the monks, was by the order of Nicolas Savin, the Inquisitor, publicly whipped through the streets on several successive days; and in the year following, before the convent of the Celestines, the ingenuity of Savin procured for him a cruel martyrdom: his nose was first cut off, then his right hand, then a hot iron crown was placed upon his head, after which he was burnt alive¹. From the hand of this Nicolas Savin, a burly, ignorant, and vicious man, who years afterwards was expelled from Metz for civil crime, but returned and lived

¹ *Histoire Générale de Metz, par des Religieux Bénédictins de la Congrégation de St. Vannes.* Metz, 1775. Tom. iii. p. 8.

in his monastery unmolested¹, nothing remains but a sermon preached on the occasion of his publicly degrading brother Chatelain, an Austin friar, who preached Lutheran discourses, and was burnt for them at about the time of Le Clerc's martyrdom. The text of this Christian discourse was John xx. 27—"Be not faithless but believing²."

Such were the ministers of Christ in whom Cornelius did not believe, and against whom his soul was at last rebelling fiercely. While he was struggling with Salini, he had strength also, at the same time, bravely and humanely to face the Inquisitor himself, and save a helpless girl from butchery. He was destroying his own worldly prospects, risking alike income and fair fame; but he was being true to his own soul, and to its Maker.

At about this time Father Claudius went to Paris upon business connected with his monastery, and was glad to think that he should there meet with Jacques Faber³. Agrippa took the opportunity of forwarding a loving letter to the Christian teacher by whose writings he had been assisted, and enclosed a copy of the Propositions, in which he had defended his fair fame against the monks, by whom he had been slandered. The good doctor received Claudius with pleasure⁴, and returned by him to Cornelius Agrippa the first letter in a kindly correspondence⁵, sending him also sundry books that had been written on the contro-

¹ Letter to Nidepontanus, prefixed to the *Prop. de B. A. Monog.*

² *Histoire Générale de Metz.*

⁴ Ep. 29, Lib. ii. p. 745.

³ Ep. 27, Lib. ii. p. 744.

⁵ Ep. 28, Lib. ii. p. 755.

versy provoked by his argument against the three husbands of St. Anne. But the gentle old man shook his head with grave and kindly deprecation over the harsh tone of his young advocate. This is his first letter: "Most honourable doctor, the venerable father Claudius Deodatus gave me your letter, which I read with pleasure. Who would not read gladly what he knows to have come from a candid and well-wishing mind? Do not, I beseech you, take it ill that many oppose what I have written, either about the Magdalene or about St. Anne. I think that, at some future day, the truth of these things will become clearer, about which I decide as an arguer only, not with rash authority. Wherefore, I beg you, let your goodwill to no person be wounded through this matter. Error has decay in itself, and will at last fall of itself, even without being struck." In his second letter, and by another opportunity, he says, "I would rather that the affair about Anne were discussed without contention among the learned; but if, through the malignity of the times, and the perversity of man's wit, this cannot be, and you have a disposition to contend, see that you by no means do it through zeal for my credit, but only for the defence of truth, and out of devotion to the Mother of God and the most blessed Anne. . . . In my opinion, he is happier who does not contend than he who does. Act, therefore, if possible, so prudently as neither to offend God nor your neighbour." This letter was written on the day after Trinity Sunday, in the year 1519, upon seeing the

Propositions only. In September or October, Cornelius forwarded a copy of the defence of the Propositions¹, regretting that he had not time to copy them in duplicate, because he was obliged to visit Germany, this probably referring to another visit upon family affairs to Cologne, where there lived his widowed mother on her little patrimony. Faber, replying on the fourteenth of November², regretted the hostility Agrippa was bringing down upon himself; the most excellent and wise Reuchlin, he said, had suffered much. If the dissertation of Cornelius was to be printed, he advised careful revision, as "the times yield wonderful critics." What Faber is said at last to have deplored in his own character even these letters show, gentle and kindly as they are.

We leave the subject of St. Anne to note another indication of Agrippa's disposition at this time. A friend and doctor of law, Claudius Cantiuncula, whose relation to the Church is not on a safe footing, has found it requisite to quit Metz suddenly. Agrippa finds that he has gone to Basle, and writes to him³, "I know, and do you firmly believe, that it is well with you if you are safe and free away from here. What else I wish you to know I doubt whether I can commit safely to a letter. It remains only that I beg you to send me the works of Martin Luther, as well as the Short Law Cases in a portable volume that were once printed at Basle, and anything truly theological in which you know I take the most delight. Be diligent

¹ Ep. 35, Lib. ii. p. 750.

² Ep. 36, Lib. ii. pp. 750, 751.

³ Ep. 26, Lib. ii. p. 744.

to recover for me, if you can, my Commentaries on St. Paul, from Christopher Schilling of Lucerne, and set me right with your true friends, as I flinch never from defending you during your absence."

Claudius Cantiuncula—he became afterwards a well known jurisconsult, wrote law-books, and was Chancellor of Einsilheim, in Upper Alsatia—Claudius Cantiuncula replies, about their life of struggle, in a spirit contrary to Faber's¹: "Virtue, without an energy, decays. Believe me, my Agrippa, that up to this time I have searched all Basle, and can procure nowhere the works of Luther; they have all been long since sold, but are, it is said, to be reprinted at Zurich. The Short Cases you want, nobody has. I give you, however, a Compendium of true Theology, issued by Erasmus, a work, Henry, which if I do not mistake, will give you pleasure; the Conclusions of Luther and Eckius declaimed this year, and also some trifles about the Emperor. Farewell. May 21, 1519."

The Emperor had died, aged sixty, on the eleventh of the previous January. Maximilian's hereditary successor was Charles V., and Agrippa's fealty as a German noble thus became due to another master. The succession to the empire was contended for between Charles and the King of France. Agrippa might ere long be serving Charles; he could not tell. "I cleave to this town," he wrote, on the second of June, from Metz², "fastened by I know not what nail: but so cleaving, that I cannot determine how to go or stay. I never was in any place

¹ Ep. 32, Lib. ii. p. 748.

² Ep. 33, Lib. ii. p. 749.

from which I could depart more willingly than (with submission to you) from this city of Metz, the stepmother of all good scholarship and virtue." He wrote to one of her own sons, the young doctor of law, who had been forced into voluntary exile from his native town and from his parents.

"My Agrippa," Cantiuncula wrote back¹, "soundest of all friends, greeting: I received your two letters sent by Sbrolius"² (a poet), "and thank you for commending me to the friendship of so learned and humane a man. . . . Nothing new of Luther's has come out; if anything appears, it shall quickly be communicated to you. Farewell, and love me as you are wont: remember me also to my parents. Salute your incomparable, exemplary wife, and your son, who is so full of promise. Sbrolius also sends good wishes to these, though he has no love for your elder famulus, an unkempt fellow, who deserves, he says, to be turned out of your house, and drudge his sordid days out at a handmill. Basle, August 27th, 1519."

Agrippa's son is in another letter called "Little Ascanius." His name was Aymon³. He was but six or seven years old at this time, and was his only son, though not his only child. I think, for a reason that will afterwards appear, a daughter may have died at Metz, a little one, very dear to his wife Louisa, and that it was buried in the church of St. Cross, at which they worshipped, by the

¹ Ep. 34, Lib. ii. p. 749.

² Richard Sbrolius, a scholar and court poet, had translated Maximilian's *Devordank* into Latin verse. He taught in Swiss universities, and afterwards served Charles V.

³ Ep. 38, 49, 58, Lib. iii. pp. 804, 9, 17.

good pastor, who was one of their best friends, John Roger Brennon. Brennon was a man very like-minded with Agrippa upon matters of honour and religion. "When I am gone," Agrippa used to tell him, as they sat together, "when they have me no longer at Metz to worry, they will worry you instead, my friend¹." There were strong friendships formed by those who worked together in the midst of strife, resisting ignorance and superstition.

At Vuopy, a neighbouring village, to north-westward of Metz, on the other side of the Moselle, there lived a young woman, a poor man's wife, whose mother had been burnt for a witch². This source of endless horror and distress to her, was also her own crime. As the mother had been, so, it was said, the daughter must be; and one night a crowd of rustics, who had been drinking together, broke into her house, dragged her with much ill-treatment from her bed, and locked her in a prison of their own invention. There, without any authority whatever, they detained her until the chapter, moved by urgent representations, brought her into the town for proper trial before the official of the Court of Metz. The rustics were allowed a certain time to decide whether they would accuse before the civil power, or denounce the woman to the Inquisition. On the appointed day eight scoundrels came forward as accusers; they were ordered to give prisoners as pledges of the good faith of their suit against the woman, and demurring to

¹ Ep. 44, Lib. ii. p. 759.

² Ep. 40, Lib. ii. pp. 755, 756, for the main narrative, compared with letters 38 and 39, covers all that follows on this subject.

this, were allowed two days' more reflection by advice of Nicolas Savin, the Inquisitor, who sat with the Judge. During those two days the Inquisitor received eggs, butter, and cakes, the Judge gold pieces; and when the case was next heard, the miserable woman was sent to Vuopyy, in the hands of her accusers, or of four of them, the other four having been rejected as notorious ruffians. This was done suddenly, without the cognisance of Cornelius Agrippa, who had come manfully forward to protect the woman in her helplessness, and had argued publicly as a jurisconsult, privately as a Christian, the illegality and immorality of previous proceedings. Especially he had opposed the right of the Dominican, Nicolas Savin, to exercise his office of Inquisitor, or sit beside the Judge. He had appeared in the court as advocate of the accused on that occasion when the cause was postponed for two days, had been reviled, he says, by "that brotherkin (I err), that great, swollen, and fat brother, Nicolas Savin, of the Dominican Convent, Inquisitor¹," and threatened with a process against himself also, as favourer of heretics; he had been in that spirit turned out of court. On the same evening he wrote a letter to the Judge, showing the law in writing that he was not suffered to explain by word of mouth. For his being called a favourer of heretics, "the rascally Inquisitor," he says, "as you may see by these his words, condemns the simple woman as a heretic, when the cause of action scarcely has been stated.

¹ Ep. 38, Lib. ii. p. 752. This is the letter, pp. 752-754, from which the succeeding passages are quoted.

I seek fair hearing for her while she is untried and uncondemned, and the vile scoffer calls me favourer of heresy ! Have you admitted this man to sit on the bench with you ? The lie is on his head, the infamous calumniator, and he thinks to quell me with his threats ; but, to the best of my calling, to the best of my constancy, I will not desist from the defence of this innocent woman. Let this brotherkin, priest, or Levite, turn his heart from her. I will be pitiful with all my power, and call myself Samaritan, that is to say not favourer of heretics, but a disciple of him, who when it was said to him that he was a Samaritan, and had a devil, denied that he had a devil, but did not deny that he was a Samaritan." Presently he tells how, on the evening before, Savin, though he had never before visited the place, went to Vuopy, feasted with the girl's accusers, and took presents from them. "But," he adds, "the hypocrite dissembles his iniquity under the shadow of the Gospel !" He ends a letter, touching upon sundry legal points, by urging that in the case in hand there is no heresy at all, or none that comes at any time under the control of an inquisitor. For no inquisitor has cognisance or jurisdiction on matters of suspicion. Heresy must be manifest before it can fall under inquisitorial correction : therefore the monk must be excluded. "I pray you," he says, "not to despise what I have written, unless indeed, even from these privileges, the poor are excluded. If you are so persuaded, laws help us in vain, and I have no need to discuss their meaning. But I hope better things from your integrity,

and have little distrust concerning that bloodthirsty monk. Farewell. From my study,—with all speed. In this city of Metz, 1519.” He wrote to a corrupt judge, as we have seen. The woman, given, on the next appointed day, into the power of her enemies, was dragged back by them to Vuopypy, beaten and insulted on the way. She was then thrown into a filthy place of durance—filthy it must have been to have been called in those days “worse than penal”—suffering under the injuries she had received, and deprived of rest by night or day, while her accusers were at liberty, drinking and playing with their trenchers. After some days, John Leonard, the official of the court at Metz, gave hearing to the case in the village itself, which lay beyond the circle of his jurisdiction. Then the unhappy creature was proceeded against contrary to the tenor of the law, by a double suit at once, by civil action and by inquisition. Her advocate, Agrippa, being absent, her husband not permitted access to the place of trial, lest he should interpose objection or appeal, “by the advice,” says Cornelius, writing an account of the case to his friend Cantiuncula, at Basle¹—“by the advice of that great bloated and fat brute, the Inquisitor, more cruel than the very executioner, the poor little woman, by virtue of the before-named stupid book (the ‘Malleus Maleficarum’), was exposed to the question under torture. But at last the civil magistrate himself, and those who were appointed questioners and censors, having gone away smitten with horror at the savage

¹ The 88th letter of Book II. already cited.

spectacle, the woman was left in the hands of the executioner and that Inquisitor, only her accusers and enemies being present, but the judge and censors absent, and among these she was then racked with atrocious torments. Carried back to her dungeon, at the hands of her enemies she suffered more ill-treatment, and was iniquitously deprived of her appointed food and water. At length, the iniquity becoming known, she was brought back to Metz, by order of the chapter."

By a strange chance it happened that the unjust judge, John Leonard, had fallen sick, and was haunted by the tortured woman's agonies upon his death-bed. He expressed horror at Savin's cruelty, and sent a special messenger to the chapter, pleading for the victim with the eloquence of his remorse, and to the Inquisitor Savin he sent, by the hands of a notary, his written judgment that the woman was innocent, or, if suspected, that she was purged of offence by her late sufferings, and by all means to be set free. But she was not set free. Nicolas Savin took the writing addressed to him by the dying judge, as an admission of his jurisdiction, and demanded that the miserable woman be delivered up to him to be exposed to a more searching torture, and then burnt. Cornelius was indefatigable, and Louisa had reason to love her husband for the noble energy with which he spent his days in working all the powers of the law, seeking out witnesses, and by public and by private pleading, ever active in a work of mercy, careless of the ruin it might bring to his own worldly reputation.

To the successor of the deceased magistrate, as soon as he was appointed, Cornelius sent this appeal¹:

“ You have seen lately, most honourable man, from the acts themselves, those impious articles of a most iniquitous information by virtue of which brother Nicolas Savin, of the Dominican convent, Inquisitor of heretics, has fraudulently dragged into his slaughter-house this innocent woman, in spite of God and justice, in spite of law and equity, contrary to Christian conscience, brotherly kindness, contrary to sacerdotal custom, the profession of his rule, the form of laws and canons: and has also, as a wicked man, wickedly and wrongfully exposed her to atrocious and enormous torments: whereby he has earned for himself a name of cruelty that will not die, as the lord official John Leonard, your predecessor now departed, himself testified upon his death-bed: and the lords of the chapter themselves know it with abhorrence. Among those articles of accusation one and the first is, that the mother of the said woman was burnt for witchcraft. I have excepted against this man as impertinent, intrusive, and incompetent to exercise in this case the judicial function; but lest you be led astray by false prophets who claim to be Christ, and are Antichrist, I pray your reverence to bear with a word of help, and only pay attention to a conversation lately held with me upon the position of this article, by the before-named bloodthirsty brother. For he asserted superciliously that the fact was in the highest degree decisive, and enough to warrant torture; and not

¹ Ep. 89, Lib. ii. pp. 754, 755.

unreasonably he asserted it according to the knowledge of his sect, which he produced presently out of the depths of the 'Malleus Maleficarum' and the principles of peripatetic Theology, saying: 'It must be so, because it is the custom with witches, from the very first, to sacrifice their infants to the demons, and besides that' (he said), 'commonly, or often, their infants are the result of intercourse with incubi. Thus it happens that in their offspring, as with an hereditary taint, the evil sticks.' O egregious sophism! Is it thus that in these days we theologise? Do figments like these move us to the torturing of harmless women? Is there no grace in baptism, no efficacy in the priests bidding: 'Depart, unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost,' if, because an impious parent has been sacrificed, the offspring must be given to the devil? Let any one who will, believe in this opinion, that incubi can produce offspring in the flesh. What is the fruit of this impossible position, if it be admitted, unless, according to the heresy of the Faustinians and Donatists, we get a greater evil as result? But to speak as one of the faithful, what matters it if one is the child of an incubus, what hurt is it to have been devoted as an infant to the devil? Are we not all from the nature of our humanity born one mass of sin, malediction, and eternal perdition, children of the devil, children of the Divine wrath, and heirs of damnation, until by the grace of baptism Satan is cast out, and we are made new creatures in Jesus Christ, from whom none can be separated, except by his own offence. You see now the worth of this position as a plea for judgment,

at enmity with law, perilous to receive, scandalous to propound. Farewell, and either avoid or banish this blaspheming brotherkin. Written this morning in the city of Metz." Delivered doubtless as soon as the ink was dry.

Thus, both as lawyer and as theologian, Cornelius Agrippa laboured, and he won his cause. He brought the Inquisitor into discredit and made of him a by-word for a little time. The chapter excluded him from jurisdiction in the case, the woman received absolution from the vicar of the church at Metz, and her enemies were fined a hundred francs¹ for unjust accusation of the innocent.

That was nearly the last cause pleaded among the citizens at Metz by their Town Advocate and Orator. He had expended his own reputation on the work. To have carried on simultaneously against the Dominicans two disputes open to a perilous misinterpretation, was to have made an enemy of the whole order, and of every corrupt monk in the town. He had many good friends there: Master Raynald, a physician; the family of the young lawyer Cantiuncula, who had retired to Basle; Tyrius, a clockmaker; Jacopo, a bookseller; a notary of the adjoining township, Baccarat; James and Andrew Charbon; and Pierre Michel, a learned canonist, native of Metz, who was versed in many kinds of literature, was afterwards honoured of princes, and became Abbot of St. Arnoul². He was in close friendship and correspondence with the monk

¹ Ep. 46, Lib. ii. p. 763.

² Ep. 43, Lib. ii. p. 759.

Chatelain¹, whom Nicolas Savin soon afterwards expelled from his order and committed to the flames for preaching Lutheran discourses. These were powerless against the mass. Among his special enemies we should name Claudius Drouvyn², an athletic Dominican. His special friend at Metz was John Roger Brennon, curate of St. Cross.

Preached against in the churches and avoided in the streets, out of the narrow circle of his household friends regarded with suspicion, the vocation of Cornelius was gone at Metz; it was not there that he could found a quiet home. Directly after he had assured the success of all his pleading against the Inquisitor, he accepted the consequences of the course he had pursued, and asked permission of the deacons to resign his office and be gone. Leave was granted readily, and after brief preparation, with his fortunes for the third time wrecked, Cornelius Agrippa, towards the close of January, 1520³, journeyed with wife and son through wintry weather to his mother at Cologne. "He was hunted from this town," say the Benedictine monks, who wrote a copious history of Metz⁴,—"he was hunted from this town in 1520."

¹ Ep. 45 and 47, Lib. ii.

² Ep. 44, Lib. ii. p. 761.

³ Compare dates of letters 42 and 43, Lib. ii.

⁴ *Histoire de Metz, par des Bénédictins*, Tom. ii. p. 700. "Il fut chassé de cette ville en 1520. Il a passé pendant sa vie pour un grand sorcier, et est mort en réputation de fort mauvais Chrétien." He is already "fort mauvais Chrétien," but the character for sorcery is not yet earned.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM METZ TO COLOGNE.

LEAVE to quit Metz was obtained from the Deacons on the twenty-fifth of January¹, and a few days afterwards Cornelius Agrippa set out with his family upon the journey to Cologne, travelling in spite of heavy rains, not without risk of being stopped by floods². At Cologne he had a mother and a sister³ living on the little patrimony that remained after his father's death. It would maintain them all while he was seeking a new field of labour for himself. What the perplexed scholar could earn he earned as a physician, for it was as doctor of medicine that he proposed to make his next attempt to climb the hill of life⁴. He never had encouragement to settle in his native town. As often as he returned thither, and truly

¹ Ep. 42, Lib. ii. p. 758.

² Ep. 44, Lib. ii. p. 759. "Condolui," says Brennon, "vices tuas, per-tinuique, ne tibi cœlo cadentes imbres iter intercluderent."

³ Ep. 44, Lib. ii. p. 762.

⁴ Ep. 15, Lib. iii. p. 789.

as he felt bound to it by the ties of home, the city of Cologne, and even his relations out of his own actual home, denied him honour¹. The University of Cologne had become known as the head-quarters of the men who directed against Reuchlin, and those who were at all like-minded with him, the attacks of all the blockheads in the Church. For favourers of Luther there was in Cologne no tolerance. It was in spirit another Metz, and by this time, as will presently be evident, Cornelius Agrippa had arrived at theological opinions and sympathies with which the air of Geneva, his wife's birthplace, agreed better than that of any city in which priests of the old school were paramount.

We have seen, too, how he went to Cologne with his spirit chafed by the bigotry and ignorance of people of this class. They have taught him to speak bitter words². Henceforth he is against them, and they are against him. For the first few months after his return to the paternal walls, while he could do no more than associate himself in friendship with the few liberal and learned men whom his town tolerated, among whom Hermann Count of Neuwied was the most conspicuous, with these friends it was his chief pleasure to agree in adverse criticism on his late antagonists³. The heat of the fierce conflict did not

¹ Ep. 26, Lib. vii. p. 1041.

² Ep. 48, Lib. ii. p. 759.

³ Ep. 50, Lib. ii. p. 768. "Ubi invicem cum doctissimis viris non absque jucundissimo fructu læte convivemus qui jam Fratrum illorum Theosophistarum verboromas linguas adeò excantavimus, ut amplius ne murire audeant."

instantly subside; his private labour was the preparing of his disputation with Salini for the press, and he was proposing to print with his own thesis the whole of Salini's argument for the three husbands of St. Anne¹. It was in Cologne that he meant to reissue his denunciations of a bigot! At the same time, the most welcome news he had at first, until the heat of controversy had abated, came in the letters from his old pastor, Roger Brennon, of St. Cross, who faithfully informed him of the further issue of the strife in which he had been for a time so actively engaged.

Brennon was seeing the fulfilment of Agrippa's prophecy by falling into his friend's place among the controversialists². In his reports—though he expresses distrust of his Latin, and seems to wish it were consistent with his station in society to write in the vernacular—we get some of the most graphic sketches of the sort of life that was then being led at Metz among the scholars and the theologians.

At one time, Brennon has to tell of a council held by the learned, in one of the town churches, to discuss the topic upon which there had arisen bitter strife—the number of the husbands of St. Anne. There is a great assembly of rustics, grandmothers, mothers, and children, listening open-mouthed to the president, who begins the discussion with a sermon three hours long, accompanied with much throwing about of the arms and actor's gesture,

¹ Ep. 43, Lib. ii. p. 759.

² Ep. 44, Lib. ii. pp. 759-762, until the next reference, but the statement in the next sentence rests on Ep. 49, Lib. ii. p. 766.

only at last to be stopped by the hand-clapping of the other priests and scholars, who desire to help in the debate. Then Master Reginald, a priest of influence, rises, and argues against the blessedness of second nuptials, but is of opinion that St. Anne married three husbands for the sake of building up the Church. Then follows Master Reynald, the physician, one of Agrippa's friends, arguing against the contamination of her who had once been immaculate, and urging that if Anne was the mother of more Marys than one, the birth of all was equally miraculous. To this it is replied that the second and third Marys were born in sin, but that the subsequent sin did not affect the purity of the first Mary's conception, nor was it derogatory to her honour, having been permitted. Then Brennon comes forward, warmly decrying all such reasoning as rash and scandalous; and showing that it is not founded on authority of Scripture. He urges that one Mary was the wife of Cleophas, and not his daughter; it is replied that so far may be true, but that there was another Cleophas who was her father. "Did you never see," cries a monk, "two asses in a market-place named Martin?" Brennon replies: "I have seen two asses together, of which I am one, and you the other; but I have never seen or read that there were two men in Scripture with the name of Cleophas." Hereupon there is great laughter in the crowd. Brennon quotes the histories of Eusebius and Hegesippus. It is replied that they are not to be believed; they sometimes dreamed. The Dominicans quote Thomas Aquinas; Brennon will not hear of him, nor of Augustine, Jerome,

Chrysostom, or anybody else; they also are not to be believed, they sometimes dreamed,—and the rustics enjoy and applaud the retort, while the Augustinians and Thomists become angry. Then Brennon suddenly revokes all that he has said, and asserts that Saint Anne had not three husbands, but four. They ask who was the fourth, and he replies, Marcolphus. Dangerous jesting, Master Roger Brennon! After he has withdrawn, a herculean priest, Claudius Drouvyn, approaches him with glowing eyes, and labours in vain to provoke him to an open quarrel. Presently thrusting out head and lips towards Brennon's ear, the Dominican whispers fiercely: "I wish you were burnt for a heretic. I have some fagots I would gladly spend upon you." Nobody being by to hear his answer, Brennon replies, with a reference to the Dominican Wigand, who some ten years before had been burnt for feigned miracles at Berne: "Keep them; they will yet be wanted for yourself and your brother Dominicans; they have not cleared off all your heresies at Berne." Drouvyn, not cooled by such a taunt, next meets with Brennon the same evening in the public square, and, going up to him furiously, as he stands conversing with some friends, shouts, "You are a fool,—you are an ass,—you are an impudent fellow, who have calumniated the great Saint Augustine!" For such words, publicly spoken, Drouvyn is liable to be brought to the proof, and Brennon summons him to answer for himself before the judges. The Dominican makes overtures for reconciliation, and they are refused.

Brennon's conduct of course is not praiseworthy, but it seems to be after the manner of the life of Metz. "I will tell you," he says, in another letter¹, "what has been done during these last few days by Nicolas Savin, master of the heretics. A certain decrepid old woman, suspected of witchcraft, being exposed by Savin to dire tortures, confessed herself, under excruciating pain, to be a witch, to have denied Christ on the suggestion of an incubus, to have flown through the air, to have raised storms, to have inflicted damage and disease on men and cattle. But she confessed also, that when a communicant at Easter, she took away Our Lord's own body and mixed it with herbs and ashes into a magical ointment in the presence of the demon, who took part as his own share, and left her the rest for wicked uses. More of these fables, such as commonly are told of evil women, Savin himself extorted from the before-mentioned crone, who, since it was her miserable lot in her innocence to want a defender, was burnt to ashes. Savin, boastful of his achievement, then vehemently exaggerated in a wordy assembly every article of accusation, chiefly that which I have just told you about the Eucharist, and the whole population was incited to a search for witches. There is a murmuring of the rough mob against poor little women; a detestable hatred springs up. Here and there the peasantry confer together, and many crippled old women are seized, but most run from the danger. Savin rejoices, hoping that it may bring him hereafter praise and profit if he can tyrannise in a like

¹ Ep. 59, Lib. ii. pp. 776-778.

way over these poor bodies. Then I, indignant at our citizens, and at the insolence of the surrounding country-people, published my detestation of the senselessness of Savin, who could so foolishly believe that the Sacrament of the Eucharist could be meddled with by a demon, changed into the form of a poisonous ointment, and in part taken away by him; it was, I said, over bold to preach this to a Christian people, when such a thing was in no way credible by any Christian man. The obstinate crowd runs down upon me; they put forward Savin, so well skilled in sacred letters; he, the Inquisitor, he, the pious father, is safe, they assert, even if the cowl can cover error. I withstand them all, persist in giving reason for so doing, bring forward the Scripture: at length my words have weight with all, and reverence cools towards Savin. But he, to consult his honour, and confirm his influence, promises an assembly on the Sunday following. Therein, to confirm his error, he deluded the people with this trivial argument, that Christ was carried over a high mountain, and to the pinnacle of the temple, by the Devil; therefore it was no marvel that Satan might lay a hand upon the Eucharist. Again the unlearned masses would have assented to him, had I not opposed him to his face, upon the spot, saying: that at that time, when the Lord was tempted in the desert, He was not known by the Tempter; who had at last, when told that he should not tempt the Lord his God, trembled suddenly and fled. Before that Lord, become now the Redeemer of the human race, he trembles, and takes flight eternally, so

that by the mere name of Jesus, and the signature of the cross, devils are cast out. . . . When I had said these, and more such things, the friends of Savin left him; he was again laughed at; they scoffed at him, and by many even he himself was called a heretic. At last all the poor women who were imprisoned were set free, and those who had fled returned in safety. Savin meanwhile sits in his cell and gnaws his finger-nails for grief, not venturing to show himself in open street." Of the great picture of the Reformation in the Church, bred by the revival of letters and awakening of independent thought, of the historical scene of that grand controversy, much of the background was, as it were, shaded in with little arguments like these. Brennon reports to his friend more of this kind of life at Metz, but enough has been said to show of what sort were in that town the experiences of Cornelius Agrippa. We must add, however, that the country-woman whom Agrippa wrested from the clutch of the Inquisitor is reported as having remembered Brennon for her benefactor's friend, and bringing to him frequently thank-offerings of eggs and butter¹.

From Metz to Cologne had been, in respect to toleration, no change for the better. To a friend, John Caesar, who had been wronged by the Cologne magistrates because accused of heresy, Cornelius wrote² in that year, 1520,

¹ Ep. 53, Lib. ii. p. 771. "Te salvere jubemus omnes, tuosque omnes, precipuè vetulam de Vapeya, quæ mihi frequenter ob tui familiarem consuetudinem rustica munerula adfert."

² Ep. 60, Lib. ii. p. 778.

that he would not lament with or console him, but that he offered his congratulations: "For what more brilliant fortune could befall you than to receive the vituperation of those who have hated none except the best and wisest men, among whom it is no slight honour for you to be numbered? Who does not know that these are the masters who expelled from the schools John Campanus, a man noted for his learning and his virtue;—who turned out of the town Peter of Ravenna, the most famous doctor of law;—who were the backbiters with foulest calumny of the most learned Hermann Count of Neuwied;—who have aspersed with their foul thoughts Erasmus of Rotterdam, a man superior to all by reason of his life and of his learning, and Jacques Faber d'Etaples, the single restorer of peripatetic philosophy, most skilled in mathematics and in literature, human and divine? But against John Reuchlin of Pfortzheim, most illustrious jurisconsult, master of many mysteries of literature and of languages, they fought with obstinacy until all their learning, credit, fame, authority, fell into one total and final wreck, when through the whole world the infamy of their ignorance, ignominy, and perfidy became a common talk. See, then, what glory has befallen you in being attacked by such foes, and numbered with so many illustrious heroes. See how you have suddenly acquired what was until now wanting to your merit——" And in this strain Agrippa runs on merrily until he closes with triumphal song, fitting to words of exultation several bars of merry music. There is a heart-ache under it, the bitterly defiant mirth is the cry not of con-

tent, but disappointment; it is the voice not of strength, but of weakness; there is too much in it of despair.

Nevertheless, Agrippa labours still on his own path, honestly and boldly, though not with the strength of men who are before him in the race. Cantiuncula, at Basle, sends word to him of any new thing published by theologians whom both admired. When an edition of the Letters of Erasmus was on the point of being issued from the press of Frobenius, Cantiuncula expressed his opinion that it would be a work not to compare with Politian, but to prefer to him, and conjectured that its price would be two gold pieces¹. Cantiuncula himself was retained at Basle by a salary, and had in this year (1520) finished preparing a collection of his lectures upon many legal topics for the press, forming a book, written, as the author stated to the public, neither for the most ignorant nor for the most learned; but he trusted that, although "the omniscient Henry Cornelius Agrippa, aristarch of polite letters," belonged to the latter class, he would take pleasure in the work, and help the writer by free criticism².

It had been understood when Cornelius left Metz in January, that his friend Brennon was to visit him at the succeeding Easter time³, with a learned acquaintance, Marcus Damascenus, who had in manuscript three books on the Nature of the Soul.

A few matters of business left unsettled at Metz, Brennon managed for his friend, among which was the receipt

¹ Ep. 41, Lib. ii. p. 757.

² Ep. 58, Lib. ii. p. 755.

³ Ep. 47.

on his account of money due from Chatelain¹, as we may reasonably suppose for medical attendance. All references to this Chatelain, who duly paid his debt, are in the kindest spirit. No doubt it is the same who soon afterwards was burnt at Metz upon the charge of heresy. At Easter, Brennon was unable to join his friend, who was already being troubled at Cologne by one person at least with slanders, not against himself only, but also against his wife, so frequent and public, so bitter and malicious, that he called upon the Church as a reconciler of disputes among communicants to reprehend and check them². Brennon, unable to travel to Cologne at Easter, promised that he would go at Whitsuntide, if he was not despatched to Rome. The Abbess of St. Glodesindis was dead, and there was a contest of three candidates for the succession to her office. The decision having been referred to Rome, Brennon thought he might have to go thither upon that business³. Cornelius replied that it would be imprudence and folly to go to Rome when the weather was so hot—he wrote this on the fourth of May—a visit to Cologne would be much better for him. On a question of health, Cornelius was sensitive just then, for he was in the first days of recovery from an attack of tertian fever. Brennon had better come to Cologne with all possible speed, and with this invitation there went to their old pastor Louisa's greeting, and the expression of her reverence as to a parent⁴. The young couple—Agrippa's present age is

¹ Ep. 47 ; also Ep. 50, Lib. ii. ; and Ep. 57, Lib. ii.

² Ep. 48, Lib. ii. p. 764.

³ Ep. 49, Lib. ii. p. 767.

⁴ Ep. 50, Lib. ii. p. 768.

thirty-four—had brought away with them from Metz a strong affection for the parish priest by whom so many of their bold opinions had been shared. Many little gifts were despatched to him by Louisa from Cologne, one of which only, Cornelius fears, reached its destination; for although the most trifling—it was a piece of her needle-work¹—it was the only one acknowledged (and that one most lovingly), therefore they must put no more faith in the messenger to whom the others were entrusted².

The succession to the rule over the nuns of St. Glodesindis having been settled quietly without the intervention of the Pope³, obstacles more serious arose to prevent Brennon's fulfilment of his promise to Louisa and her husband. At the beginning of June, or end of May (old style), he was seized with an acute fever, which, because it was characterised by great chill at the surface of the body, and much inward heat, he treated for himself by roasting the outside of his body at a fire, and cooling his inner man for two days with a diet composed wholly of cherries. Astonishing the doctors of Metz by the result of this very direct way of fighting with a case, Brennon recovered speedily, and, while recovering, was summoned to the funeral of his mother⁴, whom a month before he had been expecting to have with him at Metz, together with a sister⁵. His mother's death gave Brennon much private care and occupation. The visit to Cologne was

¹ Ep. 55, Lib. ii. p. 774.

² Ep. 61, Lib. ii. p. 779.

³ Ep. 53, Lib. ii. p. 771.

⁴ Ep. 55, Lib. ii. p. 773.

⁵ Ep. 49, Lib. ii. p. 767, and for the next fact.

deferred, therefore, till Michaelmas¹, when he and Cornelius would read together certain dogmas of Trithemius, by this time dead, which had come by testament to the hands of Agrippa. Meanwhile he sends transcribed a portion of the work of their friend Damascenus, on the Various and Admirable Nature of the Human Soul².

Of their acquaintance Tyrius, the clockmaker, Brennon had to report that he was deep in alchemy, and believed himself to be on the point of solving the great problem of transmutation. The quick-witted priest told pleasantly the story of a day's excursion he had made with Tyrius and others, over surrounding hills and fields and through the woods, all armed with swords and other weapons (because of the brigands), and so following a guide who was to point out to them a little herb, supposed to be the one thing requisite to render Tyrius the happiest and most illustrious of men. All day long they sought in vain; at last, however, they found one herb in a field. This plant was dug up and was carried home, as a wild boar might be, in triumph by the hunters. On the way home the party travelled through a wood wherein there was the same herb growing in profusion; all, therefore, finally returned in great excitement, loaded with it, and at the house of Tyrius was held high festival that night. By this account Cornelius is slightly interested, much amused³.

Over the first months of quiet at Cologne the bustle of the past thus spreads its influence. There is only one

¹ Ep. 61, Lib. ii. p. 779.

² Ep. 53, Lib. ii. p. 771.

³ Ep. 52, Lib. ii. p. 770.

more of these references to old friends at which we have to pause. Cantiuncula, visiting his parents, writes from Metz to Agrippa, begging that his mother may be comforted with a few letters from him in the vulgar tongue. He had won her confidence as a physician and a friend. "I cannot tell you," her son writes, "how much the little gift of a few words from you will comfort her. She makes so much of you, of your advice, your words, and all your opinions¹." In words like these we find another little touch of life that indicates Agrippa's gentleness of character. Brennon expresses some concern lest his friend should not have improved his worldly fate by quitting Metz, and overwhelmed by cares, may be lost altogether to his friends. I can hold my course, Cornelius replies, unhindered by fortune. I can remain myself, through all changes of home and lot.

In a letter to his friend Brennon, written from Cologne on the sixteenth of June, in this year 1520², he tells exultingly of the discomfiture of Hochstraten and his tribe by Reuchlin and Sickingen, but with a stronger interest and a much deeper concern of the "bold temerity" of Hutten, who has been in Cologne together with some other Lutherans, openly throwing off allegiance to Rome. Are there not primates and bishops in Germany, they said, that we must degrade ourselves even to the foot-kissing of the Roman bishop? Let Germany part from the Romans, and return to its own primates, bishops, and pastors. Some princes and states, adds Agrippa, lend

¹ Ep. 58, Lib. ii. p. 775.

² Ep. 54, Lib. ii. p. 772.

their ears to this. I know not in what way will avail the Emperor's authority (that of Charles V.); "for my part, I have contemplated him as a man wholly saturnine, and repose in him no hope of any good. I shall remain here at Cologne during this twelvemonth. Next spring I shall migrate again into Savoy."

For by the Duke of Savoy expectations had been raised once more, and Cornelius was now at the beginning of a two years' course of destructive hope. I may forestal the narrative—if it be to any reader of experience a forestalling—to say that this hope is one doomed to end in disappointment. It means only the wasting of long days, the purposeless halt in a difficult career, loss of time, loss of peace, and loss of bread. Agrippa has the world before him, and a prince inviting him back into his service bids him make terms with his chancellor.

Charles V. visited Cologne and stayed there for several days with many princes, but of him or of his court Agrippa sought no favours¹. He was content with his experiences of service to the court of Austria, and he had no desire at all to make part of a court in Spain. He still, however, had his Austrian connexions, his rank as a noble, and the family position in Cologne inherited from his forefathers. Thus it is that we find him to have been applied to by a friend to procure proper honour and harbour in Cologne for Paul Oberstayn, chief magistrate of Vienna, when he was about to travel through that city².

¹ Ep. 61, Lib. ii. p. 780.

² Ep. 62, Lib. ii. p. 780.

Student still of the Cabala¹, and known both at Metz and Cologne as an investigator of the abstruse secrets of nature², we find Cornelius applied to once or twice for help in magical and mathematical perplexities. The Count Theodore of Manderscheydt—who afterwards received pay from the town of Metz as the commander of its military force—caused him to be applied to for the name of the mathematician who constructed the Metz fortifications, and for information of his own respecting them³. Early in 1521, Brennon sends to him special tidings of a travelling practitioner, who has a secret cure for the disease spread so widely by the licence of the French camps, and promises to find the secret out if possible⁴. In the beginning of the year 1521, there is a famulus who had been dismissed,—the same no doubt of whom Sbrolius had given so bad a character—making his peace with his old master and mistress, pardoned and on his way, with dogs—Cornelius has tenderness for dogs—to join them. He is to make haste, because they are not likely to remain more than about another fortnight in Cologne; but the floods detain him on the journey, and he is obliged to borrow money on Agrippa's credit.

Agrippa's journey was to have been first to Metz. The negotiation with the Duke of Savoy was still unsettled: nothing was being earned, there was only the patrimony to be spent under the roof of his mother at Cologne⁵. Active steps of some kind were to be taken, and the first

¹ Ep. 63, Lib. ii. p. 780.

⁴ Ep. 5, Lib. iii. p. 784.

² Ep. 1, Lib. iii. p. 781.

⁵ Ep. 2, 3, 4, Lib. iii. pp. 781-783.

³ Ibid.

step out of Cologne was to have been to Brennon's house at Metz, for a short sojourn¹. Was to have been: and the step truly was taken, but with how much unexpected sorrow!

On the eve of departure from Cologne, not many days before Palm-Sunday, Cornelius Agrippa wrote to his friend Brennon, who had been spending at their house some of the first weeks of the year,—“From the very day of St. Catherine, on which you left us, my dearest wife began to sicken:” she had suffered severe pains from visceral disease. “On Quadragesima Sunday she took to her bed, to my great grief and loss; but I would bear all things most cheerfully if she would but recover, to which end I strive with the most diligent help of physic and physicians” (alas, for thee, Louisa!), “sparing no cost or labour. And if it would please the most high God to relieve us of our distress, or if my dearest wife, as we hope, regained ever so little health, we would take boat at once, and make the utmost haste to you with sail and oar. About my delay or about my coming write by the first messengers, and of what you wish me to know secretly inform me in our cipher. . . . My wife sends you endless greetings, and beseeches that you will help her with your holy prayers, that she may be restored as soon as possible to her old state of health, and that we all come to you together safe and sound.”

Vain were all prayers. If Louisa died at Cologne, in the arms of Agrippa and his mother, the bereaved hus-

¹ Ep. 5, Lib. iii. p. 783.

band re-entered Metz with his dead wife, carried for burial by Brennon in their old Church of St. Cross. For this reason I think she may have had her little daughter buried there. But if it was not so, there was a brief recovery, permitting the boat-journey on the Rhine and the Moselle, and it was with a dying wife that Cornelius Agrippa passed again under the gates of Metz, that were to him the gates of sorrow. By Brennon, in the Church of St. Cross at Metz, the faithful wife was buried. Agrippa supplied money for a worthy tomb¹, and ever afterwards took care that a pious service was held annually in her memory, and for her soul's repose². When all was over, he and his son quitted the inhospitable town. Even his friend Brennon knew not whither he was flying, in his poverty and his despair³.

¹ Ep. 8, Lib. iii. p. 785.

² Ep. 19, Lib. iv. p. 846.

³ Ep. 8, Lib. iii. p. 785. "Ab eo quo a nobis discesseris," he says, when he has found him, "nullus unquam fuit qui aut literas dederit, aut saltem de te verbum ullum: id siquidem suspicione magna non caruit, quæ nos mente cruciatos satis effecerit."

CHAPTER V.

CORNELIUS PRACTITIONER OF MEDICINE IN SWITZERLAND—QUESTIONS OF
MARRIAGE AND OF CHURCH REFORM.

GENEVA was the place to which Cornelius Agrippa had retired with his son¹, when his friend Brennon feared that he might have acted desperately in the paroxysm of a recent grief. That he should have gone to Geneva was most natural. It was the only town in which he had ever thought of establishing himself as a physician, to live wholly by his own exertions, without help from any public office, or engagement with a private patron. When Louisa died, Agrippa was being still flattered with hope of an establishment in life under the auspices of the Duke of Savoy. The issue of his hope was doubtful; and it was well that he should, without forming firm ties in any place, support himself until the issue of the pending treaty with the Duke was known; and that he should also prepare the way for other means of livelihood, in case of its un-

¹ Ep. 7, Lib. iii. p. 784.

favourable termination. Cornelius was thirty-five years old, and could not afford to waste more of his lifetime in idle waiting at Cologne. Then again, Geneva was the place in which lived they who could speak to him with sympathy of his departed wife; and there was an additional consideration, of no slight importance, in the fact that this was one of the Swiss towns, in which free thought upon religious matters had asserted itself boldly, and in which Cornelius could find most of that spiritual consolation which the bruised heart seeks.

If there had before been any hesitation with him as to his relations with the Church, none remained after the death of Louisa. He did not secede from it, for he thought of the reforms then afoot as coming from within; with the spirit of reform, however, and with the Reformers, he allied himself completely. Persecuted Protestant pastors were his friends in Switzerland; Fabricius Capito¹ was his companion; Zuinglius² regarded him as an acknowledged helper in the great war he was waging against Church corruption. Although more earnest than Erasmus in this war, Agrippa still followed the example of Erasmus in avoiding open breach with the Church Universal—not erring in this matter through any personal cowardice, but as one feeling how much easier it is to destroy than to build up, as one timidly settled on the rock of Rome, and labouring to make it fertile; not quitting it, lest he might suffer spiritual shipwreck in the open sea of strife, while

¹ Ep. 18, Lib. iii. p. 791.

² Ep. 82, Lib. iii. pp. 829, 830.

seeking a more fruitful soil that perhaps never would be discovered. With a less contemplative mind Cornelius would probably have done more memorable service to the cause he favoured, and he would certainly have taken a position among Protestant reformers so well recognised as to have baffled calumny. Let us know Luther as we hitherto have known Agrippa, by the showing only of his orthodox detractors, and of which of the two men who sought righteousness—Luther or Agrippa—should we have to believe most emphatically that he was a child of Satan? Luther, however—"that most combative monk," as Agrippa calls him—laid about him lustily, headed a host of conquerors, and left his fame entrusted to the jealous care of thousands of his fellow-warriors. Cornelius Agrippa dreamed, and reasoned, and aspired, making his worth known but to a few dozen wise and learned friends, who honoured him in private, while he said and did enough to constitute a multitude of busy priests his merciless detractors.

In what way Cornelius, after the first grievous shock, bore the bereavement of his wife we shall understand best when we know clearly his views upon the sacrament of marriage. He has expressed them in a little treatise¹, for in his time the whole topic was laid open to discussion; and it was one part of the contest carried on by many of the Reformers, to oppose what they assumed to be the strictly scriptural view of marriage to opinions, both in

¹ *H. C. A. de Sacramento Matrimonii Declamatio. Opuscula* (ed. Mense Septemb. 1532), sig. pag. D v.—E iv.

the Church and in society, that seemed to them corrupt. There was something of a protest against what they considered error, and a practical assertion against it of one of the texts of St. Paul, when both Capito and Zuinglius took young widows for wives. Their doctrine, and that of Cornelius, was, that in heaven there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage: that marriage is a human bond—of all such the most sacred—designed for solace, for the peopling of the world, and for the preservation of a chaste life without violence to nature. They held marriage to be the natural state of man in society, from which no person could withdraw himself justly, except only by reason of incompetence, or of a religious vow, in accordance with the saying of St. Paul to the unmarried and widows, “It is good for them to abide even as I.” But if nature is not to be curbed, then “let every man,” says St. Paul, “have his own wife, and every woman her own husband. Art thou loosed from a wife?” he adds, “seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned.” So he says also of a wife, “if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.” This doctrine of St. Paul many of the Reformers were, in Agrippa’s time, asserting against celibacies, that were not righteous, but conventional, and tended to increase of lust;—against widowhoods and widowerhoods, that, in avoiding second marriage as discreditable, fell into the snares out of which marriage was, among other of its uses, ordained to keep men’s souls. During the past three centuries it has been one mark of the growth of civilisation

that more spiritual views of marriage have arisen, which may not be truer than those here detailed, in as far as they do more than include them, but which, nevertheless, may bring their own fulfilment, and so make of the bond between some husbands and wives a blessing for eternity. Such views did not prevail in the sixteenth century; scarcely had they found any one to express them, even among poets. But Agrippa's view of marriage, as his life thus far has shown, and as his writing testifies, is high, and worthy of a Christian. "Man," he says¹, "(since he is of all animals the most sociable), then only fulfils truly and rightly the duties of humanity, puts confidence into his life, and safety into the course of it, when he has entered into the stable and indissoluble contract of marriage. . . . For what association between human beings can be more sacred and pleasant—what safer, more secure? what chaster than that between husband and wife? When one is as the other, two bodies are conformed to one mind and a single will. Only they who are wedded envy not each other, only they know the infinitude of love, when each depends entirely on the other, and reposes on the other: when they are one flesh, one mind, in one concord: having the same sorrow, the same joy: when the worldly increase of one is the increase of the other, they being alike in wealth, alike in poverty, resting in one bed, refreshed at one table, companions night and day, not quitting each other for sleep or for watchings; conjoined through life in the same actions, labours, perils, in all

¹ *H. C. A. de Sacramento Matrimonii.* D vi. vii.

fortune, they do mutual service to each other while they live. They accompany the one the other to the close of life; only by death are these companions parted; and one dead, scarcely can the other remain living." This Agrippa felt when, after Louisa's death, Brennon was trembling for him. "Whoever has taken to himself an only wife," he says again, "let him cherish her with love inviolate and constant mindfulness to the last moment of life; let father, mother, children, brothers and sisters, give place to her: let the whole concourse of friends give place to the good-will established between man and wife. Truly, so should they; for father, mother, children, brothers, sisters, relatives, and friends, are gifts of nature and of fortune; man and wife are a mystery of God, and the husband had the wife, the wife the husband, before father, mother, brother, children were. . . . Therefore, no law prohibits the departure of children from their parents, or of parents from their children; sometimes necessity compels it, expediency suggests it, reason urges it; often children are emancipated, often claim for religion's sake their liberty, often live as pilgrims absent from their homes, or build up other homes elsewhere. But that a wife should depart from her husband, or a husband from his wife, no law permits, no necessity, no expediency, no reason, no repudiation, no religious feeling, no license to quit. One parted from the other lives a desolate and solitary life, which must be most unhappy, because it is led in contempt of the help and joy that God has given, and that one has dared to spurn."

The little treatise upon marriage quoted here was written three or four years after the date (1521) at which this narrative now stands. It expresses faithfully, however, one of the most constant features of its author's mind, and I place here the few passages that have to be quoted from it in this narrative, because it is in this place that they are most helpful to the proper comprehension of one aspect of Agrippa's life. These are his words again¹:—"They sin heavily, whether they be parents, relations, tutors, guardians, who (not looking to the lifelong good-will, or to the prospect of children, or to the maintenance of chastity, but through avarice and ambition, for the dignity of lands, the power of nobility, wealth, or the like) urge beyond their duty the divine rule of obedience to parents (by a sort of tyranny), and fettering the free will of their sons or daughters, force them into unwelcome nuptials; prompted by no reason of age, kindness, condition, manners, love, or any divine precept. Out of such marriages are bred adultery, dissension, scorn, continual anger, perpetual scoldings, discords, hatreds, repudiation, and other unending ills. Sometimes there follow even poisonings, slaughterings, or sudden deaths, so that not God, but Satan, appears to have joined those pairs together. Add to this that in many places some princes and lords of this world, under the name of Christians—foes to God, blasphemers of the Lord, overturners of the Church, defilers of things sacred, arrogating to themselves divinity,—by their arbitration, sometimes even by their command

¹ *De Sacramento Matrimonii.* E, E ii.

as tyrants, compel the marriages of subjects, taking, moreover, tithes of the dowries, not without most wicked sacrilege, for their private treasuries: thus, leaving adultery untaxed, they punish marriage. There is, moreover, yet another custom to condemn, which has grown up in many nations,—that second marriages are pursued everywhere with I know not what contempt. Moreover, they levy a fine of a certain sum on those who marry twice, and give the money to be devoured by a certain fraternity of theirs, making Joseph, the husband of the blessed Virgin Mary, patron of this scorn of a divine mystery. Of this fraternity the devil was the founder, and the wrath of God delivers it to its own reprobate sense, which, applauding fornication, decries second nuptials; as if, destitute of divine grace, mocking the sacrament, to which is due all honour, reverence, and freedom.” For having suppressed this custom in his own dominions, Agrippa praised King Francis as a Christian king.

“You, therefore”—I am again quoting Cornelius—“you, therefore, who wish to take a wife, let love be your inducement, not opinion: choose a wife, not a dress; marry a wife, not a dowry. In this temper having prayed to the omnipotent God, who alone gives a true wife to man, having sought also the consent of her parents, and shown to them a due obedience, putting away all avarice, ambition, envy, and fear: with mature self-communing, with free consent, with fervent but yet chaste and reasonable love, accept the wife given to you for a perpetual companion, not for a slave, by the hand of God: let your

wisdom guide her with all gentleness and reverence. Do not submit her, but admit her to your counsels; let her be in your house the mistress, in your family the mother." Agrippa dwells upon the lessons of good order and government in states that are best learnt in families, and dwells on the unhappiness of all who, except when they do so for the more exclusive contemplation of celestial things, live solitary lives. Except death, he allows no reason whatever for a severance of the marriage tie, beyond the one asserted in the Gospel as the single cause for which a man may innocently put away his wife. Finally, it is urged upon all who are not by impediment of nature less than men, or more than men by their angelic power of maintaining an eternal purity, that they have a divine law to fulfil, a duty to the state and to themselves to perform, by marrying, so filling up the round of their own lives and educating children into righteousness. In passing from this treatise, I should not omit to say, that in one passage towards the close of it¹, after speaking in unmeasured detestation of men who destroy or wrong their wives, he points out indignantly, that, while for the lightest theft men were sent to the gallows, wives might be killed or wronged to the uttermost by their husbands almost

¹ *De Sacramento Matrimonii*. E iv. "Uxoricia etiam acerbiorē morte quam parricidia vindicantur: et merito, nam parentes natura facit, uxor Dei mysterium est. Neque eum satis condigna pœna affici posse arbitror, qui datum sibi a Deo auxilium, et præbitam vitæ consortem ausus fuerit interimere: sed nescio qua iustitiæ, Deique negligentia uxoriciæ, atque adulteri, nunc fere omnem pœnam evadunt, fures vel ob leve crimen fune suspensi necantur, nisi qui traditi iudices nostri in reprobum sensum."

with impunity. Such a blot has remained upon the public justice of some nations even to the present day.

To Cornelius at Geneva, Brennon wrote word¹ that the stone, carved most decently, as ordered by him, had been placed over the grave of his dear wife. He sent news to him, received from a friend lately in Cologne, of the well-being of Agrippa's sister and mother, added also what he had last heard about Luther, namely, that he had found safe shelter in Bohemia, and that his labour was being carried on by Hutten and Melancthon. He furnished also some political intelligence, and an account of a siege close at hand which he himself had witnessed. The tidings about the Reformers were most interesting to Agrippa; by the death of his wife previous religious feelings had been deepened, perhaps by the conversion of some parts of his theology into religion. The influences at Geneva were all favourable to the development of his convictions, and their character becomes at this time of his life more strongly marked. A monk whom he had known at Metz, and with whom he had talked liberal things, writes to him from Annecy², that "four cowed masters of the Dominican faction and (as I believe) persecutors of our faith—I meant to say inquisitors—by some chance entered my cell a few days since, and among their discourse fell upon the memory of our most erudite Erasmus, and after many things said in a sinister way of him and Luther, they at last vomited out their poison, babbling that there were now four Antichrists, doctors in

¹ Ep. 8, Lib. iii. p. 785.

² Ep. 9, Lib. iii. p. 786.

Christ's kingdom—namely, Erasmus, Luther, Reuchlin, and Faber Stapulensis. See what men are these sycophants who persecute good literature! But the bearer of this is a man skilled in good literature, singularly learned, who desires much to speak with you; trust yourself to him."

Soon afterwards this friend begs for a copy of Agrippa's lucubration against Prior Salini, and wants specially to know in what way his friend now regards Luther. "I think," he says¹, "you do not forget how you honoured me, by showing me at Metz some Lutheran writings, and that you extolled them with the highest praise." This question of opinion was discussed verbally, for the friends met soon afterwards²; and to a subsequent scruple upon the subject of obedience to the Church, Cornelius replies³: "I think you know that a Christian is, of all men, the most free, but at the same time the most dutiful of servants." That answer would surely have been different had he been greater and stronger than he was. He did not stifle conscience, he was not a coward; all his life long he had been asserting his desire for independence, but asserting it in a too speculative temper.

While practising medicine with little profit at Geneva, where his late wife's relations and Eustochius Chappuys, known for his learning throughout all Savoy⁴, were among his most intimate friends, Cornelius was engaged, as to worldly things, in much negotiation to secure that which

¹ Ep. 10, Lib. iii. p. 787.

³ Ep. 12, Lib. iii. p. 788.

² Ep. 11, Lib. iii. p. 788.

⁴ Ep. 10, Lib. iii. p. 787.

had been offered to him by the Duke of Savoy; and as to spiritual things, he was entirely occupied with the great questions of Church reform. To an inquiry about the Virgin Mary¹, founded on an argument drawn from the rubric, he replied², that "the services of the Church are of no authority in argument, because they contain many uncertain things, many doubtful things, many things empty, feigned or false, many even of which the direct contrary is what the Church believes; such services are not to support the integrity of faith, and cannot exercise the authority of the Church." He believed it not impossible for the whole Church to become that which a part of it became. Without any thought whatever of secession, he was ready to show all the errors that he believed had crept into its discipline. He was a Lutheran, but throughout distinctly that which Luther and all his fellow-labourers were at the outset of their course, a faithful member of the Church in which he saw that so much change had become necessary. He no more thought of avowing himself a heretic, than the citizen of a state, when he demands some great political reform, thinks of proclaiming himself alien or outlaw.

The reformer Capito wrote thus from the neighbourhood of Basle to Cornelius Agrippa at Geneva³. The date of his letter is the twenty-third of April, 1522: "A good man began speaking of you honourably to me on my journey; he depicted to me a man more learned than any,

¹ Ep. 13, Lib. iii. p. 788.

² Ep. 14, Lib. iii. p. 788.

³ Ep. 15, Lib. iii. pp. 789, 790.

by profession a physician, but of all knowledge at the same time a cyclopædia, chiefly, however, strong in disputation, being able with a little finger to arrest the onsets of the Sophists. I asked the name.

“ ‘Agrippa,’ he said, ‘native of Cologne, by education an Italian, by experience a courtier; that is to say, trained at court, urbane and civil.’

“ Almost disturbed by an unexpected pleasure, ‘What!’ I said, ‘that physician has a tincture of the German heresy. Does he repudiate Luther? Does he think with the most learned Parisians?’

“ Then said he, ‘Far from it. He can go beyond Luther, but he cannot oppose him, as that Luther himself has seen.’ ”

“ Moved by this talk,” Capito went on to relate, “ I have written this to you while refreshing myself at the tavern, whereby you may understand how mindful is Capito of the kindness you showed him when he was received by you hospitably at Cologne. But there is matter in the knowledge of which you are interested—namely, the condition of the Germans. The Lutherans at Wittenberg have declared as follows: First, they taught that whatever they thought they perceived of the truth of the Gospel, they were to express with freedom of speech. I will tell you a few of their expressions. Whoever, they say, does not eat meat, eggs, and the like on Fridays, let him not be called a Christian. Whoever does not take the sacrament of the Eucharist in his hands and finger it, let him not be esteemed a Christian. Whoever confesses in Qua-

dragesima, let him not be a partaker of the mercy of God. Whoever thinks good works are anything, closes for himself the way of salvation: and much of that character. They excite the simple crowd, there is a mustering, the houses of the priests are attacked, force is brought in by the citizens; thus there is a reverse caused in the opinion of the vulgar, so that the common cause of the faith, as it is maintained by Luther and his friends, is brought into public odium. Learned men wrote to Luther, urging him to come forward openly to check this. He is now, therefore, at Wittenberg, where assemblies are being held daily. He finds fault with his followers, chides those who have made rash innovations, not regarding the simplicity of the populace, but at the same time does not omit to assert what he before asserted. The people now flock round him, and with patience persevere towards the liberty of Christ. I wish the nobles understood how swift and ready is the work of Christianity, and next, how wide the difference between a seditious innovator and a patient Christian. . . . Wherefore, most learned man, I do not dissuade you from the Gospel, but I rejoice that you are opposed to the unseasonable ventures of imprudent men. But do as you are doing, and carry with you the gentleness of Christ, even into familiar talk, that nobody may be able to calumniate your pious purposes. If anything seem to require candid interpretation, do not condemn with a malignant scorn. What bitterness did ever Christ speak? to what place, I ask, did he carry the mind of a condemning judge? O preposterous piety, so

morosely pious, that obliterates the very shape of piety,—never be urged to that! Farewell, and write to me sometimes. At leisure I will write with more deliberation. Dated in haste from the tavern. Farewell again. Oltingen, near Basle, April 23, 1522.”

Nothing could be clearer than the illustration here supplied of the degree and nature of Cornelius Agrippa's sympathy with the Reformers. The inferences it suggests are all confirmed by the succeeding correspondence. When Capito's letter was delivered at Geneva, Cornelius was away from home, at the court of Savoy¹, making vain efforts to secure either a fulfilment or a retraction of the great man's promise. When he returned, he wrote to Capito that if he knew who it was that had spoken so lovingly of him upon the road, he would send many, many thanks to him for his good offices, and he wished he might some day become all he had been painted. The bearer of his letter he commended to the help of Capito as a man needing help, who was just, and a diligent preacher of the Word of God. In the same way we find by letters from friends to Agrippa, that to him also travelling “preachers of the Gospel of truth” were, from time to time, commended as to a man ready to entertain them in his house, and help them with his friendship².

The letter from Wolfgang Fabricius Capito just quoted was quite characteristic of its writer's gentleness of way

¹ Ep. 18, Lib. iii. p. 791.

² Ep. 16, Lib. iii. p. 790. Ep. 34, Lib. iii. p. 801. Ep. 80, Lib. iii. p. 829.

and steadfastness of purpose. It was no mean tribute to the piety and learning of Agrippa that they had the respect of Capito. Capito was by eight years the senior of Cornelius Agrippa. Born at Hagenau, in Alsatia, he had studied medicine at Basle to please his father, but on the death of his father, while he was still in his student years, he turned to the study of theology to please himself, and was in 1504 created doctor in that faculty at Basle. He then went to Freyburg, in Brisgau, where he taught scholastic theology, and in the four years next following he studied jurisprudence under Zase, one of the most famous jurisconsults of that age. Then, by Philip Rosenberg, Bishop of Spire, the young Capito was called to preach at Bruchsal, in his diocese. While there he became the close friend of Œcolampadius, who was at Heidelberg. At the same time Capito learned Hebrew from a converted Jew. Called from Bruchsal to Basle, there to preach in the cathedral, he laid the foundation of the first Protestant church in that town, and while there, as a member of the theological faculty, he helped to make Œcolampadius a doctor. From his friendship for Œcolampadius he never swerved; and after his friend's death became (in 1524) the husband of his widow: she was Capito's first wife. Cardinal Albert of Brandenburg, Archbishop of Mayence, had called Capito from Basle, and had appointed him court preacher and chancellor in the archbishopric. He became at about the same time doctor of canon law, and on account of his varied knowledge and experience, his services were used in many

weighty state affairs. For the same reason, not long before the date of the letter to Agrippa lately quoted, Emperor Charles V. had raised Capito and his entire family into the order of nobility. His course was not altered, and when he wrote that letter he had left Mayence, because he could not introduce into the town any Reformed doctrines, and had joined Bucer at Strasburg. He was a man remarkable for learning, although his attainments were less varied than Agrippa's, and he was, like Agrippa, moderate in his hopes and endeavours for the reformation of the Church, but, unlike Agrippa, duly mingling in the actions of his life determined power with his softer qualities. "I heard at Basle," Cornelius writes to another friend, "of the work of a certain brother, Jacob Hochstraten, against Luther, also of another similar work, issued under the name of the King of England. I should like them to be sent to me, and any response, if any, of which Luther may have thought them worthy; whatever may be their price, I will pay promptly to their bearer. Finally, I desire to know how the Lutheran matter prospers with the Germans. If you have occasion to write to Fabricius Capito, most excellent and true theologian, commend me very greatly to him. I wrote to him lately, and mean to write more at leisure. The bearer of this, a man who studies theology and is a linguist most eager to master Greek, Hebrew, and Chaldee, by nation a Scotchman, by profession a Dominican, I commend to you as to myself. I beg that you will be so good a helper to him as to show that ours is not a common

friendship: as for me, I will never fail when I am able to do anything for you and your friends. Farewell. From Geneva, September 20, 1522."

While Agrippa was at Geneva he was corresponding with his friend the lawyer Cantuuncula, at Basle¹, and he was also continuing by letters to make interest with those who might have power to stimulate the Duke of Savoy and his advisers to increased activity. The Duke had himself reopened the protracted negotiations by inviting Agrippa to him, but on the condition that it should be left to his Chancellor to settle in what office and at what salary the philosopher was to be connected with his court; he had also admonished Agrippa to look after his own interests, and take care that the Chancellor did not forget him. But the Chancellor needed much admonition. On the sixteenth of September, 1522, Cornelius wrote from Geneva to remind him of these things²; on the same day he wrote also to a friend of his own residing near the minister, requesting that he would help, if possible, in pushing matters forward, and also asking for his interest on behalf of the petition of a certain widow³. The letter to the Chancellor just mentioned went by the hand of the Abbot Bonmont, of the monastery of Moutiers, the capital of a small principedom in Savoy, the Tarentaise, and this good abbot, who was appointed to high clerical office in Geneva, told Cornelius on his return that the Duke had repeated to him his desire that everything should be settled by the Chancellor,

¹ Ep. 20 and 35, Lib. iii. pp. 792, 801.

² Ep. 21, Lib. iii. pp. 792, 793.

³ Ep. 22, Lib. iii. p. 793.

who would in a few days be coming to Chambéry, which is a town of Savoy, distant from Geneva some fifty or sixty miles. To a friend, therefore, at Chambéry, Agrippa wrote, requesting him to urge his suit for him, he being himself, short as the distance was, unable to bear the cost of a journey to that town, and the stay there requisite for the due help of his own cause¹.

But in the midst of poverty and disappointment he was unable to live alone. When he wrote that he could not pay his way from Geneva to Chambéry, he had been only for a few months married to a second wife, a Swiss maiden, aged nineteen, of a good Genevese family, whom one of his friends heard to be rich ; but that friend must have been greatly misinformed. Cornelius wrote of her, two years afterwards, to his friend Brennon, as "a maid of noble birth and of great beauty, who so adapts herself to my ways that you could not tell that they had not been in the first instance her own, or know whether either one of us equals or excels the other in a readiness of love and homage." Agrippa's first wife left him with Aymon, an only son ; his second wife began at once a steady course of child-bearing. Within the first two years and a half she became mother to two sons and a daughter², after whom there came others in quick succession.

On the twenty-ninth of September he again ventured to urge the Chancellor by letter, telling him that the matter in hand was of less urgency to him than its distinct settle-

¹ Ep. 24, Lib. iii. p. 794.

² Ep. 60, Lib. iii. p. 818.

ment¹. Four days later he wrote to his friend at Chambéry, urging the misery and waste of the continual delay². He had been kept two years in suspense, trusting to the Duke's promise, spending his money, and receiving in return only sweet words, letting birds escape while chasing flies. In the middle of that September he had been offered favours by the royal house of France; but although free to serve France, he looked to Savoy for more congenial patronage. He did not wish to die of hope. The promises of Savoy must be either fulfilled or retracted³. His friend promptly replied that he had spoken earnestly to the Chancellor, who appeared chilly in the matter, and less friendly to Agrippa than his virtues merited⁴. He promised to make fresh endeavours, and to write again in three or four days, advising Cornelius in the mean time to urge the Chancellor again by letter.

In the next despatch to his friend, Agrippa writes that his business is moving "*ægris pedibus*" and making good the omen of his name, but that he trusts in help from others, being, as he had before said, unable to go to Chambéry himself, even if the whole issue of the case depended on his presence⁵. A few weeks after this, salary and honourable consideration being offered to Cornelius as its physician by the mountain town of Friburg, that offer was accepted, and an end was made of the expectations that the Duke of Savoy had excited⁶.

¹ Ep. 25, Lib. iii. p. 795.

² Ep. 26, Lib. iii. p. 795.

³ Ep. 24, Lib. iii. p. 794.

⁴ Ep. 29, Lib. iii. p. 796.

⁵ Ep. 32, Lib. iii. p. 799.

⁶ Ep. 39 and 55, Lib. iii. pp. 805, 813.

The venerable Abbot Bonmont, from the monastery at Moutiers, who had become at Geneva a high church authority, was a warm friend to Agrippa and his family. He had become godfather to one of his children, thus taking a position which in those days gave him an artificial tie of relationship to Agrippa's wife. The tie was so distinct that matrimony was unlawful between man and woman, one of whom had at a former time been sponsor for the other's child. The good name and credit of this abbot extended to Friburg, and helped to increase there the cordiality of the reception given to Cornelius. The same abbot retained also at Geneva his friend's first son, Aymon, and took friendly charge for a time both of his maintenance and of his education.

Bonmont had great faith both in the moral and intellectual power of Agrippa. There is a letter extant, written by Cornelius at his desire for the admonition and help of a young student¹, the gist of which is that the pupil was to learn rightly from the righteous, because time was lost in listening to the depraved; that he could not be learned without Greek, or eloquent without Latin; that he should cultivate a wide field, but since the whole field of knowledge was more than a single man could travel over, he should read especially two authors, Pliny in Latin, and Plutarch in Greek. These, more than any others, could be made sufficient to render a man learned in all sorts of sciences and in each necessary language; only, above all things, he exhorted to the close study of

¹ Ep. 31, Lib. iii. p. 797.

sacred literature.—We find also that Agrippa, poor as he was, contrived in Switzerland to show himself not wanting in the observance—so essential in those days—of hospitality¹, and he was hospitable not only to the traveller, but also glad when he could spend some hours in joyous social intercourse with learned friends. His nature was affectionate, and spent its kindness upon more than men and women, also upon animals. He is said to have been almost foolish in his good-will towards dogs.

Of course there came also to the dwelling of the poor philosopher at Geneva and Friburg letters of compliment, to tell him of the barren honours he had won. Claude Blancherose, a French physician, who afterwards published a book on the Epidemics of his time, wrote to Cornelius Agrippa Latin letters full of euphuism, speckled with verse of his own making, epigrams, tetrastiches, and decastiches². They are long letters, meaning well, and labouring obviously to earn for their writer the respect and good-will of a man noted for his learning. John Laurentin of Lyons, preceptor of St. Antony's at Rivolta, who had introduced Agrippa to the town of Metz, seems to have introduced him also to Blancherose, who begs leave to be Pylades to his Orestes, Hegesippus to his Titus. One long letter this friend despatches, full of laboured verse, dating it "from Amnaise, swifter than light, more quickly than asparagus is cooked"—an old Augustan saying; in the next, which is to go swifter

¹ Ep. 28, Lib. iii. p. 796, and the letters already referred to illustrative of his hospitality towards travelling ministers of the Gospel.

² Ep. 36 and 37, Lib. iii. pp. 801-804.

than wind, he lauds his Orestes as a man who has come into the labyrinth of this world "not without the clue." And yet he knows—every friend of Agrippa knows—how in the labyrinth of the world he has been long astray: he knows it well enough to see an opportunity of quoting in this letter the text, Yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

The removal from Geneva to Friburg, in the beginning of the year 1523, indicated some slight increase of prosperity. Friburg was but a small Swiss mountain fortress, with a narrow-streeted town attached to it, and scarcely could pay a high salary to its physician. We know how slender was the payment made by small Italian towns to the physician attached to their service¹; it was, indeed, not greater than that which would be now offered in England to a parish surgeon, and retained his services not for the poor alone. It would be more correct to find a parallel as to principle for these appointments of physicians in the appointment, by communities, of men who were to be their spiritual pastors. Agrippa was received in the best spirit at Friburg, both by magistrates and people; they were a hardy, warrior race, but noted for kindness and hospitality. Their treatment of Agrippa was not only courteous, but, considering their means, munificent, and in their town, as in Geneva—always, in short, while in Switzerland—Cornelius, however little money he might earn, had only kindness to acknowledge, and was held

¹ *Life of Jerome Cardan* (1854), vol. ii. pp. 154, 155.

always in generous esteem¹. At Metz and Cologne all had been antagonism; at Friburg and Geneva all was in sympathy with his desire for freedom of opinion and action. Twice, as we have seen, he connected himself by marriage with the natives of Geneva. As a scholar, Italy was the land of his desire; but as a man, he was at home in Switzerland, and never in his whole life was he so well honoured by his neighbours as in these his days of a sore poverty among the Swiss. His friend the Abbot Bonmont wrote to him from Geneva, soon after his change of abode, "As for our little son Aymon, I wish you to be under no anxiety about him, for he is to me as my own son, and no help or labour of mine shall be wanting to train the boy in the right way and make a man of him²."

All thoughts of Savoy had been abandoned; but there was still temptation offered by the court of France that might bring down from his spare diet and happiness in the Swiss mountains a man conscious of the position that he had a right to take among the most polished, and warned also that he had the prospect of a large family of children to support out of such worldly means as he could compass. In one of his first letters, written after settlement at Friburg—it is to Christopher Schelling of Lucerne, who still has, or is supposed to have, the manuscript of Commentaries on St. Paul—we find that Agrippa happens to have gone to Berne, and has there met with an old Parisian comrade of his student days, Godfrey Brullart,

¹ Ep. 38, 39, and 55, Lib. iii. pp. 804, 805, 813.

² Ep. 39, Lib. iii. p. 805.

become a royal treasurer, who is staying at the house of the General Nurbeck. He has offers to make to Schelling, and no doubt has played the tempter to Agrippa too. "My commencement of Commentaries on Paul, and other things left with you, I trust, are safe," Agrippa says. Afterwards, on the eighth of June, in this year, 1523, he writes to Schelling of his wife's impending confinement, and of his close occupation upon pressing and important business by the magistrates of Friburg¹, who would thus seem to have made use of his skill, not only as a physician, but to have availed themselves also in other ways of his extensive knowledge. This tended, no doubt, to the improvement of his salary.

While falling into affectionate correspondence with his friend at Lucerne, he attacks merrily his friend Cantioncula, at Basle, for stinting him in letters. He has been to Basle, and there, at supper with Cantioncula, has met Erasmus, and his talk over the supper-table has dwelt on the mind of Erasmus pleasantly, so that he speaks afterwards with admiration in his household of the rare gifts of Agrippa. In the household of Erasmus is a youth who had once courted Agrippa's good-will with some specimens of Latin verse, and being admitted to his friendship—a thing not hard to acquire—writes to him about these things².

Many good friends were made in Switzerland, and at Friburg the physician had a cordial patron in a citizen,

¹ Ep. 40, Lib. iii. p. 805.

² Ep. 44, Lib. iii. p. 806.

John Reiff, who loved all learned men; occult studies, too, were cheerfully resumed. Copies of the work on Magic had been circulating among learned acquaintances; additions were made to it, and it was further lent¹. The use of the printing-press being comparatively new, there still remained in Europe much of the old plan of circulating books in manuscript; and we must remember this while noticing the reputation for great learning that Agrippa had acquired by this time, although he had issued nothing from the press. Much of his writing was known widely as writing, and his familiarity with many languages and many sciences, as well as his known habit of experimenting, were sufficient to assure him very high respect.

He had not forgotten Roger Brennon, but after a long time had ceased to send him letters, because answers never were returned. It afterwards appeared that Brennon's correspondence had been intercepted by the orthodox of Metz, and that letters to and from Cantiuncula, when he was with his family, had been also stopped². To a friend who had accepted office at Metz, and was proceeding thither from Basle, he sent a letter by a preacher of the Gospel, Thomas Gyrfalcus, whom he commended with the greatest earnestness to his faithful protection. He sent to Brennon, curate of St. Cross, his greetings, and announced—writing on the fifth of January, 1524—that the cloud had passed over his fortunes, and that he was about to return into

¹ Ep. 55 and 56, Lib. iii. pp. 812-814.

² Ep. 45 (which is from Cantiuncula, and misplaced in the printed series), Ep. 62, Lib. iii. p. 819.

France¹. Many of his old friends in Paris and Lyons had been helping him, and were desirous to have him among them. He was offered court favour, and the honourable position of physician to the queen-mother. Tempted, then, by France, in March or April, 1524, he quitted Friburg, leaving behind him none but persons who respected him—true friends and patrons, genuine, though poor. Offers had been made to him also on behalf of the Duke of Bourbon; these he had refused, and he had also used successfully his influence to take with him into the service he himself adopted certain young captains, his relatives, who had a following of not less than four thousand soldiers². On the third of May he was at Lyons with his family; looking back lovingly to Friburg, enjoying the good-will of his old French comrades who gathered round, possessed of a few gold pieces from the treasury wherewith to pay the cost of establishing his household, and in daily expectation of a messenger who was to come to him with payment of his first year's salary. So he wrote to the Abbot Bonmont, his son's teacher and friend, and begged him to instruct a person in charge of some tables of his to take care of them, because in a short time he would send money to pay for their conveyance into France³.

¹ Ep. 52, Lib. iii. p. 810.

² Ep. 42, Lib. iv. p. 881.

³ Ep. 58, Lib. iii. p. 816.

CHAPTER VI.

ACCEPTING OFFERS FROM THE ROYAL FAMILY OF FRANCE, CORNELIUS REMOVES TO LYONS—AS A COURT PHYSICIAN HE GROWS RICH IN PROMISES.

THE queen-mother was Louisa of Savoy—it was still, therefore, from the house of Savoy that Cornelius was receiving promises of favour. At the first glance, also, we notice this unpromising condition of his case—his patroness was a strict Catholic, with a strong tendency to persecution of Reformers.

During the period of Agrippa's separation from the greater bustle of political events, a new complication had been arising, which we shall find presently exerting an important influence over his fortunes. The year 1520 had been the year of the Field of the Cloth of Gold. In that year war between Charles and Francis, the successful and the unsuccessful candidate for the succession to the empire, appeared probable. In the year following, the injustice of the court at Paris, bred out of intrigues, created disturbances in Italy. Slight was put upon the Constable de Bourbon by his recall from Milan, war burst into life, and

the French were once more driven from Italian soil. This might not have been the case if the avarice of the queen-mother, Louisa of Savoy, Duchess of Angoulême, had not led her to embezzle money destined for the army. Four hundred thousand crowns, that should have been sent as the pay of the Swiss, went to her private purse, and Semblançay, the treasurer, who, in the year following, confessed to whom the money had been paid, was followed pertinaciously by Queen Louisa's hatred, until five years afterwards it gained its end and brought him to the gibbet. Pope Leo was dead, and his successor was Pope Adrian, a friend to Charles V.

In the year 1523, that is to say, during the last year of Agrippa's residence in Switzerland, Charles Duke of Bourbon had been alienated finally from his allegiance to the crown of France. The previous Duke had left a daughter, named Suzanne, inheriting much land, and Charles had joined her possessions to the dukedom by contracting marriage with her. When she died, the queen-mother, considering the Duke to be a handsome man—his age was only thirty-four—and knowing that his territories were desirable, proposed to marry him, as plainly as queen can, and also claimed inheritance of so much of his duchy as came to him from his deceased wife, by right of her own descent in the female line from one of the past dukes. The age of her majesty was forty-seven. Charles of Bourbon would not marry her, and had to bear therefore the anger of a slighted woman. The queen-mother retaliated at once by a claim on the

whole Bourbonnais. Now the Duke knew that King Francis loved him little, because he was cold and grave, and soberly attached to business; a man so little disposed to bear frivolous jokes as to be called at court the Prince of Small Endurance. He saw reason to fear the queen-mother's influence over her son, and was thus driven to seek help from counterplots. Charles the Fifth, losing no time in the use of what he held to be his opportunity, promised Bourbon his own sister in marriage, with various advantages, if he would attach himself to the imperial cause, and originate in France civil dissension. Bourbon hesitated, but stung by the progress of the court intrigues, towards the close of the year he consented, and but a very few months before Agrippa came to Lyons he had fled from his own country with a single attendant, leaving the Bourbonnais to be immediately confiscated, and gone over to the enemies of Francis.

In the spring of the year 1524, when Cornelius came to Lyons as physician to Louisa of Savoy, a campaign was reopened in the Milanese, and Bourbon began in concert with Italians to operate successfully against his countrymen. It has been long remarked of this revolt of Bourbon, that it affords the first modern example of a strong opposition of the sentiment of patriotism to the alliance of a great prince with the enemy of his king, when such a king has done or is about to do him wrong. Until with the revival of letters Greece and Rome instilled into educated men their strict views of the duty owing to one's country, and of the sacrifices that become

the patriot, certainly it was not in France that any abstract sentiment existed to restrain princes and dukes from forming what alliances they found most profitable when at enmity with an offending sovereign. Bourbon's revolt was the first of great note that occurred after the change made by the revival of letters in the public feeling of society. He found opinion everywhere against him; he was not received cordially even among his chosen allies, and he lived in his camp as a morose soldier among his troops, the only men who had a solid faith in him, a rough but friendly master, who took care to find them opportunities of plunder that should more than cover their deficiencies of pay.

Of the state of affairs here described, Agrippa had, of course, when he went to Lyons, only an imperfect and one-sided view. It was not until several months afterwards that the queen-mother, become regent during her son's captivity in Spain, showed to the world the full strength of her disposition to deal cruelly with the Reformers. Had Agrippa known in what way Queen Louisa's passions were involved in the affront of Bourbon to the crown, had he known only the shallowness of her religion and the depth of her bigotry, he would have known the step to be a false one that took him, a German and an advocate of church reform, from the true fellowship and favour of Swiss burgomasters to the service of Louisa of Savoy. But as it was, he held it to be good advancement in the world to have become a queen's physician.

As a fortunate man he was congratulated by his friends,

though one of them wrote that if, as one attached to the French court, he exchanged doctor's cap for helmet, and rode with his spear in the Italian wars, it was to be hoped he would not ride against a Swiss friend ranged upon the side of Bourbon¹. Agrippa had no thought of taking active part in war. Before anything was settled with the queen-mother he received the titles of a man attached directly to the court, as counsellor², and took part at Lyons in such public business as belonged to his position. The communication with his old friend Brennon was reopened and secured. To him Cornelius had sent, in letter after letter, confidential details on the subject of his worldly efforts and achievements; none ever reached their destination, or came back into the writer's hands³. He had had death again in his house. Of the three children born to him by his second wife, before the end of August, 1524, two, both of them sons, survived; the other child, a daughter, died. Brennon replied⁴ with sympathy, and this piece of good news: "A woman here died lately, who bequeathed to me a press and all things necessary to the printer's art, at which I shall be able to work as I get leisure." Cornelius⁵ answered to this: "I wish you had my little works, that you might print them; but I have no scribe, and possess no more than single copies. I will get duplicates of some and send them you to print, beginning with the Apology against that calum-

¹ Ep. 59, Lib. iii. p. 817.² Ep. 68, Lib. iii. p. 823.³ Ep. 60, Lib. iii. p. 818; and for the next facts.⁴ Ep. 61, Lib. iii. p. 818, 819.⁵ Ep. 62, Lib. iii. p. 819.

nious Dominican. The brute is in this town, but nearly muzzled, and disliked by all his own companions. These tumults of war are a great hindrance and damage to me. I depend wholly on their issue. If they end well for the King, I am fortunate; if ill, I am almost lost." In another letter to the Abbot Bonmont, Agrippa wrote¹, after some warm recognition of his generosity to Aymon: "In answer to your inquiry about my fortunes, certainly I am rich in promises from the King himself and other princes; but these wars, for the most part, snatch away from me the fruits of their munificence." He wrote this after he had been living for six months at Lyons upon barren honours.

At about the same time another glimpse was offered to him of a way to get his books before the world. A friend at Basle sent him a letter², by the brother-in-law of the great typographer, John Frobenius, with a message from Frobenius, requesting that he would explore the oldest libraries in Lyons, and see whether they contained any codices of Pliny's history, especially the later books. If he found any he was to send them by the bearer, who would find whatever surety was required for the safe keeping of the manuscript. "I discussed with Frobenius," the friend added, "about your work against the Dominican Monk, as well as about the printing of your complete works. He says that when they are sent to him he will take care that no one of them shall be found to meet with less consideration than is well and fairly due."

¹ Ep. 63, Lib. iii. p. 820.

² Ep. 64, Lib. iii. p. 821.

Cornelius, at Lyons, belonged not only to the courtiers, but also to a cheerful literary circle¹; he was pursuing a variety of studies; had been improving himself in astrology²; and among other sciences was studying the Cabala still, and beginning to work at the books of Raymond Lully³. He was courted by learned strangers; young scholars wrote to him soliciting his friendship⁴. Those who had been in his household always turned to him—though they could anger him sometimes—with confident affection. We have found him just now telling Brennon that he was without a scribe. The person who had been serving him in that capacity had been taken ill upon a journey, and was laid up with stone in the bladder. Seeing no hope of speedy return to his duties, he petitioned that his brother might be taken in his place⁵.

The renewed wars closed many an old channel of communication, and the Abbot Bonmont being hostile to France, and associating with the enemies of France, although old friendship remained unabated, and Cornelius expressed constant reverence for his warm friend, free interchange of thought by letters between them ceased to be possible⁶. In June, 1525, Cornelius sent for his son Aymon by a messenger, who was to bring him,

¹ Ep. 65, Lib. iii. p. 821. A piece of good-humoured denunciation for Agrippa's having promised an *Aristotle* to the writer and not having made his promise good.

² Ep. 56 and Ep. 57, Lib. iii. pp. 813-816.

³ Ep. 67 and Ep. 75, Lib. iii. pp. 822 and 826.

⁴ As in Letters 73 and 77 of Book iii.

⁵ Ep. 66, Lib. iii. pp. 821, 822.

⁶ Ep. 68, Lib. iii. p. 823; and for the next facts.

if the kind priest thought it well for him to rejoin his father. He was then expecting daily to have his future settled, and a home appointed for him by his mistress, either at Tours, Orleans, or Paris. The Abbot replied¹, that Aymon should be sent home when the weather became cooler; but that he was of too tender age for a long journey under summer heat. The same reply offered congratulations on the subject of a second letter² from Cornelius, written on the twenty-fourth of July, to announce that his wife had recently given birth to a third son,—so that he had now four children, all of them boys,—and that the infant had profited by his relation to the court, in having the Cardinal de Lorraine for a godfather, and for godmother the Dame de Saint Prie. The queen-mother and her court were then at Lyons; she was Regent, and King Francis was a prisoner in Spain. In the middle of the previous October siege had been laid to Pavia. In January no progress had been made; Bourbon, however, having raised an army on his own account, had procured money from the Duke of Savoy, and marched to relieve the besieged city early in the year. On the twenty-third of February, King Francis, defeated by Bourbon, was taken prisoner, and given to the keeping of his rival at Madrid. Louisa, Duchess of Angoulême, became Regent of France during his absence. At the beginning of August, soon after the birth of Agrippa's infant, the queen-mother was leaving Lyons with her

¹ Ep. 78, Lib. iii. p. 828.

² Ep. 76, Lib. iii. p. 827; see also Ep. 79, Lib. iii. p. 828.

daughter to visit Spain, on behalf of the captive. Instead of carrying her new physician with her, she bade him remain at Lyons, without settling there, until her return, when she would be at leisure, she said, to determine where his domestic establishment was to be fixed. It was to be in some town of the interior of France, so that he might be at hand for the performance of his duties¹. He was not the richer for having been flattered, while the whole court was at Lyons, with a distinguished godfather and godmother for his infant; such things only induced him—and perhaps were by the Queen meant to induce him—to consent longer to exist, as his wits enabled him, on the mere royal promise of a salary.

The queen-mother was avaricious; war absorbed public money, and Agrippa, there can be no doubt, suffered delays and slights because there was a stain upon his character. "Does he repudiate Luther? Does he think with the most learned Parisians?" Capito's playful doubt whether that physician was not tinctured with the German heresy, echoed the saying of the orthodox against Agrippa, and such questioning told heavily upon his fortunes. Because of this, no doubt the Duke of Savoy's chancellor had dallied with his hopes, and paid a cold attention to his claims; because of this, the queen-mother was hesitating about the fulfilment of her promises, while his inquiries into occult science, and his books of magic, that a few had seen, enabled the priests already in a very slight degree to taint his name,

¹ Ep. 9, Lib. iv. p. 838.

by attaching to it some of the disrepute connected with forbidden studies.

But Cornelius was still in active sympathy with the Reformers. There was a letter written to him in May, 1525, by a reformer in Lorraine¹, a hot partisan in the controversy upon the Eucharist. Luther believed that there was something like real presence in the sacramental bread and wine; Zuinglius taught what is now commonly believed by Protestants, and a fierce strife existed on this subject. To the zealous partisan, Agrippa replied quietly², stating what books he had himself been able to obtain upon the subject, and expressing his desire to see all others, except such as had been written by the Sophists. But the most perfect revelation of Agrippa's attitude towards the orthodox Church, at a time when he was awaiting at Lyons the fulfilment of the promises of the queen-mother, is contained in the following letter addressed to him by Zuinglius or Bucer³: "Although most busy, I have nevertheless wished to send you enough writing to prevent you from believing that you are forgotten. Lately the most learned Papilio wrote to me salutations in your name. The whole church of the saints established here has rejoiced very vehemently at hearing the fruit of the Word among the courtiers, as well as throughout nearly all France. We also glorify the Lord for the constancy of Macrinus, servant of God. I have written to many, concerning the glory of the Word

¹ Ep. 69, Lib. iii. pp. 823, 824.

² Ep. 71, Lib. iii. pp. 824, 825.

³ Ep. 82, Lib. iii. pp. 829, 830.

among you, letters which I doubt not have been communicated to you. I bless the Lord that you remain always the same, namely, a lover of the truth; by following in that course we are happier than by all things else; for what is to compare with truth? I wish it were in my power to come into France, that I might not be always dumb. The Lord's will be done. I pine, I confess, at being so long silent. I doubt not that you know of my having taken a wife" (Zuinglius had married a noble widow, Anne Richartin, in the year preceding, Bucer had married a nun two years before), "and perhaps you have seen my book on Marriage. Christ gave a son to us on the twenty-ninth of November. My sister is still expectant of a child. The boy, named Isaac, is well. Pray that he may live to the glory of God, and that I may teach him to separate himself to the utmost from anti-christ and the vain fictions of men. We endure much poverty, for all things are at the dearest, and I am weighed down by many debts. The brethren at the court, and you, perhaps, among them, sent me twenty gold ducats. Help never came at better time. In all things blessed be the name of the Lord who helps us, and is powerful to set us free from poverty so urgent. I send thanks to all who gave and helped me in my poverty. My little wife salutes you, and we both of us salute your wife in the Lord. I shall be glad if all things prosper with you. Our whole church salutes you, through Christ, Capito especially; and for you and all brethren we entreat happiness from the Lord. Make men, as far as you are able,

well disposed towards me. Write what is done at Geneva, that is to say, whether they love the Word; let there be sometimes letters exchanged between us. Grace and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Strasburg, the last day of December, 1525."

By an obvious mistake this letter has been printed in Agrippa's works as one sent from Agrippa to a friend. The tone of thought, the style, the facts contained in it, all seem to me to declare Zuinglius the writer. Not only had Zuinglius his marriage to announce, but the tractate on Marriage to which he refers was, at the date when this letter was written, the last thing published by him. It had appeared earlier in the same year, and was an address to the Swiss in reply to an outcry made against himself for having joined a husbandman in wedlock to a woman who stood to him in the relation of godmother to one of his children; this tie of commaternity, or compaternity, as it was called, having been held by the Church, but being repudiated by Zuinglius, as a bar to marriage¹. Bucer was head of the Reformed Church at Strasburg.

It was at this time that Cornelius wrote and dedicated to the King's sister, Margaret of Valois, his tractate on the Sacrament of Marriage². She was clever, spiritual, skilled in languages, favourably disposed towards the cleverness of the Reformers, and a skilful inventor of tales, then amusing, and not more immoral than some sermons

¹ *Operum D. Huldrici Zuinglii, vigilantissimi Tigurinae Ecclesiae Antistitis*, Partes iii. &c. &c. Tiguri. Exc. C. Froschover, 1581. Pars Prima, fol. 151-154.

² Ep. 1, Lib. iv. p. 881.

of the time, but certainly remarkable to men of these days for their looseness. She was then thirty-four years old, and had become somewhat recently a widow by the death of Charles Duke of Alençon. As a widow she had been to comfort in his prison at Madrid King Francis, her brother, to whom she was much attached; she had gone charged by the queen-mother with plenary powers to negotiate, and it had been hoped that she might, by her fascinations, conquer the heart of a saturnine emperor. That visit to Madrid had been paid in the previous year. The journey to Bayonne with the queen-mother was for the purpose of meeting the King on his liberation, and conveying his two eldest sons as hostages to Spain. Margaret of Valois was quite ready to marry again, and was, indeed, in the year following, espoused to Henri d'Albret, King of Navarre. To this princess, then, Agrippa felt that he should do well to dedicate his treatise upon Marriage, the substance of which has been in this narrative already described. He sent it to a learned friend and correspondent, one of the King's physicians, John Chapelain, to be presented to her highness. Chapelain very soon found that it was a clumsy compliment. Let any one compare the tone of Margaret's diverting tales with the unbending morality of this discussion on the Sacrament of Marriage, and it will be evident that, honest as her life was, such a lecture as Cornelius wished to present ran no little risk of being accepted as a rebuke against her daily conversation.

"I will see to your pension," wrote Chapelain¹,—who

¹ Ep. 2, Lib. iv. p. 832.

was a kindly man, clever enough to justify the printing of the only work of his that came before the public, *A Medical Opinion on the Plague*, in the same volume with the *Medical Opinions* of a man so famous as Fernel¹, —“I will see to your pension; but the matter is not likely to be settled yet, for in such matters the Queen is apt to be slow. However, we shall soon be coming to Paris,” he wrote from Bordeaux on the second of April; “now, if I understand rightly, we are to return to Lyons, because the most Christian King has to accomplish a vow made while in Spain to the Holy Napkin at Chambéry; in Paris I have no doubt your affair can be settled, in the mean time I will do my part as a friend when opportunity arises. Some who are nevertheless accounted Christians, little approve of that work of yours upon Marriage on account of certain passages contained in it, and they who object are people who speak often with the Princess. Therefore, fearing lest I might bring you more hurt than honour, I have deferred the presentation. Nevertheless, if you bid me, I will give it.”

The poor scholar made a manful answer²: “You write, my dear friend Chapelain, that there are some persons at court who are numbered among the wise, and who speak often with the Princess, who little approve my declamation upon Matrimony. Fearing, therefore, lest it may bring me into more contention than commendation, you have deferred offering that little treatise to their highnesses until you had again consulted me. Hear now,

¹ See *Jerome Cardan* (1854), vol. ii. pp. 100-104.

² Ep. 3, Lib. iv. pp. 832, 833.

therefore, my opinion. Among the masters at court there are some who write filthy and dirty jests, lewd comedies, songs steeped in lust, and pestilent books that dishonour the name of love. There are some, also, who translate such writings into sundry languages. And books of this sort are received without offence as gifts by ladies; the tales of Boccaccio, the jests of Poggio Bracciolini, the adultery of Euryalus and Lucrece, the wars and loves of Tristan and Lancelot, and the like, by reading of which women are made familiar with wickedness, are greedily read even by girls. Whoever is most deeply read in such works, can quote fragments of them, and talk about them fluently and often with her wooers, comes to be called a true lady of the court. I wonder, then, that our discreet and very witty censors, who make often so great a tragedy out of a trifle, not merely suppress their objection to such writings, but also read, translate, expound, and occupy themselves about them, even though they may be bishops, chief maintainers of religion, like that Bishop of Angoulême, who has turned Ovid's amatory letters into French. Such priests of their mysteries have our court ladies, of whom, since they have never learnt from good authors, and have not a morsel of right training, how can I expect that they will like such a work as this of mine, so utterly at odds with their established ways? Nevertheless, boldly offer to them these little books" (separate copies, it would seem, one for the Princess, one for the queen-mother), "nor think that your Agrippa, whose name some read *Ægris Pedibus*, lame-footed, is so gouty that he cannot

place foot against foot in combat with those wise court censors. I am not yet so destitute of the arms of honest study, that I cannot both defend this writing and confound its adversaries. A most happy farewell to you. From Lyons, May 1, 1526."

There is not a syllable too much of emphasis in this letter, in the tone of which we find, not only the purity of soul which marks the whole life of Agrippa, but a little also of the voice of a man whose heart is with the Swiss Reformers.

The treatise upon Marriage, written in Latin, had been also translated into French¹; and during this month of May we find its author very busy in dispersing copies of it, and defending it among his friends. One is sent to a friend Conrad at Chambéry, with a request for Ptolemy's *Cosmography*, which Conrad had been promising to lend him. Martin the painter, however, had the Ptolemy², had borrowed it eight months before, and there was a question whether it would ever be returned. "I never break my promises," says Conrad, "so I will get you a new copy. In the mean time, rheumatism tortures me to madness. Can you tell me of a remedy³?" "By no means get me a new Ptolemy," Cornelius replies; "I can wait very well for Martin." And he sends an enclosure of elaborate prescriptions, capping them with a secret and sure remedy that must be told to no one else. And all this time Cornelius is reduced even to bare want, by the

¹ Ep. 4, Lib. iv. p. 833.

² Ep. 5, Lib. iv. p. 834.

³ Ep. 11, Lib. ix. pp. 839, 840.

impossibility of getting the first instalment of his promised salary from Martin of Troyes, the treasurer¹. Since the Queen left for the frontier, he tells Chapelain, every good thing he had has flown out of his Pandora's box, except his hope, and that has its wings almost full-grown. Chapelain is attached to the Queen's suite, and he must see what can be done; "Go to her," says Agrippa, laughing over his distress, "fasten upon her, seize her, ask her, conjure her, compel her, torment her: add prayers, entreaties, complaints, sighs, tears, and whatever else there is by which people are stirred." He himself writes a letter to her by that messenger, and asks his friend to take care that his letter, of which he sends a copy to him, is not left unread. Above all, he wants treasurer Barguyn to be made to send a letter to his subaltern, Martin of Troyes, and command the payment of Agrippa's salary that he is holding back. If not paid, he shall become one letter more than *medicus*, which sorry joke being interpreted, means that he must become *mendicus*, a beggar.

But still hope, fast as her wings were growing, kept them folded. Cornelius maintained a cheerful spirit, and was somewhat assisted in the effort by the small distraction that arose from the objections to his declamation upon Marriage. To Michael d'Arandia², the recently appointed Bishop of St. Paul-Trois-Châteaux, in Dauphiné, he sent an explanation upon two points, chiefly urged against him by the theological objectors to his essay. They were

¹ Ep. 6, Lib. iv. pp. 834, 835; and for what follows.

² Ep. 7, Lib. iv. pp. 835, 836.

trifling, and need not be dwelt upon. At about this time also there seem to have been persons about the court who wished to be amused or edified by his skill in occult study, and had asked him for some astrological predictions. He accordingly sent Chapelain a calculation of the stars duly made out, with a double interpretation, so that he might let the courtiers see how he could profit by their folly. "Why," he asked in this letter¹, "do we trouble ourselves to know whether man's life and fortune depend on the stars? To God, who made them and the heavens, and who cannot err, neither do wrong, may we not leave these things,—content, since we are men, to attain what is within our compass, that is to say, human knowledge? But since we are also Christians and believe in Christ, let us trust to God our Father hours and moments which are in His hand. And if these things depend not on the stars, astrologers, indeed, run a vain course. But the race of man, so timorous, is readier to hear fables of ghosts and believe in things that are not, than in things that are. Therefore, too eager in their blindness, they hurry to learn secrets of the future, and that which is least possible (as the return of the deluge) they believe the most; so, also, what is least likely they believe most readily of the astrologers, as that the destinies of things are to be changed by planning from the judgments of astrology—a faith that, beyond doubt, serves to keep those practitioners from hunger."

All this shows into what form Agrippa's mind has

¹ Ep. 8, Lib. iv. pp. 837, 838.

ripened. It was two years since King Francis, when he went to relieve Marseilles, besieged by Bourbon at the outset of the war, promised the pension, of which, except a gift for travelling expenses, not a coin had been received. The King went into captivity. The captain charged by the King with the execution of his will was dead; but there were others, as the Seneschal of Lyons (godfather to one of Agrippa's children), witnesses to his command. Attached to the queen-mother as physician, he was looking in vain to her for his salary; but she had destroyed his means by charging him to stay at Lyons, without fixing himself in a home there, until she was ready to determine on his future¹. He and his household had begun to look absolute hunger in the face, and still they were kept quiet by promises. "Barguyn the treasurer," wrote Chapelain, on the seventeenth of May², "has been absent till now, and promises to make Martin of Troyes pay you your salary in Lyons. Her highness does not deny that she will some day do what you desire, but she is making a long matter of it." Nine days afterwards he reports that he has given to the Queen letters from Agrippa, but that he can get no definite reply. "I know by my own experience," he adds³, "how difficult that is, for I have wanted one thing from her for many years, and have not received it, and almost despair of getting it, though I have had not unfrequently her promise. We are treating about peace with an uncertain issue. Thanks for the prognostications.

¹ Ep. 9, Lib. iv. p. 838, for the preceding facts.

² Ep. 10, Lib. iv. p. 839.

³ Ep. 12, Lib. iv. p. 840.

I gave one to our friend Barguyn. To-morrow I depart for Paris, and thence go to St. Germain." At length, with the June weather, there came a letter that seemed to report promises more definite than usual. It was from the Bishop of St. Paul Trois-Châteaux, Michael d'Arandia¹, reporting the issue of a conversation he had just been having with the King, in which Agrippa's case was represented. Francis spoke of the unlucky scholar more kindly than ever, promising that he should have the money due to him and more to boot. Moreover, said the bishop, "M. Chapelain has written by the order of the queen-mother herself to the treasurer, who now is at Lyons, commanding him to pay your salary."

Hope flutters her wings and does not think of flying. Dread of hunger vanishes, and the threadbare philosopher can look with a new satisfaction on his wife, and on his annually expanding family of children. What can he do to express his thankfulness to the good bishop, who has been so fortunate in intercession? He must send some little gift; and, looking through the heap of his own writings in his study, he selects a little paper proper to be dedicated to a Christian priest, and sends it to him, with some modest words, in a most grateful letter².

The brief essay dedicated to the bishop was Agrippa's "Dehortation from Gentile Theology." Brief as it is³,

¹ Ep. 14, Lib. iv. p. 841.

² Ep. 15, Lib. iv. p. 841.

³ *H. C. A. Dehortatio Gentilis Theologiae, ad amicos aliquos quondam perorata*. It occupies only nine pages (sig. fol. H ii.-H vi.) in the *Opuscula*, ed. Mense Sept. 1532.

there is a depth of meaning in it, for it marks distinctly what had been the influence of recent lessons on its author's life. A year or two before this time, probably while he was at Cologne, before his settlement in Switzerland, some young friends of Agrippa who believed in him, had asked him to give them a lecture on the subject which they understood he had expounded with so much success at Pisa, the "Pimander," or book on the divine nature, of Hermes Trismegistus. Instead of complying with their desire, he wrote for them and read to them this Dehortation, against the mistake of looking for a knowledge of God to the wise heathens, when there were the Scriptures to be searched. Out of the depth of his desire for a revived study of the Gospel in its purity, he urged them earnestly to betake themselves to faithful study of the Scriptures. "Is it," he asked, "because there is not a God in Israel, that ye send to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?" What virtue is there—and virtue there is—in Hermes, Plato, Plotinus, Æmilius, Iamblichus, Proclus, that is not better taught by the Apostles, the Evangelists, the Lord himself? Why go to those worthies before we have gone to Him who is the truth and the way? We need for the study of divine things a pure, free mind, not infected by corrupt doctrines, which root ignorance so firmly in the name of knowledge, that it cannot be uprooted; and we think we know, and we declare that to be catholicity and truth, which after all is heresy and error. "But when your mind is once established in sound doctrine, then by the light of

it you are free to wander safely through the gloom of error, you may freely penetrate all depths of study. Then, if you enter, like Ulysses, the cave of the Cyclops, and descend even to hell, you return scathless ; if you drink the cup of Circe you will not be changed : if you steer your way by Scylla you will not be swallowed in the gulf ; if you listen to the Sirens you will not be laid to sleep, but will be as the Apostle declares, of all men judging, judged by none. The doctrines of the heathen then will be of the greatest aid to you, and by their help you may ascend to the loftiest theology." That is the whole purport of this Dehortation,—that young men should go for wisdom to the Scriptures, search them with free minds, and obey the teaching of the Gospel, as the only basis of a sound philosophy.

CHAPTER VII.

LABOUR AND SORROW.

CHAPELAIN had in many letters told Agrippa that his cares were ended, that his salary was to be paid. The Bishop of Bazas, in Guienne, had written that by his intercession all was settled. The Seneschal of Lyons had sent to his friend the same good news, and the Baron Laurentin (godfather to another of the children) had sent comfort also from the court. "By this hope," Agrippa wrote, in the middle of June, "I have been highly delighted, but to this moment not a speck of money has been seen. Martin of Troyes says that nothing has been written to him by Barguyn, so that my affair has not come to my net, but is still in its web among the spiders. I have let all my good birds escape, and am compelled to chase the flies¹." Two more weeks passed over the afflicted household of the scholar, not the only man whose fine spirit was fretted with the knowledge of what hell it is in suing long to bide : at the end of that time Cornelius

¹ Ep. 16, Lib. iv. p. 843.

again attacked Martin of Troyes, who told him then that he had received orders from Barguyn for the payment of various moneys, but that there was no mention in the letter of Cornelius Agrippa¹. He wrote immediately to the Bishop of Bazas, telling him how he was forced to lose good days that might be better spent, and how, if his salary was still withheld from him, penned up in Lyons, now unable to stir through poverty, he must altogether perish. Could the King procure for him a portion of his promised income, **anything with which** to meet the present need²? A few days after this letter was written, a brief note came to Cornelius from the King's doctor, Chapelain, telling him that Treasurer Barguyn had commissioned one Antony Bullion of Lyons to pay the money that was owing³. To which note the reply is very touching⁴:

"Your letter, written on the twenty-ninth of June, my dearest Chapelain, I received on the seventh of July, and learn from it that our friend Barguyn has referred the payment of my salary to one Antony Bullion, of Lyons. If Barguyn wished me well, as you write that he does, and desired my money to be paid to me, he would not have referred me to that Antony whom he knew to be absent from here, but either to Martin of Troyes, as was before arranged, or to some other, either resident here or passing through the town. On the day that I received your letter I went with M. Aimar de Beaujolois, a judge, a polished man,

¹ Ep. 20, Lib. iv. p. 846.

² Ep. 22, Lib. iv. p. 847.

³ Ep. 23, Lib. iv. p. 848.

⁴ Ep. 25, Lib. iv. pp. 848, 850.

and one of my best friends here, and had some trouble in meeting with Thomas Bullion, the brother of that Antony; he did not altogether deny that he had orders to pay me, but said he was ordered to pay in these words: if he found that he could,—if there remained any money with him. At last he said he would refer again to his instructions, and that I should have an answer from him the next morning. On the next day, therefore, when we anxiously called many times upon the man, he, hiding at home, feigned absence, until at a late hour of the night we departed, having made a very close acquaintance with his door. On the next day, however, the before-mentioned judge meets him, questions him on my behalf, and presses him; he replies that he will come over shortly to my house and settle with me about the stipend; and, with that falsehood, securing an escape, in the same hour he mounted his horse and rode away, as it is said, to join the court. You see how we are played with! Think of me, fought against on every side by sorrows—by griefs, indeed, greater and more incessant than I care to write. There is no friend here to help me; all comfort me with empty words; and the court title, which should have brought me honour and profit, aggravates my hurt, by adding against me envy to contempt.” He goes on to repeat how he was led by false promises into his false position at Lyons, and how he was taught to feed on hope, to pine with fear and sorrow. “Held in suspense,” he says, “by this continual hope, to this hour no messenger has told me whether to remain at this place or quit

it: here, therefore, I live with my large family as a pilgrim in a caravansary, and that in the most expensive of all towns, under a load of charges, subject to no little loss. You write that the Queen will some day comply with my request; but that she is always slow—slow also in your affairs. What if in the mean time I perish? Truly, so slow a fortune cannot save me, mighty goddess as she is. Perhaps you will say I should propitiate her with some sacrifice—a ram, or a bull, and those of the fattest—that her wings may grow, and she may fly to me the faster; but so extreme is my want of everything, that I could not find her a cake or a pinch of frankincense.” He entreats, therefore, his friend at court to conquer for him those obstacles with the Queen, that he, who has placed all his hope in her, who has left all other means of living at her bidding and the King’s, may not be reduced to the last limit of despair. “For believe me,” he adds, “my affairs and my temper so incline, that if you cannot win for me a speedy help I shall be following some evil counsel, since there is good fortune to be had out of ill doing.”

In the middle of July this was written. Still the weary days of cross and care followed each other; on the eighth of August a new doubt arose. Martin of Troyes had professed himself Agrippa’s friend, and had himself written in several letters to Barguyn for instructions on the subject of the salary; with the answers to each of these letters came a reply on every point contained in them but one: the subject of Agrippa was passed over without a word. The cry of his heart now is, “Would that I could be per-

mitted to despair¹!" Yet at this very time his services are being used by the queen-mother, and he has been putting aside at her command his private labours for a most annoying task, out of the performance of which added trouble is to come.

Forty years old is Agrippa now; conscious of strength, subservient to no man, but the centre of his own small circle in the great community of scholars. He has reached the age when commonly the form of a man's mind or of his fortune becomes definite, and, roughly speaking, represents the spirit of his whole career. With meaner aspirations in his soul, he perhaps would have mounted higher on the path to fame and honour which he had a right to seek, and sought with honest industry. His mind had grown in stature and in power, but it had grown to knowledge that procured him enemies among the priests. While Louisa of Savoy and her son Francis were becoming known as persecutors, and obedient to such influence as flowed from the Sorbonne, we cannot be surprised at the neglect suffered by Cornelius Agrippa. His correspondence with his friends at court was sometimes intercepted². His scorn of the corrupt dealings of the worldly class of priests—the class most able to thwart him in the world—was not concealed; it broke out in his books, his letters, and his conversation.

Especial utterance it found in a book of ambitious size and more ambitious aim, to the writing of which he had betaken himself at the beginning of his cares in Lyons.

¹ Ep. 30, Lib. iv. p. 854.

² Ep. 30 and 31, Lib. iv. pp. 854-855.

While busy with the pen he could keep all his cares at bay; and that he was so busied, and intensely busied, that his brain was at work upon more labours than one, and chiefly upon one, a book written in these his later days of disappointment—about which the second half of his life appears to gather, as the first half of it gathered round the cruder books of occult science, written in his early days of hope—it is proper here to indicate. He did not utterly consume this portion of his life in beating at the doors of obdurate sub-treasurers and treasurers. Out of his own treasury of thought during all these miserable months the coin flowed with more than customary freedom. Even in the manner of his letters we see how the wit is being spurred by trouble, how an active brain does its sad battle with an aching heart.

Among Agrippa's correspondents, during the two months of trouble among treasurers that have been last accounted for, was a Dominican, Peter Lavindus, who had made his acquaintance while delivering the Quadragesimal discourse at Lyons, and after his return to his own monastery was afflicted with some worldly trouble or perplexity, in which he was most anxious to determine rightly on his future course. Impressed by the reputation for occult knowledge that Agrippa had, this friar sent a messenger with a mysterious letter, begging earnestly of Cornelius that he would on his behalf consult the stars¹. "Judicial astrology," he was told in reply, "is nothing more than the fallacious guess of superstitious men, who have founded a science on

¹ Ep. 17, Lib. iv. p. 843.

uncertain things and are deceived by it: so think nearly all the wise; as such it is ridiculed by some most noble philosophers; Christian theologians reject it, and it is condemned by sacred councils of the Church. Yet you, whose office it is to dissuade others from these vanities, oppressed, or rather blinded by I know not what distress of mind, flee to this as to a sacred augur, and as if there were no God in Israel, that you send to inquire of the god of Ekron." Having thus spoken his mind faithfully and privately, as "a Christian bound to support his neighbour in the faith," he says, "Lest you think me but denying you, and by a subterfuge avoiding trouble for a friend, I will do all that you ask me, to the best of my ability, having thus warned you first not to put more faith in these judgments than befits a Christian¹."

Another of Agrippa's cares during this time was to attend at the death-bed of a physician of Dijon who had become his friend, to announce his loss in gentle words, and take thought for his widow and his children².

Another incident in his life during these months was his meeting in the streets of Lyons with an old friend, Christopher, from Metz, and a glad rushing to him, in the hope of a despatch from Brennon; but the thoughtless Christopher had come away without asking for

¹ Ep. 19, Lib. iv. pp. 844, 845.

² Ep. 18, Lib. iv. p. 843. It is headed *Amicus ad Agrippam*, but should be *Agrippa ad Amicum*. As it stands, it gives Cornelius charge, as nearest friend, of the widow and children of a physician of Dijon, who fell sick and died at Lyons after an illness of some days; Agrippa knowing nothing of it until all was over, and then being informed in a consolatory letter.

errands. The sight of him, however, soon produced a letter from Agrippa to his friend, with whom he had for two years been without means of communicating. By diligent inquiry there was found a travelling trader whose affairs carried him sometimes through Metz as well as Lyons; through him, therefore, Cornelius told, hiding his sorrows, what he was expecting; asked Brennon for letters, which were to be addressed to the Baron Claudius Laurentin, commended himself to his old friends by name, and "to the ears of Jacob, the librarian, for I am told that on account of Lutheranism, he has left nothing of himself but them at Metz." The letter also contains this passage: "I commend to you the funeral rites of my late dear wife, buried in your church, that no duty relating to her be omitted: but that as I disposed and founded, all be executed and completely carried out; and that I beseech of you again and again, by the memory of all the hours you spent with her and me, and as the sacred bond of our perpetual friendship¹."

Brennon replies to this: "The obsequies of your wife, on the anniversary of her death, we celebrate as you desired; that is to say, on the day before the anniversary, the vigils for the dead, but on the next a solemn mass. Also we announce on the preceding Sunday, that during the week there will be these services." Of Metz gossip he sends, of course, a fit supply, in two letters written to his friend, on successive days². The *Steganography* of Trithemius and Agrippa's manuscript of his own

¹ Ep. 20, Lib. iv. pp. 845, 846. ² Ep. 26 and 27, Lib. iv. pp. 850-852.

Geomancy, in an oblong book, Cornelius had not lost, but left behind him in the hurry of his leaving Metz. They shall be duly forwarded. Tyrius the clockmaker (he who was seeking the philosopher's stone) is always prepared for great things, but he is often drunk. Carboneus is going soon to Cologne, and will bring news back of Agrippa's parents. Thus we find that his mother was still living; and if the plural be no error of Brennon's, she had married again, as was quite possible.

A young physician, now four-and-twenty years of age, had been among the youths who heard Cornelius at Pavia, and being in Metz, had recommended himself by praise of Agrippa to the good priest Brennon. This youth, John Paul, having the world before him, offered to walk to Lyons, taking Brennon's letters and the books—the Steganography and Geomancy;—at Lyons, since the town was large, Cornelius a kindly man and a court physician, he hoped, with Agrippa's influence, to begin rising in the world, if not as a physician, yet perhaps by being recommended to the post of tutor to a nobleman¹. The young doctor marched as long as money lasted, and broke down at Langres, when he had achieved about a hundred and twenty of the two hundred and sixty or seventy miles he had proposed to walk. At Langres he contrived to live in decent esteem upon the reputation of the brother, who was a court physician, to whom he said he was travelling, and who would send him some money, and he contrived

¹ This incident is from Brennon's Letters and three others, 28, 33, and 38, of the Fourth Book.

to send, by a person travelling from Langres to Lyons, a letter to Agrippa, telling his misfortunes, begging that he would not injure him by repudiating the fraternity he had been claiming, when at his wit's end, and asking for the loan of two gold crowns to carry him on with the books—he made much talk about the books—to Lyons. Out of his wretched means, Cornelius squeezed the two gold crowns, and sent them, through a druggist of Langres, to whom he told his young friend that he might apply for them if they were wanted, but he assured him that it was not in the least worth his while to travel any farther. He was quite as likely to make a practice or to find friends at Langres as at Lyons; he had better, therefore, wait and try his fortune where he was. As for the books, they could be sent quite safely through the druggist. The young doctor replied that he had never found so much use and comfort in his life from thirty crowns as from those two, which he hoped he might live to repay. That he would be advised and stay at Langres, though he feared he wanted two main requisites for success as a physician, age and pomposity.

Such incidents of life, and energetic progress with the book to which allusion has been made, varied the days and weeks and months of weary waiting upon princes' favour, of sad watching of a wife's pale cheek, and anxious thought about the future of a little family of children.

One noticeable topic more arose. The friend to whom he had sent prescriptions for the gout, and who had crossed the Alps before they reached him, had a neigh-

bour who had been changing his profession. He had left the Law and gone into the Church. "I want to know," Agrippa wrote to his friend, during those anxious months — "I want to know about our Achilles, how he is fitted with the cowl and wooden shoes, and all their family of disguises? whether, as before, he has admirably perfected himself in the art of pleading, having the laws ready to support every opinion; able to cast, recast, bend and twist them into the same shape with his own gloss, and even contest oath against oath? Is he as quick now in the brother trade, or cowl trade, that is, the trade of sycophancy? Is he skilled in feigned sanctimony and the way of stealing by an impudent mendicity? With rubbing of the forehead and importunate hypocrisy, can he rake money in from every side, minding that he does not take hold of it with naked hands? Does he think no gain disgraceful made in the market-place, the choir, the church, the schools, courts, palaces, councils, festive assemblies, taverns, barbers' shops, public and private gatherings, confessions and disputes; from the benches, the chairs, the pulpits; in scattering among the people, by an impudent craft, trumpery indulgences, selling good actions, measuring out ceremonies; tearing from merchants, usurers, and grasping nobles their ill-gotten prey? Can he chouse of their money the fat citizens, unlearned people, superstitious crones; attract weak little women, and, after the way of the Serpent, tempt them to the ruin of the men? Can he, in fine, meddle with everything? join in unlawful marriage, adjust quarrels, reform nuns, doing all for

his own profit? If he has mastered all this, and much more than can be written in a hurried letter, he will never regret having been changed from an advocate into a brother. If not, he had better go *ἐς κόρακας*, or rather to the galleys¹."

"Through the royal promises," Agrippa wrote again to Chapelain, early in August, "I am turned like Ixion on a wheel, haunted by all the furies. I am almost losing human senses, and become good for nothing : wherefore I am the apter perhaps for prophecy, which some think comes best from mad people, as if the loss of human wit meant the acquisition of divine, and what the wise man cannot foresee, the fool can." Thus he wrote, under the annoyance of a command from the queen-mother, that he should consult the stars for her upon the future issue of the contest with the Emperor and Bourbon. Having lost, as he said, all but honour at Pavia, and been carried prisoner to Madrid, King Francis had just obtained his freedom by the force of vows and promises, which he was now making up his mind to break. Having lost all but honour, he was sacrificing that to regain everything else. His mother, bigoted and superstitious, wished to know the issue of their policy by help of the stars, and issued orders for a horoscope to her servant Cornelius Agrippa. "I am in the right way," he said, "to become a prophet, and obey my mistress; I wish I may predict her something pleasant, but what pleasant prophecies are you to

¹ Ep. 32, Lib. iv. pp. 855, 856. See also *De Incert. et Van. Scientiarum*, cap. lv.

get out of the furies and Hecate? All the mad prophets of antiquity foresaw nothing but murder, slaughter, war, and havoc, and I know not how mad people can foresee other than the works of madmen. I fear, then, that I shall prophesy in this way, unless some good Apollo, chasing off the furies, visit me with his light in beams of gold. But I will mount the tripod, prophesy, or guess, and send the result ere long to the Princess, using those astrological superstitions by which the Queen shows herself so greedy to be helped—using them, as you know, unwillingly, and compelled by her violent prayers. I have written, however, to the Seneschal that he should admonish her no longer to abuse my talent by condemning it to such unworthy craft, nor force me any more to stumble through this idle work, when I am able to be helpful to her with more profitable studies¹.”

He did write that request to his well-meaning but clumsy friend, the Seneschal of Lyons; and the good Seneschal, instead of following the hint by dropping here and there a fit remark to modify the lady's notion of the sort of service for which her physician was most fit, placed in her hands Agrippa's letter².

On the twenty-fifth of August, Cornelius had found reason to fear that other letters of his had been seen. Doctor Chapelain had for some time sent him no replies, and it appeared, at length, that he had been at Orleans, while his letters were sent to the court. Of course there had been a good deal of plain-speaking in them on the subject of

¹ Ep. 29, Lib. iv. pp. 853, 854.

² Ep. 40, Lib. iv. p. 860.

Barguyn and Bullion, and it was to be hoped that they had not fallen among thieves. At that date he wrote, also¹, "I have just completed those revolutions, according to the superstition of astrology, which the Princess so eagerly desired; but as you are absent from the court, I know not to whose hand to commit them, unless the Princess herself name some person. I know not whether she will. I have caused her to be admonished by our Seneschal, if he receives my letters."

A few days afterwards Chapelain was at the court, and found what mischief had been done. The queen-mother herself sent for him, and told him that the Seneschal of Lyons had shown her a letter from Agrippa, which suggested that she made improper use of judicial astrology, and was led by a vain hope and superstitious faith; whereat she felt a little hurt. Agrippa was to be told to set himself at rest about the astrological predictions; that she held him in high esteem without them². It was rumoured, Chapelain also wrote, that they were to go to Lyons—he hoped so, and that Cornelius would have an opportunity of saying something about Christianity before the King. It was all right as to his salary. Antony Bullion had promised to write to his brother that it was to be paid directly. Two men, with views upon Church matters like Agrippa's, Nicolas Cop and the old Faber Stapulensis, who were both then with Margaret of Valois, desired to have Cornelius saluted in their name.

More days elapsed, and then there came two letters

¹ Ep. 86, Lib. iv. p. 858.

² Ep. 37, Lib. iv. p. 859.

from Chenonceaux; one short one from the Bishop of Bazas¹, simply exhorting the unhappy waiter upon royal leisure to believe what Chapelain had written in the other. Chapelain wrote² that he believed Barguyn and Bullion to be Agrippa's friends; that it was an unlucky mistake of the Seneschal's to show Agrippa's letter to the Queen Louisa, since it had compelled all his friends to be silent before her. That he must by all means send his astrological calculation to her highness, and without delay, acting as if in entire ignorance of what had happened. That to avoid suspicion, he had better direct it to be presented by the Seneschal, and that the Queen having received it, would communicate it to the court, upon which there would arise occasion to assist the absent doctor with legitimate apology.

Cornelius, to the most important clause in this letter, could only reply³, "I repeat, that I am in a marvellous way defrauded by that M. Bullion. You know that I have not received the letters which you say you forwarded to me through him, and that his brother denies ever having letters or commissions from him. Unless you procure payment for me through Martin of Troyes, I am doomed to receive nothing. Farewell, and be happy.—From Lyons, September 11, 1526. Greetings to you from my dearest wife, who labours under a double tertian fever; and I have some fear lest, through the distress of mind she suffers, it may pass into a quartan. Of this most knavish

¹ Ep. 39, Lib. iv. p. 860.

² Ep. 40, Lib. iv. p. 860.

³ Ep. 41, Lib. iv. p. 861.

sport those treasurers are authors: may all gods and goddesses confound them! But again and again I say, may you be happy."

Four days afterwards, Thomas Bullion, met in the street, went so far as to confess¹ that he had been instructed to pay to Cornelius what money he received; but he denied the receipt of instructions from his brother to make payment forthwith. Agrippa still begged that he might get his salary through Martin of Troyes. "I do not trust the Bullions, but if they pay me, I shall be appeased: if not, I must still be importunate with letters, whereof you perhaps are weary, and which they despise; I in the mean time shall hunger. Greet for me Cop, and Faber. My wife greets you; she continues ill."

It is hard to realise the weary misery of the position to which learned and high-spirited men were reduced when they were promised means of living by a prince not active to see that the promise was fulfilled, and so were left to haunt the doors of underlings, and to be treated with disdain by knaves. But here we have the whole tale told. On the sixteenth of September², Agrippa had found that his correspondence with the court was continually being intercepted. "After the receipt of your last letter," he wrote, "I persecuted that brother of Bullion for four days, and got nothing but mystification. I am grieved and vexed to batter your head daily with these most annoying letters, and to give you so much trouble, while those thievish treasurers do but laugh at us both: yet I

¹ Ep. 42, Lib. iv. p. 861.

² Ep. 43, Lib. iv. p. 862.

hope that their iniquity will not have so much power as to cloud with the smallest doubt our mutual good-will. . . My wife greets you, but she is in a weakly state, being with child: and truly had not fortune added it, this one thing might have been wanting to the heap of my distresses.”

In another letter, written on the same day¹, he enclosed the astrological prediction, and expressed delight at getting rid of it. “As to your counsel, that I should say something upon Christianity to the most Christian king, that requires no little consideration, and must be pondered maturely: whether it be better to translate other men’s works, or offer one’s own thoughts, I am still uncertain: it is most honest to fight with one’s own weapons, safer far to hide behind another person’s shield; but safest to be silent. For at this day, as you perceive, Christian truth can be cultivated in no more secure way than by stupor and silence, lest by chance we be seized by the inquisitors of heretic preachers, and by those men of the Sorbonne, most learned Scribes and Pharisees, according to the law, not of Moses, not of Christ either, but of Aristotle: so we may be forced to recant through fear of fagot. I have been writing in these last days a volume of some size, which I have entitled ‘On the Uncertainty and Vanity’ of Sciences, and on the Excellence of the Word of God.’ If ever you see it, I think you will praise the plan, admire the treatment, and consider it not unworthy of his majesty: but I do not mean to dedicate

¹ Ep. 44, Lib. iv. pp. 862, 863.

it to that king, for the work has found one who is most desirous to become its patron, and most worthy so to be. But I am writing now on Pyromachy, and not so much writing as experimenting, and I have now at my house buildings and models of machines of war, invented by me, and constructed at no little cost; they are both useful and deadly, such as (I know) this age has not yet seen. . . . And still you do not know all, my Chapelain, that lies hidden under the cloak of your Agrippa."

CHAPTER VIII.

DESCRIBING ONE HALF OF AGRIPPA'S BOOK UPON THE "VANITY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS."

THE motto placed by Agrippa on the title-page of his book upon the "Vanity of Sciences and Arts"¹—*Nihil scire felicissima vita: Ignorance is Bliss*—points out the spirit of its satire. He dedicates the work to an Italian

¹ *Splendida Nobilitatis Viri et armato militiæ Equitis Aurati, ac utriusque Juris Doctoris, Sacræ Casaræ Majestatis a consiliis et archivis Inditiari, Henrici Cornelii Agrippæ ab Nettesheym, De Incertitudine et Vanitate Scientiarum et Artium, atque Excellentia Verbi Dei Declamatio.* Nunc denuo recognita: et Scholiis Marginariis illustrata. Nihil scire felicissima vita. Anno MDXXXII. Mense Septembri, Colonia, 12mo, pp. 351. From this copy, which is the third published edition and the most perfect, I take the sketch in the text, and to it reference is made in the succeeding notes. Subsequent reprints were mutilated by the censorship. In sketching the contents of the volume I have had also before me one of the English translations, of which several were made in the same and the succeeding century, and have made some use of the old translator's language. But as he was by no means conscientious in behaviour to his text, and especially was apt to put his own Protestantism into his author's mouth, he has needed much correction. The view given in the text represents, I believe accurately, from the biographer's point of view, the spirit of Agrippa's satire, and is expressed very much in his own words; typical sentences being so chosen to stand for chapters as to present, to the best of the narrator's power, not a long skeleton of the contents of the book; but a full representation of its spirit and its meaning as a portion of its author's life.

friend, Augustine Furnario, citizen of Genoa, and in his dedication calls it a cynical Declamation; says that he writes as a dog; and that in his next book on fire-arms, pyrography, he shall appear as a dragon, after which he will return to his old shape of philosopher.

If we bear in mind the disappointments and distresses in the midst of which this bitter jest was written, and the life also that prepared the author for his work, we shall know perfectly well its meaning. The bigotry of school-men who would test all knowledge, even all religion, by what they could find in a few Latin and Greek books, was a heavy drag upon all independent aspiration. It infected the Church: it followed with its hue-and-cry every one who sought to explore new regions of art and science. There were brave and strong men in those days, who battled with it, and broke loose from it. Cornelius Agrippa, half emancipated, in this book turned fiercely upon those who watched the prison door. You tie down free inquiry, it is meant to say, you chain our spirits to the ground; you claim to have all wisdom when you know what has been written about your sciences and arts. But you are wrong. There is as much vanity as sense in all your wisdom, and beyond it lies an undiscovered world in God's Word and His works. Hear me cry, Out upon your knowledge! You who claim to be the fountain-heads of wisdom, are not so wise as you account yourselves. I can say more, you shall find, in praise of an ass than of any one of you. The fountain-head of wisdom is the Word of God, and it shall pour its fertilis-

ing stream over a philosophy less barren than yours. "They will all run me down," he says, in a preface to the reader, and conjures up a pleasant vision of himself, with the followers of every art and science clamouring against him, every pack with its own cry. "The obstinate theosophists," he says, in his climax, "will cry me down for heresy, or compel me to bow down to their own idols. Our scornful magistrates will demand of me a recantation, and I shall be proscribed under the great seals of the world-supporting men of the Sorbonne; but I write this because I see men puffed up with human knowledge condemning the study of the Scriptures, and giving more heed to the maxims of philosophers than to the laws of God. Moreover," he adds, "we find that a most detestable custom has invaded all or most schools of learning, to swear their disciples never to contradict Aristotle, Boethius, Thomas Aquinas, or whoever else may be their scholastic god, from whom, if there be any that differ so much as a nail's breadth, him they proclaim a scandalous heretic, a criminal against the holy sciences, fit only to be consumed in fire and flames." He urges, accordingly, his apology, if he should seem to speak too bitterly against some sciences and their professors, "How impious a piece of tyranny it is to make captive the wits of students to fixed authors, and to deprive their disciples of the liberty of searching after and following the truth!"

The work contains no other subdivision than that into chapters, of which there are one hundred and two. It admits, however, of a not unnatural division into two

main parts: the first fifty-one chapters comprehend a review of the Sciences; the other fifty-one, having discussed the nature of man, speak of his Arts, and lead up to the desired conclusions. Dividing the book in this manner, therefore, I describe it in two chapters of the present narrative.

Of the Sciences in general¹, Agrippa says that all of them are evil as well as good, and that they bring us no divine advantage, beyond that which was promised of old by the Serpent, when he said, Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. They have nothing of good in them or truth but what they borrow from the possessors or inventors of them, for if they light upon any evil person they are hurtful, and there is nothing more ominous than art and science guarded with impiety. If they light upon a person not so much evil as foolish, there is nothing so insolent or dogmatical; but if good and just men be the possessors of knowledge, then Arts and Sciences may become useful to the commonwealth, though they make their possessors none the happier. True happiness consists not in the knowledge of good things, but in good life; not in understanding, but in living understandingly. Neither is it great learning, but good-will that joins men to God. Furthermore, all sciences are but the opinions and decrees of private men, as well those that are of use as those that are hurtful, being never perfect, but full of error and uncertainty; and that this is evident we shall

¹ *De Incert. Van. Sci. et Art.* Cap. i. pp. 1-8.

make appear, by taking a survey and making a particular inspection into every particular science.

He then begins his survey by entering at the wicket of the Sciences, the first elements of Letters¹, and shows how there is no agreement among men as to their number or form, and how they have gone through so many vicissitudes that there is no language able to claim possession of the alphabet as it was first given to man. Then he goes on to the art of well speaking, called Grammar², founded upon rules that only are considered right because they are established. But he asks, are they established? How many toil and labour day and night! scribbling continually all sorts of commentaries, forms of elegance, or phrases, questions, annotations, animadversions, observations, castigations, centuries, miscellanies, antiquities, paradoxes, collections, additions, lucubrations, editions upon editions. And yet not one of them all, whether Greek or Roman, has distinguished among parts of speech, or settled the order to be observed in their construction; or assured us whether there be fifteen pronouns, as Priscian believes, or whether more, as Diomedes and Phocas will have it; whether gerunds are nouns or verbs; why among the Greeks nouns plural of the neuter gender are joined with a verb of the singular number; why many write such Latin words as *felix*, *questio*, with a Greek diphthong, others not; whether H be a letter or not, and many other trifles of the same nature: so that not only as to words

¹ Cap. ii. pp. 8-11.

² Cap. iii. pp. 11-19.

and syllables, but also in the very elements and foundations of grammar itself, no reason can be alleged to end the continual warfare. The divines and holy friars, too, mixing themselves with the tribe of grammarians, overturn the Scriptures for the grammar's sake; which puts us in mind of the story of the priest who, having many hosts at one elevation, for fear of committing himself in his grammar, cried out, "These are my bodies!" Moreover, though it be apparent to the world that there is no faith to be put in these grammarians, there never was an author of so sublime a wit as to have escaped their malicious slanders. Neither is there any man that ever wrote in Latin whom Laurentius Valla, the most learned of all the grammarians, hath spared in his anger; and yet him hath Mancinelli most cruelly butchered.

But what of the Poets, who have preserved and pickled up the bestialities of the gods in neat verse and metre, communicating the same to posterity, as mad dogs venom? They weave their fictions with an art often destructive of the truth of history. Rightly did Democritus call Poesy¹ not an Art but a Madness. Therefore Plato said, that he never knocked at a poet's doors being in his wits. Yet, in the midst of their trifles, poets, with a boldness like that of the Lycian frogs, promise themselves, and others through them, lasting remembrance in the world. No very great fame or reward is that. Neither is it the office of a poet, but of a historian, to prolong the life of reputation.

¹ Cap. iv. pp. 19-23.

What then of History¹? Historians are at such variance among themselves, delivering several tales of the same story, that it is impossible but that most of them must be the greatest liars in the world. Agrippa fills a pleasant chapter with accounts of the Uncertainties and Vanities of the historians, in the number of whom Ephorus is to be reckoned, who related that there was but one city in Ireland; as also Stephen the Grecian, who said that the Franks were a people of Italy, and that Vienna was a city of Galilee. There are other historians more to be condemned for their untruth than this, who having been present at scenes, yet will, through favour or affection, in flattery of their own party, deliver to posterity falsity for truth, writing not what the thing is, but what they desire it should have been. Many, again, write histories, not so much for truth's sake as, like Xenophon in writing his account of Cyrus, to delight the reader and set forth some idea of a king which they have framed to their own fancy.

In Rhetoric² great is the question even as to what its purpose is, whether to persuade men or to teach good utterance. There is a maze of theses, hypotheses, figures, proems, insinuations, and so forth; yet it is denied that among these the end of rhetoric is to be found. There was Corax, a rhetorician among the Syracusans, a man of shrewd wit, who taught his art for gain. To him came Ctesias as a pupil, having no money, but promising double pay as soon as he was perfect. When Corax had taught

¹ Cap. v. pp. 24-30.

² Cap. vi. pp. 30-36.

him, he asked, meaning to defraud his teacher, What is Rhetoric? and was answered, It is effectual persuasion. Then, said Ctesias, if I persuade myself I owe thee nothing I am quit effectually of my debt. If I cannot persuade myself, I shall then also owe thee nothing, because I have not been perfected in my art. To which Corax replied, Whatever I was to be paid, if I can persuade myself to take it, I must have. If I cannot persuade myself to take it, you should give it me, for having bred a scholar that excels his master. When the Syracusans heard this talk, they cried out, Bad crows lay bad eggs. Æschylus writes that composed orations are the greatest evils in the world. A confident eloquence defending bad causes prevails over justice, therefore the Romans for a long time would not receive rhetoricians in their town; and the Spartans exiled Ctesiphon because he bragged that he could talk a whole day upon any subject. There are men so affected with the charms of eloquence, that, rather than not be Ciceronian, they will turn Pagan; but they are vain babblers, who will have account to render of their idle speech.

Dialectics¹ they call the art of Reasoning; but, says Agrippa, our dialecticians don't succeed in making things so clear that they may not be asked why they should not as well call Man a Man, as Animal Rationale, or Mortal Rational Creature. Cornelius, having described some of their niceties, says, these are the nets and these the hounds with which they hunt the truth of all things, natural or supernatural; but, according to the proverb of Clodius

¹ Cap. vii. pp. 36-39.

and Varro, they never fall upon their game by reason of the noise they make in brawling with each other.

But the late schools of sophistry¹, Agrippa says in his next chapter—the eighth—have produced worse, portentous things: Infinites, Comparatives, Superlatives, Incipits and Definites, Formalities, Hæcceities, Instances, Amplifications, Restrictions, Distinctions, Intentions, Suppositions, Appellations, Obligations, Consequences, Indissolubles, Exponibles, Replications, Exclusives, Instances, Cases, Particularisations, Supposits, Mediates, Immediates, Completes, Incompletes, Complexes, Incomplexes, with many more vain and intolerable barbarisms. In this study our sophisters are so stupidly employed that their whole business seems to be to learn to err. These are they who, as Quintilian says, are extraordinarily subtle in disputing; but take them from their impertinent cavilling, and they can no longer endure the blows of a right reason; like little bugs that, secure in chinks and crevices, easily are trodden upon in the plain field. I deny not the use of such science in scholastic exercises, but I cannot apprehend how it may assist or uphold theological contemplation, whose chief logic consists in prayer.

The art of Raymond Lully² is the subject of the next chapter; and as he has written, he says, a commentary on it, he dismisses it with a few words, simply warning men that its use is to display learning and wit, not to increase it.

The Commentary here referred to has not yet been

¹ Cap. viii. pp. 40-43.

² Cap. ix. pp. 43, 44.

mentioned in the narrative, its exact place in it being uncertain. It is included among Agrippa's works, and presents simply, at some length, a sketch of one of Lully's works, the *Ars Brevis*¹. This is a technical system for the due fitting of knowledge to the memory, by a right use in reference either to simple or complex objects of study, of propositions, definitions, arguments, and exhaustive questions; the application, in fact, of a short and good logical process to the art of study. A commentary upon this system has, therefore, not much biographical significance. Not a few clever men, including Faber Stapulensis, were employing Lully's system in their studies. Men who began their studies late, made, it was said, a surprising progress by its help. Cornelius Agrippa was among the learned men who used it. He had learnt it from one of three young Germans, Andrew, Peter, and James Canter, by whom it was taught in many lands; and, having digested it afresh in his own mind, he reproduced it in the shape of a Commentary, and dedicated his work to the Reverend and Noble John Laurentin of Lyons, Preceptor of St. Antony's at Rivolta. There is no date to the dedication, and the friendship with Laurentin, who had helped in sending him to Metz, and who is now at Lyons, runs over so many years that his name is no clue to the date of dedication. Enough that

¹ *H. C. A. In Artem Brevem Raymondi Lullii Commentaria*. Opera, Tom. ii. pp. 331-436. Lully was a man who lived a wise wild life in the thirteenth century.

a rather full account of this method of study was at this time among the number of Agrippa's writings.

From his brief chapter on the Art of Lully, the satirist passes, in the tenth chapter of his *Vanity of Sciences*, to the Mnemonic Art¹—technical memory. This art, when Simonides or somebody else offered it to Themistocles, he refused, saying he had more need of forgetfulness than memory; for, said he, I remember what I would not, but I cannot forget what I would. After all, a great memory is but a childish thing to display, for it is shame and disgrace to make a show of great reading after the manner of those who parade all their wares outside their doors, and have an empty house within.

Of Mathematical Sciences², which treat of figure, number, and motion (though there was never any figure yet found perfectly round), the first is Arithmetic³, mother of all the rest, and only valued among merchants for the mean benefit of keeping their accounts. Geomancy⁴ is a vain branch of arithmetic, related to astrology. "I myself," Agrippa says, "have written a Geomancy" [a lost work, to which we have had previous allusions], "far different from the rest, though not less superstitious and fallacious, or, if you will, I may say equally lying." Arithmetical science has another offspring in the Art of Dicing⁵, whereof Chance is the father. This dicing is now-a-days

¹ *De Incert. et Van. Sci. et Art.* Cap. x. pp. 44, 45.

² Cap. xi. pp. 45, 46.

³ Cap. xii. p. 46.

⁴ Cap. xiii. p. 46.

⁵ Cap. xiv. p. 47.

a game in the utmost request, even among kings and nobles. How do I say, a game? Yea, the sole wisdom of men wickedly bred up to cheat and cozen. Then there is, also, the Pythagorean Lot¹, by which fortunes are told from numbers got out of the letters of a name. But to return to Arithmetic²: it yields such idle and uncertain labour, that among arithmeticians has arisen that irreconcilable dispute, Whether an even or odd number be most to be preferred; which is the most perfect number between three, six, and ten; and whether any number may be properly said to be evenly even, in which matter of great consequence they say that Euclid, the prince of géometricians, very much erred. Some account the numerical inventions of Pythagoras among the sacraments, and the arithmeticians think themselves as gods because they are adepts in numeration; but the musicians regard harmony as more divine.

Of Music³, which Aristoxenes called the soul of men, Agrippa then describes the scales and measures, of which the Doric was preferred by the Tuscans, as being more grave, honest, and every way modest, than the Phrygian or Lydian. So Agamemnon, going to the Trojan war, left behind him at home a Doric musician, to the end that he might, by his grave spondaic songs, sustain the virtue of his wife; and thus it was impossible for Ægisthus to disturb the faithfulness of Clytemnestra, until he had first murdered the said musician. Yet is the com-

¹ Cap. xv. pp. 47, 48.

² Cap. xvi. pp. 48, 49.

³ Cap. xvii. pp. 49-54.

mon opinion verified by much experience, that music is an art professed only by men of ill-regulated dispositions, who neither know when to begin nor when to leave off; as is reported of Archabius the piper, to whom they were wont to give more money to leave off than to continue playing. Music hath been always a vagrant, wandering up and down after its hire. Athanasius, by reason of its vanity, exiles it from the Church. True it is that St. Ambrose, delighting more in pomp and ceremony, instituted the use of singing and playing in churches; but St. Augustine, in the mean between them both, makes a great doubt of the lawfulness thereof in his Confessions.

Dancing¹ belongs also to the science of numbers, and, were it not set off with music, would appear the greatest vanity of vanities. Yet, as the worst things have their extollers, some of the Greeks have deduced the origin of dancing from the heavens themselves, comparing the steps of dances to the motions of the stars, that seem in their harmonious order to move by a kind of dance, which they began as soon as the world was created. Others say it was an invention of the Satyrs. Socrates, judged by the Oracle to be wisest of the men then living, was not ashamed to learn to dance when he was far stricken in years; and not only so, but highly extolled the same art, reckoning it among the most serious parts of education. Nevertheless, this art attends always upon immoderate feasts, and is a part of wantonness. Also, when the children of Israel had erected themselves a calf in the

¹ Cap. xviii. pp. 55-57.

wilderness, they sacrificed thereto, eating and drinking, and afterwards, rising up to play, they fell to singing and dancing. Infamous certainly is gladiatory dancing¹; neither is pantomimic dancing², which has been compared with eloquence, worthy of honour, and indeed all sorts of dancing are not only to be dispraised but utterly abominated, seeing they teach nothing but a wonderful mystery how to run mad. The similar art of Rhetorical Gesticulation³ is now, Agrippa says, quite laid aside, except it be among some acting friars, whom you shall see with a strange labour of the voice making a thousand faces, looking with their eyes like men distracted, throwing their arms about, dancing with their feet, lasciviously shaking their loins, with a thousand several sorts of writhings, wrestings, turnings this way and that way of the whole body, proclaiming in their pulpits their frothy declamations to the people.

Geometry⁴ is the science next akin to Arithmetic, of which such is the uncertainty, that no man could ever find out the right squaring of the circle, or the line truly equal to the side. Akin to this is the science of Optics, or the Perspective Art⁵, by which we come to Painting⁶, which is mute poetry, as poetry is a speaking picture; and to Statuary and Engraving⁷, arts invented by those who first introduced idolatry, the ministers of pride, and lust, and superstition. "But that pictures and statues are

¹ Cap. xix. pp. 57, 58.

² Cap. xx. p. 58.

³ Cap. xxi. p. 59.

⁴ Cap. xxii. pp. 59-61.

⁵ Cap. xxiii. pp. 61-63.

⁶ Cap. xxiv. pp. 63, 64.

⁷ Cap. xxv. pp. 64-66

authorities not to be scorned I learned once upon a time in Italy, for between the Austin friars and the regular canons there arose a great debate before the Pope about the dress of St. Augustine, that is to say, whether he wore a black stole over a white tunic, or a white stole over a black tunic, and finding nothing in Scripture that gave light toward the determination of the question, the Roman judges thought best to refer the matter to the painters and sculptors, resolving to be guided by what they should declare they had seen in ancient pictures and statues. Encouraged by this example, I myself, labouring with indefatigable diligence to trace the origin of the monk's cowl, since I could find nothing about it in the Scriptures, at length I betook myself to the painters, seeking the truth of the matter in the porches of halls belonging to the brethren, where the histories of the Old and New Testament are generally painted. But seeing that I could not find in all the Old Testament any one of the patriarchs, or of the priests or prophets, or of the Levites, or Elijah himself, whom the Carmelites take for their patron, wearing a cowl, I looked through the New Testament pictures, when I saw Zacharias, Simeon, John the Baptist, Joseph, our Lord, and his apostles and disciples; scribes, Pharisees, chief priests, Annas, Caiaphas, Herod, Pilate, and many others, but never saw one cowl among them all. Beginning again at the beginning, and examining them all figure by figure, presently, in the very front of a scene, I found the Devil himself with a cowl on, as he stood tempting Christ in the wilderness.

I was very glad to have found among the pictures what I had before failed to find in writing, namely, that the devil was the first inventor of cowls, from whom I suppose the other monks and brothers borrowed it, unless perchance he may have bequeathed it to them as his heirs."

Returning then to optics, or the use of Reflectors and Perspective-glasses¹ (refractors), the experiments thereof, he says, are daily seen in glasses of various kinds, hollow, convex, plane, orbicular, angular, pyramidal, and so forth. They have their impostures, representing things that are below as being above us, or surrounding them with rainbow colours. I myself have learnt to make glasses wherein while the sun shines you may discern for the distance of three or four miles together, whatever places are enlightened or overspread with his beams. However, he adds, they are vain and useless things, invented only for ostentation and idle pleasure.

So may the toy of one age come to be the precious treasure of another. The first telescope was not made till the beginning of the seventeenth century. Cornelius was, with other men, upon the traces of a great discovery, but had probably advanced towards it no farther than many of his learned neighbours.

Cosmimetry² is divided into cosmography and geography: both measure the world; one by a system drawn from the heavenly bodies, the other by furlongs and miles; and by division into mountains, woods, rivers, towns,

¹ Cap. xxvi. pp. 66, 67.

² Cap. xxvii. pp. 67-70.

nations, and so forth. But what authors shall instruct us in this art? manifold being the contentions about boundaries, distances, longitudes, latitudes, climates, characters of countries! Neither are the masters of this science agreed about the middle, or navel, of the earth, which Ptolemy places under the equinoctial circle, and Strabo believes to be the mountain Parnassus in Greece; with whom Plutarch and Lactantius the grammarian agree, and believe that in the time of the deluge it was the only mark left between sky and water. Other theories Agrippa gives, and then falls upon the disputes of geographers concerning the Antipodes.

Architecture¹ is a good and honest art, except that it so much seizes the minds of men, for there is scarcely one to be found who, if his wealth will permit him, does not wholly employ himself in rebuilding, or adding to that which is done already well and decently. Vanity was the ostentatious architecture of the Labyrinth, the Pyramids, the Sphynx. Vain was the architect who proposed out of Mount Athos to cut an effigy of Alexander that should contain a city of ten thousand inhabitants within the hollow of its hand. "Vain," he says, "are the great churches erected in our days, with most lofty towers and spires, vast heaps of stone, rising to an incomparable and prodigious height; together with innumerable steeples for bells, erected at a vast expense of money, drained under the pretence of charity and pious use, which had been better spent in the relief of thousands of the poor, who, being the true temples of

¹ Cap. xxviii. pp. 70-72.

God, fall through hunger, thirst, pain, sickness, want; while they might, and should be, more properly erected and supported by help of those sacred alms." Death, too, is brought by this knowledge of architecture among men, not only by means of the deadly engines it constructs on land, but by means of the ships which it fits out to multiply the perils of the sea.

Mining¹ is allied to architecture. It were to be wished that men would aspire as eagerly to heaven as they descend into the bowels of the earth, allured by veins of riches that will not content their souls.

We, turning our thoughts now heavenward, pass to the science of Astronomy², and find the men who talk about the stars, as if they had conversed with them in heaven, and were but newly come out of their company, having among themselves the most dissentient opinions even concerning those things by which they say all things are kept up and subsist. Of course, the diversities of doctrine among the astronomers find a long chapter for Cornelius, though he will say little of such questions as the contention as to which is the right and which is the left side of heaven. All the twelve signs, with the northern and southern constellations, got into the sky by help of fables, and by these fables the astrologers grow fat, while the race of poets that invented them is left to die of hunger. Judicial astrology³ is next discussed and denounced, as we have seen in his letters how Cornelius de-

¹ Cap. xxix. pp. 72-74.

² Cap. xxx. pp. 74-80.

³ Cap. xxxi. pp. 80-90.

nounces it. Yet, he says, these fortune-tellers do find entertainment among princes and magistrates, from whom they receive considerable salaries; whereas there is, indeed, no sort of men more pernicious to a commonwealth. For their skill, it lies in the fitting of ambiguous predictions to events when they have happened; and so it is that a man who lives by lying shall by one chance truth obtain more credit than he loses by a hundred manifest delusions. These men have attributed to Mars the cause and necessity of the Lord's death; yea, they do affirm that he made choice of his hours to work his miracles, and spoke as an astrologer in saying that his hour was not yet come; also, that by knowledge of the stars he was enabled to ride into Jerusalem at times when he knew that the Jews could have no power to hurt him. In this chapter—the thirty-first of his work—Agrippa cites the twelve books against Astrologers, written by Giovanni Pico di Mirandola, and declares his assent to all their arguments. In a like spirit he denounces arts of Divination¹, points out that there is idleness in Physiognomy², in Metoposcopy³, and Cheiromancy⁴, foster-children of astrology. He turns again to Geomancy⁵, to remark upon its astrological connexions; declares Augury⁶ to be a practice depending only on conjecture, grounded partly upon the influences of the stars, partly taken from parabolical similitudes, than which there is nothing more deceitful. Speculatory divination⁷ he

¹ Cap. xxxii. p. 90.² Cap. xxxiii. pp. 90, 91.³ Cap. xxxiv. p. 91.⁴ Cap. xxxv. pp. 91, 92.⁵ Cap. xxxvi. p. 93.⁶ Cap. xxxvii. pp. 93, 94.⁷ Cap. xxxviii. p. 94.

dismisses in a line or two, as being notoriously false. The treatises that have been written on the interpretation of Dreams¹ are mere dreams concerning dreams. As for the foreknowledge of the Mad², it is not to be credited that what the wise and waking know not, mad folks and dreamers should see; as if God were nearer at hand to them than to the vigilant, watchful, intelligent, and those that are full of premeditation.

The circle of the sciences turns next to Magic³, which is allied closely with astrology. Natural magic⁴ is the force above human reason which is the active principle in nature, and the practice of it is the art of producing with open act the hidden and concealed powers of nature, as if any one should cause parsley to spring from the seed into a perfect plant in a few hours. Mathematical magic⁵ produces wonderful inventions by help of mathematical learning and celestial influences, such as the wooden dove of Archytas, which flew. It produces contrivances neither partaking of truth nor divinity, but certain imitations in some way akin thereto.

Of the sort of natural magic which is called Witchcraft⁶, Cornelius speaks next, as one not doubting that the browsing of Nebuchadnezzar, the incantations of the witch of Endor, and the deeds of Pharaoh's magicians, were so many scriptural authorities for a belief in the deeds said to be done by witchcraft. "It is manifest, however," he

¹ Cap. xxxix. pp. 94-96.

² Cap. xli. pp. 97, 98.

³ Cap. xliii. pp. 100, 101.

⁴ Cap. xl. pp. 96, 97.

⁵ Cap. xlii. pp. 98-100.

⁶ Cap. xliv. pp. 101-103.

concludes, "that this natural magic, inclining toward conjuring and necromancy, is often entangled in the snares and delusions of bad spirits."

Of Conjuring and Necromancy¹, which are to be abhorred as detestable arts, he teaches that, unless there were something of reality in them, and that many mischievous and wicked things were accomplished thereby, both divine and human laws had not so strictly provided for the punishment thereof, and ordered them to be extirpated from the earth. Among the practisers of wicked arts are the necromancers, who gave to the ancient fathers good cause to ordain that bodies of the dead should be buried in consecrated ground, assisted with lights, sprinkled with holy water, and prayed for so long as they were aboveground. For the Serpent, prince of this world, eats the dust, which is our carnal body, so long as it remains unsanctified; and something to this purpose, it was thought, was the great dispute (which St. Jude mentions in his epistle) of Michael with Satan about the body of Moses.

Theurgy², or divine magic, is the search for communion with good angels by the purification of the soul; it is not evil, rightly understood; but is a pernicious superstition to the foolish.

In the next chapter, which is upon the Cabala³, Agrippa shows that he has again outgrown the enthusiasm of his youth, and that there died out a great part of one of his

¹ Cap. xlv. pp. 103-106.

² Cap. xlvi. pp. 106, 107.

³ Cap. xlvii. pp. 107-112.

own favourite vanities, while there increased within him the severe and simple faith of the Reformer. He does not say that there is no Cabala, but discourages the search for it. "As for my part," he writes, "I do not doubt but that God revealed many things to Moses and the prophets which were contained under covert of the words of the law, and not to be communicated to the vulgar: so I own that this art, of which the Jews boast their possession, and which I at one time investigated with great labour and pains, is a mere rhapsody of superstition, allied to theurgic magic. For if, as the Jews contend, coming from God, it did in any way conduce to perfection of life, the salvation of men, true understanding,—certainly that Spirit of Truth which, having forsaken the synagogue, is now come to teach us all, would not have concealed it from the Church, to which there is no name given under heaven by which man can be saved, but only the name of Jesus. Wherefore the Jews, although most skilful in divine names, after the coming of Christ, were unable to do what had been done by their forefathers. The Cabala of the Jews, therefore, is now only a vain delusion, by which men extract their vain inventions from the oracles of God, and, feeding upon empty speculations, lose the Word of Truth. Coming to the subject of Magical Illusions¹ in his next chapter—his forty-eighth—Agrippa speaks of magic, and says of another of his trains of youthful speculation, "It is true that, being young, I wrote three books of magic

¹ Cap. xlvi. pp. 112-115.

myself, in a considerable volume, which I entitled 'Of Occult Philosophy,' in which what errors soever I then committed through the curiosity of youth—now grown more wary—I do publicly recant; for I vainly wasted much of my time and means upon these vanities. This advantage I got, that I know now by what arguments to exhort others against following the same way to ruin."

Natural Philosophy¹ staggers constantly upon unsound and slippery opinions, and finds nothing at all fixed to hold. As to the very Origin of Things², Agrippa shows how great is the uncertainty of knowledge, and in the next shows how philosophers have argued opposite opinions respecting the Plurality of Worlds, and the world's continuance³. Empedocles said there was one world, but that it was a small particle only of the universe. Metrodorus, a disciple of Democritus, and afterwards⁴ Epicurus, said that there were innumerable worlds, because the causes of them were innumerable; neither was it less absurd to think that there should be one world in the universe, than to imagine one ear of corn in a whole field.

¹ Cap. xlix. pp. 115, 116.

² Cap. l. pp. 116, 117.

³ Cap. li. pp. 117, 118.

⁴ I correct here a trifling slip of Agrippa's memory. He calls Metrodorus a disciple of Democritus and Epicurus.

CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH IS COMPLETED THE DESCRIPTION OF AGRIPPA'S BOOK UPON THE
VANITY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS.

HALF the number of chapters into which Agrippa's satire is divided have been now described. They may be summed up as having treated, first, of the means of knowledge,—letters, language, and the arts of speech and study; then of the group of sciences dependent on the primary idea of number, with some arts arising out of them; next of the science of Nature displayed in the heavens, with the arts of astrology, augury, and the like therewith connected; and, lastly, of the science of Nature in the study of the powers of things upon earth, and of the studies therewith most immediately connected. Supplementary to this view of the universe was the chapter upon the Plurality of Worlds.

Cornelius now turns to man, and begins with the study of his Soul¹, showing at some length how vain and uncertain are the opinions of the books concerning it. Thus of its seat, he says, Hippocrates and Hierophilus place it

¹ Cap. lii. pp. 118-126.

in the fibres or ventricles of the brain; Democritus, in the whole region of the temples; Erasistratus, in the cranial membrane; Strabo, in the space between the eyebrows; Epicurus gives it room in the whole breast; Diogenes, in the arterial ventricle of the heart; the Stoics, with Chrysippus, in the whole heart, and in the spirits that surround the heart; Empedocles places it in the blood, to which opinion Moses seems to incline; Plato and Aristotle, and the more noble sects of philosophers, place the soul in the whole body; Galen is of opinion that every part of the body has its particular soul. As to its nature, as to the fact or manner of its continuance, the mode of its propagation, there are equal dissensions among the philosophers, and through them it has come to pass that there are so many absurd contests upon the origin of the soul among our Christian divines. Some believe that soul begets soul, as body, body; against whose heresy St. Jerome fiercely combats. Others are of opinion that souls are created daily by God, which opinion is that of Thomas Aquinas. Moreover, concerning souls, some have ventured to write many things about the apparitions of departed souls, which often are repugnant to the doctrine of the Gospel. "I do not absolutely deny that there are holy apparitions, admonitions, revelations from the dead, but I admonish caution, knowing how easy a thing it is for Satan to transform himself into the semblance of an angel of light. There is nothing in any such visions of solid truth or secret wisdom tending to the growth of the soul; they only persuade people to alms, pilgrimages, prayers, and

such works of piety, to which they are persuaded by the Scriptures themselves with far better reason and authority."

As to the study of mind, or of things having no visible existence, which study is Metaphysics¹: this philosophy is full of the vainest speculations, and by it is all theology adulterated. Moral philosophy² is not taught with more certainty by the philosophers; for as it is the discipline of manners, it is found to vary as the manners of those with whom the lot of the philosopher is cast. What was once called a vice is to be called now a virtue; what is here a virtue is a vice in the adjoining land. For character is various as clime. "Who," says Agrippa, "that beholds a man strutting like a cock, with the bearing of a prize-fighter, an unruly look, an ox voice, austere discourse, fierce behaviour, a dress unfastened or torn, does not at once judge him to be a German? Do we not know the French by a well-ordered gait, mild gestures, bland aspect, fair-sounding voice, facile discourse, modest behaviour, and loose dress? We know Spaniards by their holiday step and behaviour, the high lifting of the countenance, the plaintive voice, the choice speech, and the exquisite attire. But we see the Italians rather slow of pace, in gesture grave, in countenance unsettled, low-voiced, captious in talk, magnificent in behaviour, and having a well-ordered attire. We know, also, that in singing the Italians bleat, the Spaniards howl, the Germans hoot, and the French trill. In speech the Italians are grave but crafty, the Spaniards polished but vain-glorious,

¹ Cap. liv. pp. 126-129.

² Cap. liv. pp. 129-137.

the French ready but proud, the Germans hard but simple. In counsel the Italian is provident, the Spaniard astute, the Frenchman inconsiderate, the German useful. Over food the Italian is clean, the Spaniard choice, the Frenchman a free eater, the German clumsy. Towards strangers the Italians are obliging, Spaniards placid, Frenchmen gentle, Germans boorish and inhospitable. In dialogue Italians are prudent, Spaniards cautious, Frenchmen polished, Germans overbearing and intolerable. In love Italians are jealous, Spaniards impatient, Frenchmen fickle, Germans ambitious; but in hate Italians are secret, Spaniards are pertinacious, Frenchmen are threateners, Germans avengers. In transacting business Italians are circumspect, Germans laborious, Spaniards watchful, Frenchmen anxious; in war the Italians are stout but cruel, the Spaniards subtle and thievish, the Germans truculent and venal, the French high-spirited but rash. The Italians are distinguished by their literature, the Spaniards by their navigation, the French by their courtesy, the Germans by their religion and mechanic arts." Thus every nation has its way, and tends to its own notions of a moral code. Agrippa cites some scandalous things out of the morality of Aristotle, and abuses Aristotle heartily; for as he is showing the schoolmen the bad side of their case, it is not improper to point out to them how lustily their idol Aristotle may be battered with abuse founded on plenty of authority. Then, again, how have moralists contended with each other about pleasure and pain, and what is to be considered happiness!

St. Augustine puts us in mind of one hundred and eighty opinions collected by Varro touching this one subject. Agrippa turns, however, to the teaching of the Gospel, and ends his chapter on Moral Philosophers by a comparison of some of their fine doctrines with those of Him who preached the Sermon on the Mount.

From morality he turns to Politics¹ and shows how uncertain and various are the speculations of the learned on the comparative excellence of monarchies, aristocracies, and democracies. In stating the case for each, he seems to show decided preference for the last, but in stating the case against each, it is of democracy that he shows most emphatically all the ill. He is unmerciful in judgment on the evil deeds of kings. Emperors, he says, in a passage that may be one of the many which he found too well remembered by the great men with whom lay the building or destroying of his worldly fortune,—“emperors, kings, and princes, that reign now-a-days, think themselves born and crowned not for the sake of the people, not for good of their citizens and commonalty, not to maintain justice, but to defend their own state and prerogative, governing as if the estates of the people were committed to them not for protection but as their own spoil and prey. They use their subjects at their pleasure, oppress their cities with borrowing, the common people some with taxes, some with penal statutes, and grow rich by fines and confiscations, for as the offences of delinquents are the strength of tyrants, so does the multitude

of offences enrich princes. When I was in Italy I had the honour of familiarity with a powerful prince, whom when I once advised to suppress the factions of the Guelphs and Ghibellines within his dominions, he confessed to me ingenuously that, by means of those factions, above twenty thousand ducats came every year into his exchequer." Cornelius refers also to mixed governments, but sums up all with the opinion that for good government the essential things are integrity and ability in those who rule ; for a single person may govern best, so may a few, so may the people, provided that in each there be the same intention of unity and justice ; but if the designs of all be evil, then can none rule as they should.

The survey next extends to man's Religion¹, a sense rooted in him so deeply by nature, that it marks more clearly than reason does the distinction between man and beast. He shows how many antagonist faiths there are in the world, a great part of it with its philosophers worshipping Mahomet, while, he adds, among us Christians various popes, various councils, various bishops, have prescribed various forms of worship ; differing among themselves, either touching the manner of the ceremonies, meats lawful, fasts, vestments, public ornaments, or else about clerical promotions and tithes. But one thing overcomes the admiration of wonder itself, to see how these ambitious men think to climb heaven by the same way that Lucifer fell from it. In this chapter we learn that among the matter declaimed by him in the schools of

¹ Cap. lvi. pp. 143-146.

Cologne, after his return from England and Dean Colet, the Poms of the Church were discussed fully.

In this book upon Vanities of course they are not spared. From the general topic of religion he passes to an attack upon Images¹ and Image-worship. He who desires to know God, cries Agrippa, let him search the Scriptures. And they who cannot read, let them hear the word of the same Scripture, where St. Paul pronounces that Faith comes by hearing; and what Christ in another place saith, My sheep know my voice. He attacks relic-worship. He does not deny that relics of the saints are sacred, or that in the presence of them, when they happen to be genuine, one may approach, as by help of a sort of pledge, nearer to the saint who is invoked. But to avoid falling into idolatry and superstition, it is better, he urges, to put no faith in things visible, but seek the saints in spirit and in truth, imploring help from them through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have no relic so efficacious as the Sacrament, which is to be found in every church. But a greedy sacerdotal race, hungry for gain, not only of wood and stone, but also out of the bones of the dead and relics of the saints, make instruments of rapine and extortion. They show the sepulchres of the saints; they expose the relics of martyrs, which no man must so much as touch or kiss except for money; they adorn their pictures, set out their festivals with great pomp and state, advancing the fame of their miracles, themselves utterly differing in their lives and conversa-

¹ Cap. lvii. pp. 146 151.

tions from the lives and examples of those whom they praise. These are the men of whom our Saviour spoke when he cried out, Woe unto you that build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, being like to those that slew them. Then, like to the heathen, they allot to every divinity its proper charge; to one, with Neptune, they assign watch over the dangers of the sea; to another, they confide Jove's thunder; another, they give as a Lucina to the women. The Temples¹, too, they dedicate to their saints, as heathens to their gods. But the Most High dwells not in houses made with hands. Men themselves, pious and devout towards God, are His most holy and most acceptable temples: our Lord sent not his followers into the synagogues to pray, but into their private closets; and he himself went up into a mountain, where he spent the night in prayer. Only because of sin, because men could not worship together in their homes and in their fields free from ungodly intrusion, places were appointed separated from profane business, wherein the divine word might be preached to the multitude, and the divine sacraments decently administered. But these have now, by endowment and enrichment, and by misdirected zeal, increased so needlessly in number and in wealth, sums so enormous have been spent upon their superb magnificence of architecture, that, as I said before, many of Christ's poor, true temples and images of God, are forced

¹ Cap. lviii. pp. 151-153.

to suffer hunger, thirst, heat, pain, toil, weakness, want, and downfal.

There is a vanity in the undue esteem of holidays, as if it were lawful to be more religious or more ungodly at one time than at another. To true and perfect Christians there is no difference of days; theirs is a continued festival and rest in God. For the sake of the untrained, the fathers instituted holy days, that they might obtain leisure and liberty to hear the word of God, not meaning that the Church should serve the days, but that the days should serve the Church. For the sake of this convenient freedom, rest from labour was enjoined; but after what lewd fashion is this leisure spent, and what vain controversies have arisen about sacred days and seasons¹. Ceremonies², too, have obtained undue reverence before a God who demands not to be worshipped with corporal actions, but in spirit and in truth. God requires of the Christian no incense but that of praise and thanksgiving; the sacrifices and ceremonies instituted for the Jews by Moses were allowed to the hardness of their hearts, being the indulgence of a small error to recal them from things more unlawful, directing sacrifice to God and not to devils. Moses established those laws by the suffrages of the elders and the people; they passed away, only the law of God remains, and it was God who spoke by Jeremiah, To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and cinnamon from a far country? your burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me. It is not to

¹ Cap. lix. pp. 153-156.

² Cap. lx. pp. 156-159.

be denied that the Apostles, Evangelists, and fathers decked the Christian Church with decent rites, as a spouse for the bridegroom; but later statutes and decrees have added to these out of human weakness. The Christians are now as much burdened with ceremony as were of old the Jews; and, what is more to be deplored, although these ceremonies are neither good nor bad in themselves, the people puts more faith in them, and observes them more strictly than the ordinance of God,—our bishops and priests, abbots and monks misleading men concerning them, and consulting in that way the comfort of their bellies.

The Magistrates of the Church¹ can possess no power of ordaining what is right, except by the suggestion of the Holy Spirit. “Whoever is not called by the spirit to the great office of the ministry, enters not by the door which is Christ; he is a thief and an impostor if he be a minister of the Most High through favour of men to his worldly strength, or by the purchase of votes at an election. Yet such customs now subvert the ancient constitution of the Church, that many popes and apostles sit in the seat of Christ, like to the Scribes and Pharisees who once sat in the seat of Moses. They say and do not, they bind heavy burdens on the shoulders of the people, and themselves touch them not with a finger; they are hypocrites. Doing all their works that they may be seen of men, displaying their religion on the platforms, they desire first seats in the choir, in the schools, in the synagogue, and every-

¹ Cap. lxi. pp. 159-165.

where in the market-place, and in the squares they look to be called rabbi and doctor. They close the way to heaven, and themselves, not entering, keep others out; they devour widows' houses, making their long prayers; compass sea and land, seduce and steal young children, that having made one proselyte they may increase the number of those lost, as they themselves are through vain comment and tradition. They neglect souls and the altars of the public, and with a covetous eye seek after only gold and gifts; and, minding the more profitable and sinister parts of the law, are very strict in their decrees touching tithes, oblations, collections, and alms; tithing fruits, cattle, money; not sparing, also, things of the smallest price, as mint, anise, and cummin, for which, barking like dogs, they contend with the people from the pulpit. Now the Pope of Rome himself (as the holy Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux complained) is the most intolerable and burdensome of all whose pomp and pride never yet any of the tyrants equalled." Agrippa then sketches some of the historical misdeeds of popes, who feed on the sins of the people, and are clad, and nourished, and luxuriate upon the same. The comment is continued in the same vein, but arrives at this conclusion, that as all powers that be are good, being of God, who so provides as to turn all our evil actions for the best, we ought to obey and not resist those who are appointed rulers in the Church. It is infidelity to doubt the Scriptures, and impiety to spurn the priests: priests are good, a bishop is better, holiest of all is the most high Pope, and chief of priests, into whose hand are

given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, to whose keeping are committed the secrets of God. In God's name he is a king, in Christ's name a priest, whom he who honours God will honour, he who dishonours God will dishonour, and he shall not escape vengeance. A sentence meant to be a guard upon the author's life, and to a certain extent perfectly sincere, but perhaps also by the exaggeration of sincerity partly connected with the satire.

Of the Monastic Orders¹ we next find Agrippa speaking, in a vein familiar to us, with no great respect for these ecclesiastical establishments; he says and shows that there is an abominable rout of sinners crept in among them, and his honour for the fraternity is expressed by the fact, that from considering them he passes in his next chapter—expressly calling the transition natural—to the arts of prostitutes² and panders³, in which he speaks with a stern plainness, and in the temper of a Huguenot tells rugged truth not of monks only, but also of kings and courtiers.

The next chapter is on Beggary⁴. It is incumbent both on Church and State to take thought for the poor. Therefore, there are appointed public almshouses, whereof the endowments daily increase through the alms of well-disposed people. The chapter on beggary soon passes, by way of impostors, to the mendicant friars, and denounces them with vigour.

Economy⁵ is the next subject, and a large one; economy is private or public, regal, noble, commercial, and so forth.

¹ Cap. lxii. pp. 165-169.

² Cap. lxiii. pp. 169-179.

³ Cap. lxiv. pp. 179-193.

⁴ Cap. lxv. pp. 193-197.

⁵ Cap. lxvi. pp. 198, 199.

It is not so much an art or science as a doctrine of opinion and custom, and applies to every craft, even to that which is most unhappy, the life of the mariner, who in his perilous sea-prison, ill-faring among filth, is the most wretched of men, and also the most wicked and desperate. But of the mechanic arts, the most important are merchandise, tillage, warfare, surgery, and the inferior parts of law, on all which topics we shall treat in due succession.

To begin with the fundamental principle which is to be found in private economy¹, the chief strength of that consists in matrimony. It is the only condition in which man may be said to live happily. Therein, if there come care and labour, as many times crosses will happen and there is no man's life without misfortune, yet the very burden becomes light, and the yoke easy. He closes his eulogy with examples of unhappy marriages, but attributes these in most cases more to the fault of the man than of the woman. He speaks of trial that may come through children, and heaps together, from Plautus, Euripides, and Lucian, proverbs against servants, adding of these, too, that we do not so often find them enemies as make them so, while masters carry themselves proudly, covetously, cruelly, and contumeliously, becoming lords and tyrants at home, exercising a severity over them, not as they ought, but as they please.

Economy of kings and courts² is then dissected with no trembling hand. "A court," Agrippa writes, "is nothing

¹ Cap. lxvii. pp. 199-204.

² Cap. lxviii. pp. 204, 206.

else than a college of giants, a convent of noble and famous knaves, a theatre of the worst satellites, a school of the most corrupt morals, and an asylum for execrable sins. There pride, arrogance, haughtiness, extortion, lust, gluttony, envy, malice, treachery, violence, impiety, and cruelty, with whatever other vices and corruptions there may be, dwell, rule, and reign. There rape, adultery, and fornication are the sport of princes and of nobles, and even kings' mothers are pimps to their sons. There virtue suffers wreck unspeakable. There the just man is oppressed by the unjust, the man of simple mind becomes a jest, boldness and impudence obtains promotion. There none prosper but flatterers, whisperers, detractors, denouncers, slanderers, sycophants, liars, reputation-killers, authors of discord and outrage among the people. Whatever there is worst in every beast, seems to be brought together in the single flock of the court fold: there is the ferocity of the lion, the cruelty of the tiger, the roughness of the bear, the rashness of the boar, the pride of the horse, the greed of the wolf, the obstinacy of the mule, the fraud of the fox, the changefulness of the chameleon, the dog's bite, the camel's vengefulness, the cowardice of the hare, the petulance of the goat, the filthiness of the hog, the fatuity of the ox, the stupidity of the ass, and the ape's jabber." Agrippa's spirit was in arms, and he could think only of what he felt while he was writing. He made his denunciation more complete and stern than this. "I know," he said, in illustration of one portion of his argument, "a famous town of France so changed by

the arrival of the court in it, that when it left hardly had one husband a modest wife—hardly was it possible for one young man to wed a virgin.” Fearful, indeed, is such a description of the French court in those times; but it is history, not rhetoric.

Then of the nobles of the court¹—Thrasons in gold, purple, and plumage—Agrippa tells the wicked arts. “As a class, lecherous and gluttonous, men counting it no dishonour to be so prodigal at one meal as to be beholden to other men’s tables for a quarter of a year after, their common discourse is a mere trifling tittle-tattle of detraction, giggling, half-truth, falsity, and brag. Some lie about dogs and hunting, about forest bounds, ways through the woods, and the result of hunts; others about horses, or about the wars and what valiant acts they themselves performed there. If any one has a mind to thwart the other, he begins a discourse equally idle, at cross purposes, to put the other out; which the other not brooking, proves to be lying, and laughs to scorn: thence the whole festival is often broken up with quarrels and recriminations, and, as in the banquets of the Centaurs, there is no end to the gifts of Bacchus but in blood. But the chief art and business of these men is to observe the times and humours of their prince, seeking their own opportunities, and flattering whatever passions or desires they find in him, thus often by their perfidy confirming him in error. Such councillors,” adds Cornelius, “has at this day Francis the King of France, who freely urge

¹ Cap. lxi. pp. 207-209.

him to all perfidy and tyranny against the Emperor, yet are themselves all the while held to be excellent and faithful." Here then is a distinct opinion on the memorable act of perjury then under deliberation. While this chapter was being written by Cornelius, the advisers of King Francis were encouraging his wish to get rid of the hard conditions upon which he had bought his escape from durance at Madrid. His councillors abetted his resolve to break the sacred oath wherewith his faith was pledged, so putting out the light of his own honour while he rekindled the flames of war. We see, therefore, that while it existed in suggestion only, Cornelius Agrippa spoke of their deed as an act of perfidy. His detestation of it, had, as we shall find, some influence upon his subsequent career.

The Commonalty of the Court¹ Agrippa next describes, and chiefly in the chapter given to them shows by what arts men of low birth and mean nature rise to wealth and dignity. First they, for the sake of opportunities afforded, and without receiving wages, enter as menials the service of some nobleman, into whose confidence they know how to insinuate themselves, by watching day and night, ready at any time to run or ride. Thus they become secretaries, and from step to step rise by like cunning, trusting themselves only, loving themselves only, wise only to themselves.

Neither are the Court Ladies² without their vices. Their elegant forms, hung with jewels and decked out

¹ Cap. lxx. pp. 209-213.

² Cap. lxxi. pp. 213-215.

with raiment of purple and gold, are such as Lucian fitly compares to Egyptian temples, beautiful structures painted delicately, and adorned with costly stones, but if you look for the god within you shall find there nothing but an ape, a dog, a goat, or a cat. Of their morality, Cornelius speaks his whole opinion: "And they have tongues," he adds, "to which silence is a punishment, yet is their talk most idle and impertinent,—upon ways of arranging, combing, dyeing their hair, upon the management of their cheeks, the folds of their dresses, manners of walking, getting up, and sitting down, what they shall wear, to whom they must give precedence, how often to bow in saluting, whom it is right or wrong to kiss, who may ride on an ass, who on a horse, who on a saddle, who in a coach, who in a litter, what gold ornaments, gems, corals, neck-chains, earrings, bracelets, brooches they can wear, and other idle points in the laws of Semiramis." Many worse things than these are urged against these dames and damsels. "Whoso would marry an honest woman," adds the satirist, "let him not look for her at court. My tongue has spoken out too freely, nevertheless I have said what it was impossible for me not to have said. But I will put my hand upon my mouth, and say no more about the matter." He quits the subject of the court, therefore, to speak of Trade¹.

The tricks of Trade were a large subject in those days, and traders travelling from land to land; among the subjects of contending princes, when communication was not

¹ Cap. lxxii. pp. 216-220.

at all open, were to a great extent letter-carriers and news-carriers, and had it in their power to earn money as spies. For these causes, for their monopolies, and for the luxury they stimulated, Agrippa finds that a bad side of their calling can be shown also to the merchants, and that they can have Church authority produced against them, for St. Chrysostom says that a merchant cannot please God; and St. Augustine says that it is impossible for soldiers and merchants truly to repent. Then come to be discussed the arts of thievish Treasurers¹, who live by their fingers, whose fingers are so birdlimed and beset with an infinity of hooks, that although money can fly and is as quick at slipping through men's hands as an eel or serpent, yet it sticks to them if once they touch it, so that it can by no force be pulled away. These men delay payments until they are bribed to make them, counterfeit bonds, open and re-seal letters, and are often in close league with the alchemists, who help them to substitute false money for true, some being also alchemists themselves.

Of Agriculture² worthy things are said, as of an art worthy to have given names to noble families, the Beans and Peas of Rome, the Fabii, the Lentuli, the Ciceros, and Pisos. Pasturage³ is named with equal honour, as the first calling which mankind followed. Thus Italy itself was named from Vitulus, a calf, which the ancient Greeks called Italus, as men of reading know.

¹ Cap. lxxiii. pp. 220, 221.

² Cap. lxxiv. pp. 221, 222.

³ Cap. lxxv. pp. 222, 223.

Fishing¹ deserves less praise, for that fish are a hard food, not grateful to the stomach, nor yet acceptable in the sacrifices to the gods. Nobody ever heard of a fish being immolated. Hunting and Fowling², as pastimes, are to be condemned for cruelty. "We read of no person in the New Testament who was given to hunting, and in the Old Testament the mighty hunters mentioned were bad men. It is a fierce and cruel thing, when the poor beast, overcome by dogs, has its blood shed, its bowels torn out, to exult and count the end of pleasure gained, except that the victim has to be cut up according to the rules of a polite art of butchery. These exercises, base and servile in themselves, are come to be so far esteemed, that now the chief nobility, forsaking liberal and noble studies, learn these only, and find in them no small help to preferment. Now-a-days the whole life of kings and princes, nay, which is a greater grief, the very religion of bishops, abbots, and chief doctors and masters of the Church, is consumed in hunting, wherein mainly they have experience and show their goodness. And those beasts which are by nature free, and by law belong to those that can possess them, the tyranny of the nobles has by its bold interdicts usurped; husbandmen are driven from their tillage, their farms and lands are taken from the rustics, woods and meadows are closed against shepherds, that there may be more herbs for the wild game to feed upon, more dainties for the nobles, by whom only this game is eaten. If any villager or husbandman but

¹ Cap. lxxvi. p. 223.

² Cap. lxxvii. pp. 223-227.

taste of it, he becomes traitor, and, together with the beasts, the hunters' prey."

Having spoken in a former chapter briefly and honourably of workers on the soil, he adds now "the Rest about Agriculture¹," namely, the ill that may be spoken of it. It is the direct produce of the sin of Adam, the visible form of a Divine curse, the symbol of our loss of happiness, from which and its attendant arts we nourish our own pride and luxury; of which matter Pliny complaining, gives for instance the seed of hemp, which, being but a little seed, in a short time produces a large sail, that by the help of the wind carries a ship all over the world, occasioning men, as if they had not earth to perish in, to perish likewise in the sea.

Since soldiers are chosen especially from husbandmen, as the strong men who are most hardy for fight, we may pass from agriculture to the Military Art². War is nothing but a general homicide and robbery by mutual consent; of all arts the most uncertain and vain. It is exercised only to the ruin of many, causing the destruction of good manners, law, and piety. The rewards thereof are glory got by the effusion of human blood, enlargement of dominion, out of greed of rule, obtained through the damnation of many souls. And truly the Italian wars, which in those days covered half Europe with sin and sorrow, were to be, not only for argument's sake, but fairly, so described.

¹ Cap. lxxviii. pp. 227-230.

² Cap. lxxix. pp. 230-234.

War first begot Nobility¹. To this subject Cornelius devotes the longest chapter in his satire. It chiefly contains an historical sketch, designed to show that nearly all technical nobility in this world had a morally ignoble origin. He feels so strongly on this subject, and thinks it so well worth demonstrating for the abasement of vanity, that he has even written a distinct book² (one of those which have not come down to us in print, but, like his book on Pyromachy, may exist somewhere in manuscript) to show nobility in its true colours. He has shown, he says, that there never was, and that there is not any kingdom in the world, or any great principality, that did not begin with acts of parricide, treason, perfidy, cruelty, massacre, and other horrid crimes,—arts of nobility. If any man wishes to be ennobled, first let him be a hunter—that is the first element in the calling; then a mercenary soldier, ready to do homicide for pay—that is the true virtue of nobility, which reaches to its height of glory for him, if he prove himself an able plunderer. Whoever cannot do these things, let him buy his patent of nobility for money, for it is also to be had by paying for it: or if he cannot do that, let him fasten himself as parasite upon a king or grandee of the court, let him become a pander to the palace, let him prostitute his wife or daughter to his prince, marry a king's cast mistress, or the daughter of his shame, and that leads to the highest

¹ Cap. lxxx. pp. 234-254.

² Ego hanc rem, quam hinc summario conceptu tetigi, ampliore velamine descripsi alibi. . . .—*Ibid.* p. 250.

of nobility, a mingling with the royal blood. These are the roads, these are the ladders, these are the steps to dignity.—Agrippa was a nobleman himself, and it was noble, not ignoble blood, that over all such matters tingled in his cheeks with scorn.—Oppressed by the tyranny of such men, he says, the Swiss destroyed them all, and extirpated their whole race out of the country: by which conspicuous action they earned a name famous for valour, and with that their liberties, which they have happily enjoyed now for four hundred years, hatred towards those nobles still abiding with them. From ancient story and from Scripture, Cornelius argues that there is a tyrannicide just in the eyes of God and man. Nature, he says, finally, bears witness against nobles. Our noble birds are eagles and others, always birds of prey; our noble beasts are lions and tigers, dragons, serpents, things cruel and venomous. Among plants, those reckoned noble are not corn, not the fruit-trees, but trees yielding no fruit, or fruit by which man is not nourished, as the oak, the laurel. Among stones, we count not marble or the grindstone noble, which serve men, but diamonds and jewels, that are useless. Among metals we account noble the pernicious gold, for which the peoples fight together at so great a cost of blood.

Heraldry¹ is an art which supplies these noblemen with fitting emblems. They may not wear on their coats an ox, a calf, a sheep, a lamb, a capon, or a hen, or any creature necessary to mankind; but they must all carry

¹ *De Incert. et Van. Sci.* Cap. lxxxi. pp. 254-259.

for the emblems of their nobility the resemblances of cruel monsters and birds of prey. Some there are that bear for their arms, swords, daggers, towers.

From war and nobility let us hasten to Physic¹, which is another art of homicide, mechanical, though claiming the name of a philosophy. Cornelius describes the factions into which physicians were divided, and which, although less numerous than those of the philosophers, raised equal controversy. He shows also, by example, the uncertainty of their opinions, how many things are said about the humours, or digestion; Asclepiades and his followers even believing that the meat is not at all digested, but distributed raw into all parts of the body. Practice of Physic² furnishes matter for a chapter of some length; and although Agrippa himself studies to live by it, he is not for that reason the more merciful towards the healing art. The pomps and vanities of the physicians, the way that will bring practice to the man with velvet coat and rings, with certain shows of religion, addicted to uncompromising self-assertion, or the use of Latin sentences and authors' names, are fair matter for satire; so too are the saturnine gravity and martial confidence with which a popular physician sets about his trade. Then there is the way of tickling solemnly with knick-nacks the palates of the effeminate; there is the portentous majesty of deportment towards the apothecary, and the affectation by the doctor of sometimes ordering a medicine to be made up before him; pretending himself to be at the choice of the best

¹ Cap. lxxxii. pp. 259-263.

² Cap. lxxxiii. pp. 264-279.

ingredients, when, for the most part, he knows not good from bad, nay, hardly knows the things themselves when he sees them. There is the commanding of unusual things, and the prohibiting of things common. There is the further advice, and the wrangling consultation by the bedside; the hole picked by every one in the opinion or treatment that seems best to any other, out of which a proverb grew upon the differing of doctors. There is the attributing of the patient's death to everything but the doctor, and of the patient's recovery to nothing but the doctor. There is the use of far-fetched and costly medicines, that can rarely be got except in a most adulterated state, as scammony; or of which the remedial use depends upon the time when it was gathered, as colocynth—and who can tell when it was gathered?—while the simples of the country, which God caused to grow there as the proper antidotes to the diseases of the country (this opinion Agrippa held, with many others of his age), which can be had pure and culled at right times, are despised and rejected. Yet there have been philosophers, he says, who have thought them worthy to be subjects of famous volumes, as Chrysippus wrote one upon Colewort, Pythagoras one upon the Squill, Marcion on the Radish, Diocles on the Turnip, Phantias on Nettles. But it was feared of old that, with their far-fetched drugs, physicians—who are worse than hangmen, inasmuch as they are not content to put to death those only who have received sentence of death from the judges—would try vain experiments upon the sick. Therefore the Egyptians had

a law, that in the first three days the physician was to cure a disease at the hazard of the patient's life, but, after three days, at the peril of his own. The Apothecaries are attacked next for their dealing in adulterated drugs¹, and for the vanity which drives them to cause the sick even to eat man's flesh spiced, which they call mummy. Surgery² is a surer science, of an evil origin, for it is bred of war. Anatomy³ was practised once on living criminals; surely, Agrippa says, it is an abominable and an impious spectacle to see it practised on the dead. Here he expresses the universal feeling of society, against which protests had been very few and faint. It was only a few years afterwards that Andreas Vesalius began, while a student of Paris, his career as the apostle of a right of free inquiry into the anatomy of man. Veterinary surgery⁴ is discussed, briefly and kindly, as a useful art, too proudly scorned by the physicians. Dieting⁵ tends to an undue quarrelling with the meats and drinks God has created, as St. Bernard complains of the disputations of the physicians, who assert that such a thing hurts the eyes, this the head, and that the body; pulse is windy, cheese offends the stomach, milk affects the head, drinking water is injurious to the lungs; whence, St. Ambrose says, it happens that in all the rivers, fields, gardens, and markets, there is scarce to be found anything fitting for a man to eat.

¹ Cap. lxxxiv. pp. 279-282.

³ Cap. lxxxvi. p. 283.

⁵ Cap. lxxxviii. pp. 284-286.

² Cap. lxxxv. pp. 282, 283.

⁴ Cap. lxxxvii. pp. 283, 284.

From Diet the survey of knowledge passes to the art of Cookery¹, useful, and not dishonest, when it passes not bounds of discretion. Gluttony, however, has sought in all regions for provocatives of appetite; and as for those who in the name of religion deny themselves no pleasure of the gullet, but reviling a part of the food God created for man's sustenance, abstain from meat, but are more thirsty for wine than Epicureans themselves, and say that they abstain and fast, when they fill themselves with fish of every sort and choicest wines, to which they bring their lips, tongues, teeth, and bellies, never their own purses—Enough of them! Agrippa cries: I pass on to the crucible of Alchemy², which consumes not less treasure than the flesh-pots. The alchemist may earn a scanty livelihood by the production of medicaments or cosmetics—whence, they say, every alchemist is either physician or soap-boiler,—or he may use his art, as very many do, to carry on the business of a coiner. But the true searcher after the stone which is to metamorphose all base metal into gold, converts only farms, goods, and patrimonies into ashes and smoke. When he expects the reward of his labours, births of gold, youth, and immortality,—after all his time and expense, at length, old, ragged, famished, with the continual use of quicksilver paralytic, rich only in misery, and so miserable that he will sell his soul for three farthings, he falls upon ill courses, as counterfeiting of money. Many things Agrippa declares that he could tell of this art (whereof he is no

¹ Cap. lxxxix. pp. 286-290.

² Cap. xc. pp. 290-295.

great enemy) were he not, as one initiated, sworn to silence, but it is vain. The prophet says, Because thou eatest by the labour of thy hands, therefore thou art blessed, and it is well with thee; but these men, contemning the Divine promise of happiness, think to make mountains of gold by child's play. I deny not, he adds, that to this art many excellent inventions owe their origin. Hence we have the discovery of azure, cinnabar, minium, purple,—that which is called musical gold, and other colours. Hence we derive knowledge of brass, and mixed metals, solders, tests, and precipitants. To it we owe the formidable invention of the cannon, and the most noble art of glass-making.

Of Law¹ the chief heads are now-a-days the Pope and Emperor, who boast that they have all laws written in the cabinets of their breasts; whose will is reason, and whose opinions govern science. The censorship claimed by the Pope over matters of religion; the Emperor claims over philosophy, physic, and all the sciences. But the Law, that claims to be the judge of knowledge, is itself infirm, subject to change as princes change, and as time passes. Its origin, too, is the sin of our first parents, which brought divisions among men, Law having no other use than to enable the good men to live among the bad. Canon, or Pontifical Law², shelters its precepts of avarice and formulary robbery under a semblance of piety, though it contains the fewest possible decrees that regard piety, religion, the worship of God, and the sacramental rites.

¹ Cap. xci. pp. 295-299.

² Cap. xcii. pp. 300-304.

Some of its laws are even repugnant to those of God ; others are mere matters of contention, pomp, and gain. New canons are being constantly established by the ambition and lust of the Roman pontiffs, whose arrogance has grown to such a head that they address precepts to the angels of heaven, presume to rob hell of its prey, and lay hands upon dead men's souls ; while they also play the tyrant over the Divine law with their own interpretations, declarations, disputations, in order that there may be nothing wanting to the fulness of their power. Did not Pope Clement, in a bull, of which authentic copies are kept at Vienna and elsewhere, command the angels of heaven that the soul of a man dying on the way to Rome for indulgences, should be loosed out of purgatory and taken to perpetual bliss ; adding, It is our pleasure that he suffer no more of the pains of Hell ! He granted also to those signed with the cross, power, at their pleasure, to take three or four souls out of bale. From these canons and decrees we have learnt that the patrimony of Christ is kingdoms, camps, endowments, foundations, wealth, and large possessions ; that the priesthood in Christ and the Church is foremost rule and empire ; that temporal power and jurisdiction is the Sword of Christ ; that the rock of the Church is the Pope's person ; that bishops are not the servants of the Church only, but its lords ; and that the goods of the Church are not Gospel doctrine, zealous faith, contempt of the world, but tribute, tithes, oblations, collections, purple robes, mitres, gold, silver, jewels, plunder, cash. The power of the most high Pope is to wage war, dis-

solve leagues, loosen oaths, absolve from obedience, and make the house of prayer into a den of thieves. He may condemn to hell—no man asking him, Why do you this?—a third part of the souls of the faithful. But from the same laws we learn that the duty of bishops is not to preach the Word of God, but on payment of fees to confirm youth, confer orders, dedicate temples, baptise bells, consecrate altars and drinking-cups, bless clothes and images: if any have a wit above these works he leaves them to I know not what titular bishops, while he himself becomes a king's ambassador or queen's companion, excused thus by a sufficiently great and high cause from the service of God in His temple, because he is doing homage to the king at court. In this spirit, and without one sentence to modify his censure, Cornelius attacks that Canon law, according to the prescriptions of which, he says, men are compelled to live more strictly than according to the rules of the Gospel.

In the next chapter he speaks of Advocates¹, whose calling is to pervert equity, and who entice people into the meshes of the law. From these he turns to Notaries², not one of whom can frame an instrument from whence there may not be some cause of quarrel picked. The Study of the Law³ he calls the craft by which the world is governed, and a way, if taken by wicked men, to honour and great influence. Then he attacks the Inquisition⁴, and his old foes the Dominicans, denouncing that

¹ Cap. xciii. pp. 304, 305.

² Cap. xciv. pp. 306, 308.

³ Cap. xciv. pp. 305, 306.

⁴ Cap. xvi. pp. 303-313.

new rule of the masters in the Church which puts fire and fagot in the place of reason. Berengarius, he says, revolting to a most damnable heresy, was not only not put to death, but continued in his archdeaconship. But now, if a man slip into the least error, it is more than his life is worth, and he shall be thrown into the fire. He denounces also, as he has denounced before, the usurpation of Inquisitors, who have, by their own law, no power over suspected heresy, but only over heresy declared and manifest, yet seize even the innocent and hurry them to torture. Again, they may convert a punishment from penal into pecuniary, and they do take annual stipends for the term of their lives from persons whom they threaten on default to torment. When I was in Italy, says Agrippa, several Inquisitors in the Duchy of Milan persecuted many honest matrons, even of the noble class, and extorted great sums of money secretly out of those poor affrighted women; till, at length, their cheating being discovered, they were severely handled by the gentry, hardly escaping fire and sword. He refers also to the conduct of the Cologne theologians, who were led by the Inquisitor Hochstraten to signal defeat and the complete wreck of their reputation, in the ten years' war against John Reuchlin, about Hebrew studies. He recalls also his experience of the witch-seeking priests at Metz.

In all this argument there is no timid assertion of Agrippa's faith. He attacks boldly the undue pretension of the Pope. He denounces the Inquisition, protests against image-worship, exposes with a bold hand the

corruptions of the priesthood, decries the pomps and vanities of formal worship, and urges that every man should, for his instruction, have free access to the Word of God.

In his next three chapters he treats of the three sorts of Theology : scholastic, interpretative, and prophetic¹. The Scholastic is that taught at the Sorbonne, a combination of Scripture texts with philosophical reasoning, a study of the Centaur class ; it produces sophisms, glosses, questions, problems—a vain logomachy of a class of theologians, more ready to discuss than to examine, who are called subtle and angelical, and seraphic and divine doctors. Preaching Christ through contention, these men produce labyrinths of heresy. No man is now accounted a good doctor who does not belong to some sect, and is not ready to bite and devour on its behalf, and glory in its name, as Thomist, Albertist, Scotist, Occamist. It is not enough for such great men to be called simply Christians, when they have to share that title with fishermen, wool-combers, cobblers, tailors, and poor ignorant women. Some rise above the Saviour and his apostles, and correct their erroneous opinions ; others, who do not scale such heights, construct stories of saints, adding some pious lies ; supply relics, and invent plausible or terrible tales, which they call warnings ; count prayers, weigh merits, measure ceremonies ; become hucksters of indulgences, distribute pardons, sell their good deeds, and, as beggars, feed upon the people's sins. They substitute for the Gospels and the Word of

¹ Caps. xcvii. xcvi. xcix. pp. 318-331.

God trifles and human traditions, preaching a new gospel, adulterating God's word, which they deliver, not for mercy's, but for money's, sake. They are not fishers of evil men to draw them to salvation, but hunters of good men into exile. Enough of them! Agrippa says; it is not safe to tell about them freely: when angered they conspire to drag their enemies before the Inquisition, or to get rid of them by secret poison; for they have this also among their mysteries, that to avoid scandal they poison any one of their own class, whose shame is threatened with a public punishment.

Interpretative Theology is not to be attained by such a path as this; the Divine Word needs an interpreter, but it has one interpreter alone, given by God to every man in answer to his prayers. Governing all that he says by this idea, Cornelius shows what are the six modes of interpretation commonly in use; and passes, next, to the Prophetical Theology, which is the gift of God to those who by a pure and holy aspiration strengthen their own spiritual nature, and become like-minded with Him. He speaks critically of the prophetic books of Scripture, names those referred to in the Bible but now lost, enforces the authority of Scripture, and thence passes to his hundredth chapter on the Word of God¹.

You have heard, he says, how vain and uncertain is human learning, how hard it is for Truth to be found, even in Theology. The only way to the attainment of it is by following the Word of God; and he cites from Gregory a

¹ Cap. c. pp. 331-340.

passage which expresses in one sentence the spirit of the book he is concluding: "Whatever is not built upon God's Word may be as easily condemned as approved." It needs no scholarship to find God in the Bible; the people need not trouble themselves about its senses, moral, mystical, cosmological, typical, analogical, tropological, and allegorical; we need to search the Scriptures not by syllogism, but by faith in Jesus Christ, from God the Father, poured down through the Holy Spirit into our souls. As says Isaiah to the wise men of Chaldea, Ye are deceived in your cunning, ye are wearied in the multitude of your counsels: so is it with us. The grammarian, watchful against barbarism in speech, lives filthily; the poet would desire rather to halt in his life than in his metre; the dialectician would rather deny manifest truth than yield to an adversary the most insignificant conclusion. Musicians have their concord in their lyres alone. Philosophers inquire into creation, but seek not for the Creator. Theologians desire rather to understand God than to love Him. But in the Scripture there is nothing so difficult, so deep, so recondite, so sacred, that it shall not belong to all faithful Christians, or that it shall be entrusted to those sesquipedalian doctors, to be kept concealed by them; but all theology ought to be a common possession to the entire body of the faithful, enjoyed by each according to the measure of the gift of the Holy Spirit. None of Christ's sheep should be defrauded of their pasture.

In one more chapter, Agrippa, treating of the masters

of the Sciences and Arts¹, compares the confusions of the worldly wise with the fulness of the knowledge that has been revealed in God's Word to the simple. Human learning had declined to its lowest level, he observes, when Christianity ran pure from its source, and rapidly spread. It is defiled now with the multitude of human counsels. Then it was that our Lord chose for his apostles, not rabbies, scribes, magistrates, priests, but rude men, almost wholly destitute of learning, ignorant men and asses.

So the work ends, with a Digression in Praise of the Ass². Let no man, he asks, speak ill of him because he has called the apostles asses; let him first hear what are the mysteries of the ass. With Hebrew doctors it was the symbol of fortitude and strength, patience and clemency, and its influence was said to descend on it from the Sephiroth called Hochma, which is Wisdom. For the ass lives, as all must live who would be wise, content with scanty and poor fare, most tolerant of poverty, hunger, toil, ill-treatment, neglect; most patient when persecuted, most simple and poor in spirit, ignorant of the distinction between lettuce and thistles; of a harmless and chaste life, destitute of bile, at peace with all other creatures; patiently carrying all burdens on his back; while his reward is, that he is not troubled with lice, is seldom diseased, and works longer than any other animal in harness. There is a great deal more said in this vein. It is shown, too, how the ass is throughout honoured in Scripture, how in Old Testament law, when the first-born of all animals were

¹ Cap. ci. pp. 340-343.

² Cap. cii. pp. 343-347.

ordained for sacrifice, asses alone were exempt—asses and men. For a man a price might be paid, and a sheep substituted for an ass. The ass has of all animals the noblest place in the New Testament, and many things go to confirm this saying of the people, *The Ass carries Mysteries*. Let us, then, rather be asses than philosophers.

The peroration¹ urges, almost entirely in the words of Scripture, that men should aspire to become like-minded with God; and learning of Jesus, the true Master, be wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.

This is the whole lesson of Cornelius Agrippa's book upon the Uncertainty and Vanity of Sciences and Arts. I have endeavoured accurately to represent its scope, its spirit, and all that seems to a biographer especially significant in its illustrative detail. The wide range of study shown in the whole work it was not possible to represent within the limits of this narrative. Agrippa had tried nearly every art that he found wanting: a Courtier in Austria, a Soldier in Italy, a Theologian at Dôle, a Lawyer at Metz, a Physician in Switzerland, an experimenter in optics and mechanics, a deeper searcher than perhaps any man of his age into the philosophy of the ancients; student of the Cabala, sworn possessor of the secrets of the alchemists, master of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages, and, among modern tongues, not of his own German only, but also of French, Italian, Spanish, and English. He was not a reviler from without, but a satirist from within,

¹ Cap. cii. pp. 347-351.

of the uncertainties and vanities of the imperfect art and science of his day.

As has been seen, he used in this book all his knowledge in the interests of that great struggle, begun in his time, for the cleansing of filth out of the Old Church, and for the free concession of the Gospel to the people. He felt, too, as we cannot fail to see, that he was having his revenge upon the savage men, who, with their flinty bigotry, had pelted him and struck him on his upward flight, whose act it was that kept him fluttering among the clods with broken wing, while eyes and heart strained heavenward. Had but the way of his life led Agrippa to the scaffold! Had but the wing been stronger, the flight higher, and the end a death-wound in mid-air!

CHAPTER X.

ACCOUNTS FOR THE REST OF THE TIME SPENT BY CORNELIUS AT LYONS.

HOSPITABLE in his poverty, hiding his sorrow from acquaintances, revealing it with bitter jesting to his friends, while loving none of them the less, because he found much to complain of in the world about them, still Agrippa lived and strove through many other months at Lyons. One learned man who had been a guest sent him a little gift, by help of which he could relieve his eyes, dull of sight through his assiduity in studying by night and day¹. We find that he corresponded still with distant friends, and grumbled at them pleasantly if they deprived him of the solace of their gossip in return²; that he responded as a kind friend to the letters of the young physician, John Paul, who had sent for the two gold pieces when detained at Langres, and provided him—when he failed at Langres, and went into Lorraine—with letters of introduction to some of the most influential of the people, whom he had himself known in those parts³.

¹ Ep. 45, Lib. iv. p. 864.

² Ep. 57, Lib. iv.; also Ep. 59, and Ep. 71.

³ Ep. 58, 67, 68, Lib. iv. pp. 878, 887.

He troubled himself cheerfully to answer abstruse questions, sent from afar, on matters of scholarship¹. His book finished, he worked still at his inventions of machines of war, and at his architectural ideas; while he bore in the midst of his family the pinch of want, not without the most indefatigable effort to remove it, or abate the pain it gave.

Chiefly he looked for assistance to his friends at court, Jean Chapelain, one of the King's physicians, and the Bishop of Bazas. In the middle of September (1526), somebody having told him of an office at Lyons, in the gift of the queen-mother, that would shortly become vacant, the holder of it being on the point of death, Cornelius, who again had to write word that he was trifled with upon the subject of his salary, asked of both his friends their interest with the Queen to procure for him this other chance of a subsistence². At the same time, however, of Chapelain, at court, spiteful inquiries were made by the Queen about Agrippa, and to all the good words of his helper she replied with so little kindness that it became Chapelain's duty to report faithfully his doubt whether, unless her temper changed, even the promise of a salary from her would not be withheld for the future³.

Chapelain's advice still was that Agrippa should act as in ignorance of all these doubts, and write to the Queen an account of the machines of war he had invented, and was

¹ Ep. 1, 2, 11, Lib. v. pp. 895-897, 902.

² Ep. 46, 47, Lib. iv. pp. 864-865.

³ Ep. 48, Lib. iv. pp. 865, 866, and for what follows.

ready to present to the most Christian King, if she commanded him to do so. He was also, if he would take Chapelain's advice, to show that he had not been negligent of her wishes in her absence, by sending her the desired astrological judgments and calculations. He should send them by no means through Chapelain himself, but through the Bishop of Bazas. He was also to write to the Queen, professing his continual promptitude to obey all her commands, and say no more in condemnation of astrology. At the same time Doctor Chapelain wanted Agrippa's judgment upon the marvel of a great battle among crows in Apulia; and also upon the marvel of an army of locusts in Sicily, which had devoured everything except the vines, and then either cast itself into the sea or died because no food remained.

The judgment of Agrippa on the crows was that they usually signified bad monks, being rapacious, greedy scoundrels of corpses, and feeders upon the substance of dead men; being also black, ill-omened, and unclean. They might mean, too, a rebellious people; and the battle of the crows might be a figure of the civil war in Italy round about Naples, where priests, nobles, and people were destroying one another. The locusts were, of course, the Moors and Turks; the abstinence of the locusts from the vines indicating the abstinence of those devastators, as being Mussulmans, from wine. These barbarians might be destined to plague Europe, and part of them might succeed in occupying Sicily, while part would be driven back into the sea. He told another recent marvel in return for

these suggested ones, interpreting it very ingeniously; but we may pass it by¹.

As for the salary from the queen-mother, he had not received any part of it, and saw no hope whatever of receiving any. His book of Pyromachy, and the warlike machines and architectural contrivances, he reserved, he said, as a gift for King Francis, whenever he should come to Lyons, always supposing he himself remained alive at Lyons, or had not abandoned the place and the hope in it before King Francis came. He had been invited elsewhere when he entered the French service; he had had good offers from Bourbon. The unjust wrath of the Queen, his own just grief, and the urgent need of a subsistence, might bring him to he knew not what extremity. To the Bishop of Bazas, Cornelius suggested that as he had once by his influence made the Queen well-wishing towards him, he should make her now well-doing; and, above all, if his salary was ordered to be paid, let the payment come through Martin of Troyes, who could be trusted, as the Bullions could not, to pass money through their hands².

The smallness of his offence—the expression of a desire that she would put his abilities to worthier use than the practice of astrology—as compared with the obstinacy of the Queen's wrath, was a puzzle to Agrippa. "Let her say what she means," he tells his friend; "if I am in fault, I am content to suffer. Perhaps there was some dog of the court at hand to give malignant meaning to

¹ Ep. 55, Lib. iv. pp. 873, 874.

² Ep. 49, 50, Lib. iv. pp. 867, 868.

the letter that was shown her. But I know how difficult it is to make a dog's bed, because wherever he is going to lie down he twists round and round, so that it is impossible to know where we should place his pillow. So those court dogs, hounds that hunt down men of letters, who frisk at the heels of princes, twist round and round with their opinions, so that we do not know which way they mean to settle; surely, too, there is nothing so clean that they cannot defile it." The sending of his prognostics to the Queen, Agrippa thought, would only lead to more occasion of offence, "for they contain matter that she would be most pleased not to read; and I, as you know, am not able to flatter. Besides, on receipt of your former letter, I desisted from the task and threw it aside, rejoicing to be set free in any manner from these fortune-telling follies¹."

A critical day came at last to the much troubled philosopher². On the morning of the seventh of October he was walking in St. John's Church, when a man who was a stranger, but had good-will in his face, stopped him, and drawing him into a corner, asked him how matters stood with him at court; whether he had certain intelligence of any sort. Cornelius told the stranger what he supposed to be the state of his case, but the man then answered, "I serve in the office of Barguyn the treasurer, and as a friend I warn you not to be misled by any false

¹ Ep. 51, Lib. iv. pp. 868, 869.

² Ep. 52, Lib. iv. pp. 869, 872, for what follows until the next reference.

suggestion, but to take thought for some better way of prospering. A very little while ago I saw your name struck off the pension-list."

Agrippa thanked his friendly counsellor, knew that he must be saying what was true, and became, as he says, after the event a prophet in his own affairs. He had not only trusted princes, but put faith in woman. Why had Chapelain never told him—or did Chapelain not know—that he was labouring to reap the wind, when he abandoned solid opportunities of prospering to wait upon the promise of his Queen, accepting certain loss for doubtful gain? "For my faith in your mistress," he writes to the doctor at court, "I am repaid with perfidy; not warned, but discharged furtively. Had I been servant to a merchant or a draper, or even to some peasant—man or woman—of the meanest class, no such master or mistress would have turned me off without a warning, even if I had been guilty of offence. But from this court I am thrust out secretly without blame and without fault, and in the mean time, nursed on a vain hope, and, led to renounce every good offer from elsewhere, am driven to the wreck of all my fortunes. I am destroyed thus by my honesty and the good faith I have kept with your Princess, and (may it please the gods!) this is in her an act of authority which would be called in any private person an act of perfidy and betrayal. I will not say this of the Queen herself, but of the court harpies who abuse her name and her authority, who prosper only by detraction, fraud, and sycophancy. This, my Chapelain, is the end of the

tragedy, that, being altogether destitute, I can sing with empty wallet in the presence of the robber, and shall henceforth dare to speak and write with increased boldness. . . . The Queen has renounced her part of the contract, and I am free of my oath of service, ready to accept any good fortune that may offer, and offend her further, if I must, by doing so."

It need hardly be said that the office in the Queen's gift which had become vacant at Lyons was filled up with another man¹.

Cornelius sent letters to the Queen, expecting little fruit from them; but he was not without hope that if the Bishop of Bazas spoke to the King, Francis would be found more friendly than his mother, while he felt that he could really do good service to the crown, and, as a first-fruit, said that he was ready to produce a plan, thought out by his own wit, which would enable the King to increase considerably his revenue, not only without pressing upon his subjects, but even with advantage to the nation, and the glad consent of all the people. But if the King desired to have this information he must ask for it. And still, for the increase of his own revenues, the philosopher discovered no successful plan.

His bitterness against the courtiers he expressed of course, in these days, even more emphatically than he had expressed it in his book, written under the sting of their contempt. "Hear what rules I have prescribed for myself,"

¹ Ep. 58, Lib. iv. pp. 872, 873, and for what follows.

he wrote to Chapelain¹, "if ever I am tempted to return to the court service: to make myself a proper courtier, I will flatter egregiously, be sparing of faith, profuse of speech, ambiguous in counsel, like the oracles of old; but I will pursue gain, and prefer my own advantage above all things: I will cultivate no friendship save for money's sake; I will be wise to myself, praise no man except through cunning, decry any man you please. I will thrust forth whom I can, that I may take what he is forced to leave, will place myself on half a dozen seats, and despise every one who offers me his hospitality but not his money, as a barren tree. I will have faith in no man's word, in no man's friendship; I will take all things ill and brood on vengeance; the Prince only I will watch and worship, but him I will flatter, I will agree with, I will infest, only through fear or greed of my own gain. You may admire me for that I have become so good a courtier only now, when I am liberated from the court. . . . The astrological judgments, as I before told you, I have not finished, and will not finish, until the Queen has replied to my letter, and herself required them of me. . . . But I should like you to tell me who my evil genius is by whom the Queen's mind is possessed, to the obliteration of her good-will, so recently expressed towards me: because I ought to cast him out by some religious exorcism, or appease him by some magical sacrifice, or fortify myself against him with barbarous names of the gods and

¹ Ep. 54, Lib. iv. pp. 878, 874.

cabalistic pentacles." Agrippa afterwards repeated sometimes his desire to know who was his enemy, but was told only that he was a man whose name was not worth mentioning¹.

"All hail! my dearest Chapelain," Agrippa wrote, a few days afterwards, mocking his own misfortunes. "Blessed be the Lord, I am a rich man, if there be truth in fable. A man of consideration, long my friend, has brought me seeds of gold, and planted them over my furnace, within long-necked flasks, putting underneath a little fire, as of the sun's heat; and as hens brood over eggs, we keep the warmth up night and day, expecting forthwith to produce enormous golden chicks. If all be hatched we shall exceed Midas in wealth, or at least in length of ears, and I shall say a long farewell to those great Ninuses and Semiramises. A rich and prosperous farewell to you!—From Lyons, from your soon to be long-pursed or long-eared Agrippa. Oct. 21, 1526²."

There was as much faith to be put in the long-necked flask as in the court of France. His letters were often intercepted³, and he was still fed with promises, reported from the lips of Thomas Bullion, on the subject of the arrears of salary to which he was entitled⁴. He could not feed his family on hope, he said⁵. Moreover, he had penetrated to the bottom of a mystery⁶. The Queen's

¹ Ep. 3, Lib. v. p. 898; Ep. 5, Lib. v. p. 899.

² Ep. 56, Lib. iv. pp. 877, 878.

³ Ep. 57, Lib. iv. p. 878.

⁴ Ep. 60, Lib. iv. p. 879.

⁵ Ep. 61, Lib. iv. p. 879.

⁶ Ep. 62, Lib. iv. pp. 879-884, for what follows until the next reference.

anger always had appeared to him absurdly disproportioned to so simple an offence as the expression of an honest, loyal wish that the best use might be made of his services, and that he might not be compelled to waste time on a science in which he had little faith. That zeal on the part of a plain-spoken and faithful servant ought not to have produced against him a malicious anger. After pondering this matter one day, he dismissed it wearily, and went for relief, as usual, to his Bible. Therein he chanced to open on the history of Jezebel, at that passage where Ahab says of Micaiah, "I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil¹." The words spoke to him as an oracle, for suddenly, and then for the first time, he recollected that in the letter shown to the Queen by the Seneschal, he wrote that Bourbon's nativity promised him again a year of victory and the defeat of the French armies. Unlucky prophet! he then said to himself; that is the beginning of this grief. Know now that the Queen rages because you touched her ulcer with that cautery. In that way you threw the gate open by which all the flatterers, and slanderers, and time-servers could come in and abuse you. So he himself describes his meditations. "I knew," he adds, "that Bourbon was an enemy, but I did not think he was so pestilent that one might even be poisoned by uttering his name. I remember now how a good mathematician and astrologer, Orontius of Paris, was vexed with a long imprisonment for prophesying what was true.

¹ 1 Kings, xxii. 8.

Certainly, if I had sent the rest of my prognostication I should have passed through the smoke into the fire. Because, like Balaam, I could not curse Bourbon, I am guilty already, marked as Bourbon's friend and the court's enemy. How far I am so, many of that duke's noble followers can testify, who, when I was leaving Friburg, tried to divert me, both by prayers and large promises, into his service. How I answered them and what I did, there are some captains to testify, cousins of mine, named von Eylens, who would have favoured Bourbon had I not caused them to come hither with the four thousand foot-soldiers under their command. I induced them to serve the King of France, and trusted my whole fortunes on the faith which has been kept neither with them nor me. Our men have been carried to slaughter: one of my relatives is lost, another seriously wounded, but neither pledges, promises, nor the usual public military contract, have secured for us what is our due. Had we served Bourbon we should have grown rich upon your spoil, and I, a soldier and a knight, should never have been basely used as the physician to your Queen. Your King in absence has forgotten and neglected me; your Queen, for candid speech, impatient of the truth, immoderate in vengeance, has spurned, repulsed, expelled me." Proceeding to pour out his heart to his friend, he speaks next of the flight of the King's followers, leaving him captive in the Duke of Bourbon's hands. They were braver men who followed Bourbon than the people who denounced as Bourbonist Cornelius Agrippa. These men had fled from their

King's enemies, and, their master being captive, the queen-mother Regent, had found shelter for themselves behind the woman's petticoats. From that post of advantage they had whispered scorn against Agrippa; and her sex is mutable, and she was herself one of a race that had already learnt to chastise merit, as there was cruel evidence, and recent. He was not bound to live under these adverse stars: trouble could sharpen wit, and many men had found despair the step to better fortune. "Hitherto I have fought in the ranks, now I will fight alone; armed cap-à-pie, you shall see me act more boldly, hear me speak more boldly. But you must forgive my wrath, for there is no animal created so infirm as never to break out into anger. I know your honesty, or I would not have written words like these. Be of good courage, and say no more to the Queen in my behalf, make no further attempt to appease her; our Seneschal may try this if he pleases, since he gave occasion to her fury, though, in truth, by no fault of his own. Take care never to address to me again as Counsellor, or Queen's Physician. I detest this title. I condemn all hope it ever raised in me. I renounce all fealty that I ever swore to her. She never more shall be mistress of mine (for already she has ceased to be so), but I have resolved to think of her as some atrocious and perfidious Jezebel, if she thus heeds rather dishonest words than honest deeds. Salute for me Jacques Lefevre (Faber), Cop, and Bode, patriarchs of literature and virtue, and all others who love you and me. I wish them all peace and good fortune:

the rest of the courtiers, may the gods confound! I now hate princes and courts equally. Again farewell. Remembrance to you from my dearest wife, the most faithful companion of my fortune.—Lyons, Nov. 3, 1526.”

With his wife and children hungering around him, certainly Agrippa had fair reason to be angry. He would have been, as he suggests, no animal at all, had he not turned in wrath. A week afterwards he wrote a letter, addressed both to Chapelain and the Bishop of Bazas, telling them they had proved slow doctors in his case, and bidding them good-by, with counsel to forget him¹. At about the same time he despatched a servant to one of his military cousins with this message: “Now it is time, and there is fit occasion to avenge ourselves upon the perfidy of the Frenchmen, who have so shamefully deluded us. Do you, therefore, on sight of this, prepare at once for travel, and come straight to me, accompanying the bearer, for you must go with all speed to the Imperial camp, and present yourself to Bourbon. You will be a welcome messenger to him. The rest I will tell you when you come. Infinite greetings, both in my name and my wife’s, to Captain Claudius, Otto, John and Francis your brothers-in-law, and my cousins.—From Montlai, Lyons².”

At the time when he had come to the determination indicated by this letter, he was indebted to a woman’s way of doing business for the means of forcing from between the fingers of the treasurer one sum of money

¹ Ep. 64, Lib. iv. p. 885.

² Ep. 65, Lib. iv. p. 885.

that was due to him. A quick-witted woman, Madame Salle, who was a true friend to Agrippa and his family, had called in a determined mood on Thomas Bullion, for advice had been received that a donation had been sent for Agrippa through the royal treasurers from certain friends at court. Bullion dealt, as usual, in hopes and possibilities, fingering, at the same time—incautious man!—with an official air, his paper of instructions. Madame Salle pounced upon it suddenly, and was carrying it off in triumph to her friend, when the enemy recovered from his consternation. The precise instructions became known, denial of them was impossible, and Bullion was required imperatively to obey them to the letter. He called upon Agrippa, angry at the woman's trick that had been played him, asked for his official papers, and promised to pay in a few days Agrippa's money. Promises not being valued, he then added threats that he would never pay, that he would take care not a sous came ever to Agrippa's hands, if he did not at once restore the document. "You have deceived me with so many falsehoods," said Agrippa, "that I shall keep these papers as evidence of what you have to pay, till I am paid. I can use it before a judge; and if I must, I will despatch it to the Queen, that she may know where to look for a dishonest treasurer." After a four-days' struggle the money was produced; but there was produced with it, under the name of receipt, a long document supplied from the court, beset with legal traps, to which Bullion desired Cornelius to sign his name before two notaries. Cornelius not only refused, but carried

about with him the court scheme of a receipt, showing it to lawyers and others, until Bullion was so much resisted by the judgment of all men of his own class in Lyons, that at a late hour of the night he withdrew his unusual demand, and paid the money, taking no more than the usual form of quittance in return. This happened on the fourteenth of November, and next day report of it was made in a letter to the Bishop of Bazas¹; but this was crossed by a very stiff note from the Bishop, who had been offended by the tone of the letter in which Agrippa had sent farewells to his Reverence and Doctor Chapelain. Yet there was no quarrel, for Agrippa went on worrying his friends in his own affectionate, impulsive way, and attacked Chapelain, especially by confiding to him, as a courtier, his disgust at courts. Chapelain had not written for some days. "I have been reading in the Gospel," said Agrippa, "about a certain rich man who was in hell, and wanted to send messages to his friends; and it seems to me that you, being at court, must be in hell, a place from which it is taught us that no messages may come." Thus started, he proceeds in a letter of considerable length to carry out minutely a comparison between the French court and the poet's Tartarus. His jest ends with advice to his friend to come up and join him in the upper regions, and for some time, when writing to a friend at court, we find him in his poverty pleasantly dating "from the upper air." "Do not condemn me," he pleads, at the end of the letter just described—"do

¹ Ep. 66, Lib. iv. p. 886.

not condemn me for the vexed life that I lead. There are gods at whose name the very gates of your Inferno tremble, and by them I shall be vindicated. There are friends unknown in your dark regions who will be my helpers; and I have strength besides of which the dwellers in your world know nothing¹."

In the mean time, Agrippa had invented a machine for propelling fire-balls swiftly and easily at a cheap cost², and he had not abandoned the idea that King Francis might be induced to behave towards him better than his mother. He reserved, therefore, his book on Pyromachy for the king, but when he heard from the Seneschal that, as he expressed it, Pluto was only to be approached through Proserpine, he wrote to Chapelain, "Promise nothing as to that work, for I have changed all my counsel."

The Bishop of Bazas, not having written for some weeks, and the last letter from the Bishop having expressed annoyance, Cornelius teased him again by telling him that he was justifying his complaint by silence and by touchiness. He told him again, that he wanted nothing more of him and Chapelain but the debts payable to friendship—namely, letters; and that if they were not paid he thereby declared war against them both. He had shown himself, indeed, but a bad fighter in their hen-roost, but no French cock—he was playing on the Latin word for cocks and Frenchmen—was his master. If need were, he would pelt them both with letters till he

¹ Ep. 72, Lib. iv. pp. 889-892.

² Ep. 68, Lib. iv. p. 887.

buried them under the heap, and then they should be made to sing for him at all hours of the day, or else he would eat them on his plates and dishes. "You must suffer me to joke," he adds, "for you know I have lost all my bile by pouring it out over Tartarus¹."

Chapelain having suggested a new intercessor at court in the Archbishop of Bourges, Agrippa said that he might tell the case to him, and show all the letters if he pleased, except the Tartarean one. If the Archbishop could help him, it was well². But Chapelain told Agrippa that it would be better for him to write to the Archbishop himself than that he should show the letters, in all of which there was a trace of bitterness. The King also, it was said, would in a short time be at Lyons³.

Weeks elapsed, and by the fifth of February, in the next year, there was an end of all rumour of the King's coming to Lyons⁴. The man of whom I wrote to you, he tells his friend—namely, the man who informed him in St. John's Church that his name had been secretly erased from the Queen's list of pensioners—"lifted me out of darkness into upper light. If you could at an earlier time have made known to me what he disclosed, you would have done me a great service." He means to assert himself boldly against the Queen. "Lest any one may suppose me guilty of some secret crime," he says, "by which I was made unworthy of your royal court, and by reason

¹ Ep. 74, Lib. iv. pp. 892-893.

² Ep. 75, Lib. iv. p. 893.

³ Ep. 76, Lib. iv. p. 894.

⁴ Ep. 3, Lib. v. pp. 897, 898, and for what follows.

of which I have been thus, while absent, clandestinely cast off:—for although no definite charge is made against me, yet by the ejectment I seem to be accused and judged before all men, and, as warns the proverb, what has not been said is made the worst of:—I myself intend to publish the whole matter. For while I hold it to be the duty of a generous mind to refuse to endure calumny or insult, and to make the innocence of its life manifest to all, I see no better way of doing that in this instance than by publishing those letters of mine, which will suffice to represent this tragedy in every street and market square, and cause that there shall be no place hereafter in which its noble tale shall not be known. Let who will be displeased. I will incur the implacable wrath and endless hate of all the courtiers and of your King and Princess too, and will not care a straw when once the truth is public. However the matter end, it is as dangerous for me to keep silence as to speak. I am ready to bear anything rather than throw down my fair fame, and take upon myself a load of infamy. When, as I hope soon will be the case, I have steered into another safer harbour, your Semiramis shall know what manner of man she has rejected. I understand that certain long letters of mine addressed to you and to the Bishop of Bazas have been intercepted. Possibly there have been others which did not reach you; but as the proverb says that certain animals all at last come together in the tanpit, so perhaps these will be found to come together in the press.” From this intention Chapelain gravely and kindly sought to turn his

friend¹. The letters, however, did, after a few years, come together in the press, and in this narrative their tale is told again.

At this time Cornelius was in communication with the Duke of Bourbon, and the next letter he caused to be published is one in which he addressed himself as a man cheerfully at work on his behalf to that commander. It was dated on the twenty-sixth of February, 1527. A month later, on the thirtieth of March, Cornelius again wrote in reply to letters brought him by a messenger from Bourbon. Bourbon promised him fairly, and desired help from his counsel. In the last month of the preceding year, King Francis had procured the support in France of what was termed an Assembly of Notables, who justified their sovereign's desire to break the treaty to which he had sworn, and which had been the price of his own liberty. This act of perfidy renewed the war, and of course helped to turn the current of Agrippa's sympathy from France towards the Empéror and those who fought with him. Against the Emperor there was a great league formed. The first thought of Bourbon next year, was both to strike a blow that should startle Europe, and to find the richest plunder for the payment of his troops, by an attack on the Pope in his own city. He proposed to besiege and capture Rome. Upon this subject he had asked from Agrippa counsel, and no doubt also prognostications. "Do not be disturbed," replied Agrippa, "by the power of those enemies who depend not upon their

¹ Ep. 5, Lib. v. p. 899.

own strength, but upon mutual support in their weakness, for already fate declares their coming ruin. You will soon see how those proud walls will fall together almost at the first attack. Go forward, then, bold Prince, whom the Fates make the leader to so great a victory. Delay no more. Continue fearlessly in what you have begun, and prosperously. Advance in strength, fight steadfastly; you have armed bands of the best chosen troops, favour of Heaven is on your side, God will favour a just war; fear nothing, for glorious is the triumph that is near¹." I do not know whether a contrary advice would have arrested or delayed the siege of Rome. Certain it is that the counsel given in this letter describes the course that was pursued. On the last day but one in March, Cornelius wrote his answer to Bourbon, and despatched it by the Duke's messenger from Lyons. On the fifth of May, Rome was stormed and taken by the Duke of Bourbon's troops, but one thing happened that Cornelius had not foreseen—the Duke himself was killed in the assault. The pride of the Pope was humbled, the French court was alarmed, but Agrippa lost again his hope of better days, and it was at about that time—during Lent²—that his wife made him the father of another son.

¹ Ep. 6, Lib. v. p. 900.

² Ep. 7, Lib. v. p. 900.

CHAPTER XI.

FROM LYONS TO ANTWERP.

ABANDONING all question about money due to him, Agrippa became once more a petitioner through his court friends. He desired but one more thing in France, formal license to quit the queen-mother's service, with letters of safe-conduct into another land¹. That desire granted, he should be as happy as, were the fable true, Pope Gregory made Trajan, when he removed him out of hell and gave him a seat among the angels. Such was his prayer on the seventeenth of July, 1527. On the twelfth of August he was still urging the same request². On the twenty-first of September it had not been granted. Whither he was to go when he left France he did not know certainly; he only knew that he must leave. He was then living with his family as a guest in the episcopal residence attached to the monastery of the Austin Friars³. He was still finding occasion to complain that letters addressed to him were intercepted⁴.

¹ Ep. 9, Lib. v. p. 901.

² Ep. 10, Lib. v. p. 902.

³ Ep. 12, Lib. v. p. 903.

⁴ Ep. 13, Lib. v. p. 903.

But at about this time, among the letters not lost on the way, came one from an Italian monk of the order of St. Augustine, resident at Antwerp, Father Aurelius of Aquapendente, whom Cornelius appears to have known in Italy, and who was now desirous of his closest friendship. For Aurelius had amused himself with the study of mysteries, and when by chance a written copy of Agrippa's books upon Occult Philosophy came into his hand, he regarded it as a masterpiece, and betook himself immediately to the source whence they had sprung. Those manuscripts of the Occult Philosophy which were in circulation were in many respects defective, and of the third book there was to be found in them only an epitome¹. Having learnt what was Agrippa's position at the court of France, Aurelius invited him to Antwerp; one of his friends there living testified to the welcome that might safely be promised, and to the number of friends he would find active to promote his interests². There was also at Antwerp another prosperous Italian, Augustine Furnario, a citizen of Genoa, disposed cordially towards Cornelius, and prompt in offer on behalf of Antwerp and himself³.

These cordial offers, and the prospect of obtaining at the age of forty-one the patroness whom he had sought in his youth, Margaret of Austria, Regent in the Netherlands, caused Agrippa to determine as to the next step

¹ Ep. 14, Lib. v. pp. 904, 905.

² Ep. 15, Lib. v. p. 905.

³ Ep. 15, Lib. v. p. 906.

he should take. At Christmas he would quit Lyons, to which place he had so long been bound by the Queen's perfidy, and proceed with his family and all his household goods to Paris, travelling by the Loire to Briare, whence he understood that it was only a day's journey to the other river that would carry him to Paris¹. (It is from Briare that a canal now departs which joins the Loire and Seine.) He would travel, he told his Antwerp friends, as fast as winter weather would permit, but the road was difficult, the times were dangerous, his children were young, and his means being exhausted, it was only by the generosity of the Genoese citizen, Furnario, that he was enabled to meet the expenses of the journey².

Of his Occult Philosophy he was at this time writing to Father Aurelius, in answer to inquiries, and the purport of his information was that such philosophy consisted in a study of God through his works, and that the key to the Occult Philosophy was Intelligence, for the understanding of high things gives power to man, when he is lifted by it to nearer communion with God, and dying to the flesh has his life hidden in Christ. So it was with the apostle who, whether in the flesh or out of the flesh he knew not, was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words. It is a substantial faith in that doctrine of Aspiration which had guided him in youth that abides by him in his maturity; this, he informs Aurelius, is the key to his philosophy. "But I warn you," he adds, "not to be deceived herein concerning me,

¹ Ep. 17, Lib. v. p. 907.

² Ep. 18, Lib. v. p. 908.

or think that I myself have attained any divine heights. I have been baptised a soldier in human blood, have almost always been attached to courts, am now bound by a tie of the flesh to a most dear wife, am exposed, an unstable man, to all the blasts of fortune, am wholly turned aside by the world, the flesh, and household cares, and have not sought after those heavenly gifts. But I wish to be accepted as a guide who, himself standing at all times outside the gates, shows other men where they should enter¹."

Busy throughout November with the packing and the other preparations for departure, on the fourth of December Cornelius and his wife had everything ready. His models and inventions, with a new scheme for a bridge, he had sent to the citizen of Genoa by whose friendly hand he was to be assisted out of France². He had also forwarded his whole library by way of Lorraine, addressed to Furnario, for safe keeping until he rejoined it³. On the sixth the pilgrimage began, license having been obtained for the party of ten persons to pass to Paris. The ten persons were Cornelius Agrippa himself, aged forty-one; his wife, aged twenty-four, and delicate in health—she was always referred to by Chapelain, who liked her heartily, as a girl, and the quality in her upon which he seemed to dwell most was her modest bearing;—his boy Aymon, aged about fourteen; three boys, of whom the eldest was not four years old, the

¹ Ep. 19, Lib. v. pp. 908-910.

² Ep. 20, Lib. v. p. 910.

³ Ep. 24, Lib. v. p. 912.

youngest a baby of eight months, his wife's maid, two young servants, and a boy as runner. With these he had to take his household goods in many packages¹. They had a clear sky and the mildest winter air to favour them, so that they reached Paris in fifteen days², that is to say, on the twentieth of December³. They had landed at Briare on the fifteenth, but as Agrippa did not find there waiting a learned friend residing in those parts to whom he had written, and whom he desired to meet, the travellers went on to Gien, and slept there at the inn of the Three Kings. On the day following they crossed to Montargis for the other water way, and Agrippa wrote to his friend that they would wait for him two or three days in that town, at the Golden Winepress in the Rue St. Martin, but that it would not be possible for them to tarry longer⁴. So they reached Paris on the twentieth, and put up at the sign of St. Barbara, in the street called La Harpe⁵. He expected to be detained in Paris a few days⁶.

He had his safe-conduct, or passport, out of France to wait for. Very soon he obtained the distressing knowledge that he was to be still further tortured by delay. The little fund that was to take the family to Antwerp, went to pay their lodgings at the Paris inn. The desire of Agrippa to leave France excited a desire in the queen-mother, or in those about her, to detain him. His request for a safe-conduct into the Netherlands was

¹ Ep. 43, Lib. v. p. 928.

² Ep. 24, Lib. v. p. 912.

³ Ep. 43, Lib. v. p. 928.

⁴ Ep. 27, Lib. v. p. 918.

⁵ Ep. 21, Lib. v. p. 910.

⁶ Ep. 24, Lib. v. p. 912.

the request of leave to pass over to the public enemy. The sack of Rome and capture of the Pope, who was then held by the Emperor imprisoned in the Castle of St. Angelo, had not alarmed King Francis only, it strengthened the confederacy between France and England, and led to the devising of a vigorous attack upon the Netherlands as the most ready way of offering a check to the Emperor's ambition. This counsel was changed. It was thought better to press the war in Italy, and reasonable offers of accommodation made by Charles having been rejected, in the month of January, 1528, heralds, who had been despatched at about the time when Agrippa brought his family to Paris, made the declaration of war to the Emperor. The field of the great struggle was, as usual, Italy; but active hostilities, on a small scale, broke out between France and the Netherlands, and raised on each side of the boundary-line between those countries a tumult of disorder. Between Paris and Antwerp much of the ground soon came to be overrun by military bands and hordes of plunderers. The travellers, it was then found, required not only the usual official passport, but also a military pass from the Duke of Vendôme, and letters of safe-conduct from Margaret at Brussels.

Chapelain, who was at St. Germain, wrote to Agrippa, ten days after his arrival in Paris, that he had been unable to attend to his friend's affairs, the King and his mother having both been out of health and needing his professional attendance. The Seneschal of Lyons and some other

friends would shortly be in town, and it appeared to him that it would be most 'easy—considering the value of Agrippa's recondite inventions—for them all to recover the Queen's grace towards him. "Tell me," he said, "a way of restoring obliterated writing, that I may see who is the owner of that Greek book so necessary to physicians which is in my keeping, and restore it to him." Agrippa sent the desired recipe, and warmly repudiated any intention of humbling himself to beseeching more of the Queen than license to depart out of her service and safe-conduct to the Netherlands, with a reasonable sum, if she would pay what it was her duty to pay, for travelling expenses. So he wrote when he had been only eleven days at Paris, and had spent already nearly twenty gold crowns on the cost of maintaining his household at the Harp-street inn¹. Sixteen days later he was still detained, receiving no letters of dimission, but in place of them new promises of favour, by which he was not to be deceived². On the twenty-first of January letters of dimission having been promised by the queen-mother's Chancellor, but not produced, Agrippa, with his little ones about him, was grown painfully impatient of the expenses of the tavern. He had written to the Queen, and had received no answer³. While he was suffering under the displeasure of the French court because he was no juggler, and was left with salary unpaid, it did not soften his wrath to see that a magician, who was said to have power over demons, was

¹ Ep. 23, Lib. v. p. 911.

² Ep. 24, Lib. v. p. 912.

³ Ep. 25, Lib. v. p. 913.

being brought at considerable cost from Germany, that as Jannes and Mambres resisted Moses he might resist Cæsar. "You see," he said, "where they put their faith who seek to subject the elements, nature, Providence, God, to the command of one magician, saying as Saul, when the Lord answered him not, said to the witch, I pray thee divine unto me by the familiar spirit. This is done by the most Christian king and by his mother; bishops and cardinals connive and suffer the counsels of the Father of Lies to be rewarded from the sacred treasures of the Church. What profit had the mighty ones of old from the diviners who deluded them with promises of happy fortune? Did they not all come to the dust, and perish miserably in their sins? Those impious follies lead to ruin, and make none more miserable than the men who trust them most. I do not deny that there are arts, wise thoughts, by which, without offence to God, injury to faith or religion, kingdoms may be defended, counsel tested, wealth increased, enemies overcome, the good-will of mankind conciliated, sicknesses be combated, health preserved, life prolonged, the vigour of youth restored: there are also holy intercessions, public supplications, private prayers of good men, by which not only the Divine wrath may be averted, but the Divine blessing obtained. But if there is beyond this any art of prescience, or of working miracles, certainly to these triflers and slaves to the demons it remains unknown. By the grave counsels of wise men, who have sought to be filled with the spirit of God, states may be served, not by the follies which pro-

duced the ruin of the greatest empire in the world." Agrippa showed how a verse of Jeremiah that expressed this in Latin (*Cecidit corona nostra, vae quia peccavimus*), yielded numerals that gave the date of the capture of King Francis at the battle of Pavia. "In vain the watchman wakes, except the Lord be keeper of the city. There is only one way of averting evil, by the change of perfidy and malice into repentance and charity, then it may be to any man against whom judgment has been decreed, as it was with Ahab, when the Word of the Lord came, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days." In that spirit Agrippa was a prophet cast out by the court of France¹. Not because he was a magician, but because he was a magician in the best instead of the worst sense—philosopher, not charlatan—he was despised among the courtiers; and here we see how, as the philosopher was passing out of France, the charlatan was passing in; one largely persecuted, and the other largely paid.

The court was at Paris when Cornelius arrived there with his family; he went immediately to his late mistress, and might have had his letter of dimission with no more than a few hours' delay. The Queen at first displayed wrath at his wish to leave her, then flattered him with verbal inducements to remain; finally promised letters of safe-conduct, but requested him to wait a little time. Soon afterwards she went to St. Germain, and for three

¹ Ep. 26, Lib. v. pp. 913-917, for the preceding.

months the little family of travellers was compelled to remain at the inn in Harp-street, while the means of safe departure were withheld, and various attempts were made to induce Cornelius to change his resolution. At the end of the three months he was still uncertain when he might be able to proceed, for he was then not only without the necessary papers, but without the necessary money for the journey. The innkeeper at Paris had received the greater part of that which was to have been spent upon the road between Paris and Antwerp; and although Agrippa, having marketable knowledge, did, after a little time, find means to live upon it in the French capital, yet his earnings sufficed only to pay the tavern bill, and there was little or no prospect of his being able to lay by a fund to meet the costs of travel¹. In the mean time, he was meeting with old friends, forming new friendships, learning and seeing many things of which he had been ignorant before; that was the only consolation he had in his impatience at the hindrance offered to his attainment of the rest from care that Antwerp seemed to him to offer². His mind during this time of detention seems to have been possessed firmly with the belief that he had only to reach Antwerp to be at peace.

In these perplexities Agrippa saw no way of leaving Paris unless he could borrow, and no hope of borrowing upon his own security. If any known merchant of Antwerp would be answerable for repayment through him of the loan and interest after Agrippa should have

¹ Ep. 27, Lib. v. pp. 917, 918.

² Ep. 28, Lib. v. p. 919.

reached that city, the money-lenders would enable him to move. Father Aurelius was advised with, and requested to procure for him, if possible, the desired guarantee. He was also to obtain for him the passport from the Princess Margaret, without which it would not be possible to complete safely the journey of the father, the young mother, and the little ones, among the drawn swords of the soldiers, and through the tumult of a people eager to shed blood. Margaret's safe-conduct was to be sent to a friend at Cambray, from whom Agrippa could receive it when he had reached Peronne¹. The military safe-conduct requisite to be obtained in Paris, was an order from the Duke of Vendôme to the captains engaged in the border war to furnish him with an escort of soldiers at his own expense, and conduct him, together with his family—ten persons in all—safely across the ground they occupied². Some of Agrippa's friends having obtained the written form of the desired passport, and being in favour with the Duke, offered to procure his signature. But he, when he saw or heard Cornelius Agrippa's name, fell into sudden wrath, and tore the paper across, saying that he would never sign anything in favour of a fortune-teller. The Duke of Vendôme had been the only prince of the blood royal left in France after the battle of Pavia, and he would have been made Regent by the Parisians, to the exclusion of the queen-mother, if he had not wisely supported her authority, and acted under her only as President of the Council. Agrippa's own re-

¹ Ep. 29, Lib. v. pp. 919, 920.

² Ep. 48, Lib. v. p. 927.

sentment at this check to his desire was lessened by his contempt for a prince whom he regarded as preposterously devout and dull of wit, with comprehension of but little beyond cups and platters. He supposed Treasurer Barguyn, or some unkind courtier, to have been at the Prince's ear, but ascribed all in the first place to the queen-mother, who, having abused his genius by desiring him to waste it upon astrological inanities, added to all the other loss she brought upon him for resisting her desires, the decoration of him with these titles of conjurer or fortune-teller¹. When the military pass was thus refused him—on the thirtieth of March—Agrippa was in the fourth month of his durance at the tavern. He had sent his baggage on already to Antwerp, and on the very next day received from Aurelius at Antwerp a letter, which was regarded favourably by the Paris money-lenders. He was at that time entirely without money, and was ready to give every personal security a lender might require, whenever on the faith of Antwerp letters he obtained the necessary loan. That at Antwerp he should be unable to repay, seems never to have occurred to him as possible. Antwerp had become to him and his wife the haven towards which they strained all their desires; there they were at last to prosper and to be at rest².

At this time of his sore distress, one of Agrippa's friends—who is not named—deserted him, and was cast out of his friendship in a letter written after the manner of the form of excommunication with which an offender

¹ Ep. 30, Lib. v. p. 920.

² Ep. 31, Lib. v. p. 921.

is expelled out of the Church¹. It is the only instance known of such a quarrel in the whole course of Agrippa's life. Friends that he made he kept; if he teased or scolded them sometimes, if sometimes, when sorely pinched, he became petulant, they understood and loved him as he loved them; no interruption of good-will was the result. Chapelain had a letter now and then that must have worried him, but affectionate and gentle words usually followed in the next. Agrippa had, in fact, two qualities that go far to make friendship stable—a great tenderness of disposition, and a habit—dangerous in some other respects—of giving free expression to his thoughts.

One difficulty in the position of Agrippa while detained at Paris, arose from the fact that although he had the solace of some learned friends, he was avoided on the whole by the Parisians as a man known to be passing over to the enemy. By the sixteenth of April he had received the necessary papers from the Queen Louisa, and waited only for such as were to be signed by the Duke of Vendôme, and for those of Margaret. He waited also for the power of borrowing sufficient money². Wanting this, he became destitute and desperate³. A letter, sent by him to the Duke of Vendôme, was opened by his private secretary and suppressed, because, it was said, nobody dared aid in soliciting again that which had been so angrily refused⁴. Chapelain came to the rescue⁵, but in vain. The queen-mother complained that

¹ Ep. 32, Lib. v. p. 921.

² Ep. 34, Lib. v. p. 923.

³ Ep. 36, Lib. v. p. 924.

² Ep. 33, Lib. v. p. 922.

⁴ Ep. 35, Lib. v. pp. 923, 924.

Cornelius had spoken imprudently about her. So much he confessed ; but he wished her no ill, he said—nothing worse than long life, that would enable her to see who were false friends, who agreed with her when present and abused her when absent : what, after all, was the difference in value between fraudulent dissimulation and the free tongue of plain truth¹.

When May began, Agrippa saw no hope of travelling till May was at an end. To the other difficulties there were added rumours of new risings in Flanders and Brabant. His friends all warned him against the exposure of his wife and his young family to the mercies of plunderers, who cared little for royal passes. He was admonished to wait for a lull in the quarrel, which was then being expected ; there were even fresh endeavours made to win him back to service in the court of France. He explained his position to Furnario, and requested him to send instructions, addressed to the care of Pierre Billardy, merchant of Paris, living in Rue St. Denis, near the church of the Innocents. His wife sent all good wishes, and added the expression of her eagerness to see their friend, and to migrate to Antwerp, where the Fates promised a rest².

Some members of Agrippa's family, who have not yet been named, travelled with him from Lyons, and resided with him at the inn in Harp-street: these were his pet dogs. There was a young family attached to one of them. A learned friend, who had access to an influential

¹ Ep. 87, Lib. v. pp. 924, 925.

² Ep. 38, Lib. v. pp. 925, 926.

courtier, M. Nicolas, seems to have been bribed with a pup: he wrote word, that without wishing to dictate, he would prefer a male¹; and afterwards wrote that M. Nicolas, who had intended to get the necessary signature to a form of pass supplied by Cornelius, had dropped the form and lost it, as he said: also, that it was quite wise that the male pup should be allowed to stay a little longer by its mother². Soon afterwards, Agrippa was invited to meet at a supper-party this important M. Nicolas³, but excused himself because his heart turned from the importunities by which he seemed to be now doomed to support his household, as if they were made the substitute for honest labour⁴. On the sixth of May, Chapelain wrote to him that what he wanted was already prepared. He positively had letters of safe-conduct, signed even by the King, made out for ten persons, during six months following the twenty-fifth of February. The one document needed was the instruction to the military captains from the Duke, and even these would of course leave them, with what military escort they could afford to maintain, to take their own chance against actual banditti⁵.

Among the learned friends made by Agrippa while in Paris, M. Fine, or Orontius, is not to be forgotten. He was a mathematician, who, like Agrippa, had a great taste for mechanical inventions. He also, in the course of

¹ Ep. 39, Lib. v. p. 926.

² Ep. 40, Lib. v. p. 926.

³ Ep. 41, Lib. v. p. 927.

⁴ Ep. 42, Lib. v. p. 927.

⁵ Ep. 43, Lib. v. pp. 927, 928.

his life, suffered imprisonment for having discovered bad omens for France among the stars. He earned wide fame as a geographer, was married and had a family, with which Agrippa's wife made herself intimate. We find that when Agrippa writes to M. Fine, his wife sends in the note kind greetings to Madame Fine and her daughters¹. Cornelius and his whole household remained in good health, though he and his wife were almost laid up with grief at their ruinous detention. Much money was owing from the court, of which they did not hope to receive a coin; whatever was earned, was spent in payment of the tavern bill. "Armed with wit and pen," Agrippa wrote, "I fight at the paper, and that is my only solace here²."

His trouble was not at the worst. In the middle of June, when he had nearly completed his sixth month in Paris, news came of his library that had been sent on from Lyons to Antwerp, and of his other luggage that had been more lately forwarded from Paris. All was detained on the frontier. French property was proscribed in Flanders, and unless Agrippa could prove that he was detained in France against his will, and had left the queen-mother's service before war broke out, his books and household goods were to be confiscated. He wrote to Chapelain on this, and added to his note, "My lamenting wife salutes you, and prays that you will have

¹ Ep. 44, Lib. v. p. 928. This is the Orontius who refused to meet Cardan. *Life of Jerome Cardan* (1854), vol. ii. pp. 96-98.

² Ep. 45, Lib. v. p. 929.

pity on our lot, and help us. From our tavern, June 14, 1528¹."

When Father Aurelius, at Antwerp, received news of this climax of sorrow, he bestirred himself, and on the second of July sent word² that he was seeking to provide a travelling fund, and hoped that a remittance would come to his friend's hand even sooner than the letter he was writing. The case remained, however, nearly in the same state for another fortnight. As for the Duke of Vendôme, he refused always to admit the scholar to his presence³; and Agrippa then, entrusting to William Forbot, his wife's relation, the protection of his family till he returned, himself took horse and crossed the frontier, to seek personally the help without which Antwerp never could be reached by his wife and children.

He arrived there on the twenty-third of July⁴, to find Father Aurelius absent, none knowing whither he was gone⁵. During a whole month Cornelius searched Antwerp for his friends. Both Aurelius and Augustine Furnario were absent; other friends he found, none eager on his behalf. At the end of a month news came from Aurelius, not of the most cheering, although of a friendly character⁶. On the same day, a letter arrived with tidings from the feeble little household waiting and depending on his efforts, in their desolate inn-lodging at Paris. The mother had fallen sick, her kinsman wrote. "Alas!" he

¹ Ep. 46, Lib. v. pp. 929, 930.

² Ep. 47, Lib. v. p. 930.

³ Ep. 50, Lib. v. p. 931.

⁴ Ep. 51, Lib. v. p. 932.

⁵ Ep. 53, Lib. v. p. 932.

⁶ Ep. 54, Lib. v. p. 933.

replied¹, "what do you announce, my dearest cousin? My dearest wife labouring under so perilous a disease, and she with child, and I absent, who had scarcely been able at great risk of my life to depart alone, that at last I might find means to bring into safety her who is to me my only soul, my spirit, my wit, my salvation, my life? Ah me, how wretchedly this die has fallen! I am here now in wretched agony. My wife is at Paris, miserably perishing, and I cannot come near her with any solace; my children are in tears, the whole family mourn, and this sword passes through her soul. Oh that I only could bear the hurt and she be safe! What shall I do? Whither shall I turn? Whom shall I implore? Except yourself I have here no one. I know that she who is present presses heavily upon you, and that I absent am obliged to be burdensome to you in letters: but I ask forgiveness, for I have none other to whom I may be burdensome; in you alone is my whole hope, and you will heed my prayers as I heed you and put faith in you. Spare not cost, spare not attention; call any physicians, so that they be the best, and let my wife recover. In thus doing you will equally help me and bind us all to you for ever. Farewell, and tell me everything without delay. Written with haste, at Antwerp, August 24, 1528."

She did recover, gradually, and the fortunes of Cornelius recovered with her. Augustine Furnario returned in August to Antwerp, and was helpful². The first fruit

¹ Ep. 55, Lib. v. p. 933.

² Ep. 56, Lib. v. p. 934.

of Agrippa's efforts to obtain money enough for the conveyance of his family from Paris had been eight crowns and a half, forwarded to his kinsman by Michael de Moneglia. In October, however, he was able to send sixty crowns¹, with a letter, begging that his friend would at once add, from his own resources, what more money was necessary, which he would repay in good faith, and never ask again for a like favour. If he would do that, they were saved, but without such aid, they must despair again². Forbot replied to Agrippa that his wife had recovered slowly, and was only now able to undertake the difficulties of the journey; but that she was able now, and therefore that they would set out³. It will be seen that Agrippa set aside the difficulty raised by the Duke of Vendôme, by travelling alone, without his military pass and at his own peril, across the disturbed frontier. Afterwards, when the person asking leave to take an escort for himself and his companions was not Cornelius Agrippa but William Forbot, there was no obstacle to conquer. In safety, therefore, on the fifth of November, 1528, Forbot arrived, with Agrippa's wife and children, at Mechlin⁴. With all speed Cornelius joined them, and the pleasant laughter of new friends over his joy⁵ shows how little he had been able to conceal his careful love during their absence.

¹ Ep. 58, Lib. v. pp. 934, 935.

² Ep. 57, Lib. v. p. 934.

³ Ep. 58, Lib. v. p. 935.

⁴ Ep. 60, Lib. v. p. 935.

⁵ Ep. 61, Lib. v. p. 936.

CHAPTER XII.

A YEAR AT ANTWERP, AND ITS CHANGES.

ANTWERP friends, after the arrival of his wife and family, began to multiply about Cornelius Agrippa. Among the learned and the noble he found helpers and companions. He was honoured in families. We find him, in a very short time, pleading wisely the cause of a father with a son who had fled from law studies attracted by the glitter of the court, counselling in gentle language wisdom to the young, forbearance to the old¹. Practising as a physician, he obtained quickly a credit that extended beyond Antwerp to adjoining towns, and caused him to be sought by wealthy patients². He obtained credit at court, and the winning ways of his wife commended him and his household, not less than his own learning, to the favour of Margaret of Austria³. He obtained by her appointment very soon a formal position at court as Indiciary Councillor, or Councillor in the matter of the Ar-

¹ Ep. 62-65, 67, Lib. v. pp. 936-939, 940. ² Ep. 71, Lib. v. p. 942.

³ Ep. 81, Lib. v. p. 948.

chives, and Historiographer to the Emperor. These titles were given to him already in the January after his arrival in the Netherlands, when, on the seventh of the month, he obtained license to print and possess for six years the copyright of his works¹. The early work, written in honour of Margaret, on the Nobility and Pre-eminence of Woman, with some smaller writings, formed the first publication. This must have been published at Antwerp in the year 1529, or early in the year 1530², though of this, its first edition, beyond reference of his own to it, no trace is at present extant. In addition to the successes thus achieved, there occurred even a chance of Agrippa's appointment as successor to the physician of the most Serene Princess Margaret, who, with large offers, was being tempted back to his own country. Interest was made on behalf of Agrippa, but the vacancy did not arise. The old physician's salary was raised, and he remained at Mechlin. All went well, and on the thirteenth of March, 1529, a little more than five months after her arrival at Antwerp, Agrippa's wife became the mother of another son, born, as it seemed, to happy fortune³. His father's fame was spreading. They talked of him at Ghent as a man gifted with rare knowledge⁴. He was summoned in June by one patient, a secretary's wife, who offered the most liberal pay, from Antwerp to Louvain, and by another patient, in July, to Mechlin⁵. Pupils sought his

¹ A copy of the license is prefixed to all the early publications.

² In December, 1530, he speaks of it as a known publication already extant. Ep. 8, Lib. vi. p. 961.

³ Ep. 68, Lib. v. p. 941.

⁴ Ep. 70, Lib. v. p. 942.

⁵ Ep. 71, 78, Lib. v. pp. 942, 943.

instruction; one of them was John Wier, son of a citizen of Gravelines, who became an illustrious scholar and physician. He was a boy of fourteen or fifteen when in Agrippa's house; and afterwards, when it was almost heresy to say a good word for his early teacher, whose memory the priests had befouled, he spoke of him lovingly, and ventured to defend his reputation against the charge of having had a familiar spirit in form of a dog, by telling of the foolish fondness he had seen him show when at Antwerp for his dogs, especially for two whom he had brought from France, and used to call Monsieur and Mademoiselle. Monsieur used often to lie on the table by his master's papers when he wrote, and even slept sometimes upon Agrippa's bed. That Monsieur was the little black dog who was afterwards identified by the Church with the Prince of Darkness¹.

While Agrippa was away from home, attending on a wealthy patient dangerously ill at Mechlin, his secretary wrote home-news to him. His little wife—no rare thing in those days—could neither write nor read. The tone of these letters—in which even the scribe writes affectionately—shows how peacefully and pleasantly his home was ordered. Let us dwell upon it; for it is the last glimpse of his happiness that we shall have. The wife had been in weak health since her last confinement. "All are safe at home," ran one of the reports; "your wife be-

¹ Wierus, *De Præstigiis Dæmonum*, Lib. ii. cap. v. (Opera ed. Amst. 1660), p. 111. Wier appended this and like matter to the chapter cited, only in later editions of his work, when, he said, he could keep silence no longer.

comes stronger and stronger every hour, the children are happy, chirrup, laugh, and grow. Mary" (that was the nurse, called in the household Mary the Greater; there was another little maid, whom her master called Mary the Less)—"Mary sedulously watches over your wife's health. Tarot, Franza, Musa, with the concubines" (these are his dogs), "day and night make themselves heard, and threaten torture against thieves; but they trot so constantly about the lawn that I fear lest they be changed from dogs to garden deities, or husbandmen, or, at any rate, philosophers, that is to say, of the academic sort. For the rest of the company here, the nurse nurses; Hercules" (a man-servant) "is herculean; Aurelius works in the laboratory. All, in fact, goes well. I set at rest your notary, who came here in your name; I wonder that you did not give me any kind of hint about him. Everything else I have done to the best of my ability. Your wife bids me write this that you may address yourself with an easier mind to the healing of your patient, and be able to come back to her the sooner. She wishes you fortune, health, and all the happiness you ask, and wishes to be very much commended to you¹." Agrippa replied in the same tone—these letters were passing in the middle of July—especially inquired about the progress of a slow distillation that he had left behind him to be watched carefully in his laboratory, and, in a postscript, said that if the young servant to be sent by the master of the Oratory

¹ Ep. 72, Lib. v. pp. 942, 943.

came, he was to be either received into the house, or sent to him at Mechlin¹.

"Your most ancient wife, Mary the Greater, and the host of dogs salute you," said the answer. "We were on the point of sitting down to dinner when your note was brought; how sweet it made the dinner of your little wife it is beyond my speech to tell²." The patient at Mechlin was dying, and he and his friends pleaded with Agrippa that he should not quit him until all was over. A servant who brought one of the letters from Antwerp told Agrippa that his wife was well, except feeling uneasy in her stomach. On that account he was desirous to return to her, and expected that in two or three days either his patient's death or a change in him for the better would enable the physician to rejoin his family³. The next household budget informed him that Father Aurelius wished for his return, and that his wife was not only restored in health, but that her whole aspect was changed. While the letter was being written she was in the highest spirits, but had not, up to that date, gone out of doors, for she waited till the weather mended. (During this month of July the rains were very heavy⁴.) "She greets you," said the scribe, "a thousand times, and grieves that she cannot write so as to be able to make merry with you in letters. She asks, also, that as soon as you can tear yourself from that place, you run to us for the comfort of your friends. This I write from her lips at eleven o'clock at

¹ Ep. 73, Lib. v. p. 943.

² Ep. 75, Lib. v. p. 944.

³ Ep. 74, Lib. v. p. 943.

⁴ Ep. 80, Lib. v. p. 947. ;

night, after receipt of yours. Farewell, and take care of your health. Tarot, Franza, Musa, Ciccone, Balassa are well, salute you, and cry for your return. Mary the Greater greets you; the Less, with Hercules and Margaret, can bear your absence easily for some time longer. Again, farewell¹."

This is the next happy letter, and, alas! the very last.

"While I write to you, your wife stands at my right hand and Mary at my left, both of them dictating, so that if I write amiss, you must forgive, for neither my ears nor my hands are made of iron. First, your wife had a letter from you to-day, which, because it was written in French (write the next time in Latin, that I may interpret, for I am a Roman, not a Gaul); I could not read to her correctly. But of what can you complain? Your wife is strong, her beauty is come back, she wants nothing on earth but your constant presence, and for that longs continually. But as she is not less prudent and honest than she is fair, she weighs the gain and credit you obtain by your long absence, if your patient will begin to get a little better: therefore she bears bravely these days of solitude. You must, therefore, study to cure him, for his own sake and to please your wife. Mary is well, and after you return will have little to do. The dogs trot about the lawn, now surround their mistress, now sleep, bark, devour. The children are in the best health. You have no cause at all for troubles, no friend to distrust: while there is spirit in my body I shall

¹ Ep. 76, Lib. v. p. 945.

love you wholly. Everything proceeds happily. I will write more fully to-morrow ; just now the departure of the messenger, the dogs, the dinner, everything brings disturbance to my pen¹."

But the letter of the morrow said that the wife had passed a wretched night, that there were signs of the return of her old malady, that they were persuading her to send for a doctor, but that she wished to have no one but her husband². He hurried to her instantly. Plague raged in Antwerp, and Agrippa's wife was stricken.

She had been ailing since Easter. Skilled attendance, nurses, medicines, the most anxious care, sparing no cost, had been engaged on her behalf. Three times she had recovered and relapsed. She had enjoyed an entire month of health when she was seized by the plague. An abscess opened in her groin; she suffered heats, pain, change of expression, redness of the face, inflammation of the jaws, wretched anxiety, and nervous spasms; she spat blood; the exhalation from her body became horribly foetid³; great plague-spots broke out over her whole body; finally in her husband's arms she died, and so at Antwerp did indeed come to her rest.

"I am lost," wrote Agrippa to Forbot, her kinsman⁴, "for I have lost her who was the only solace of my life, the sweetest consolation in my labours, my most loved wife. Ah, she is lost to me, and dead, but eternal glory

¹ Ep. 77, Lib. v. p. 945.

² Ep. 78, Lib. v. p. 946.

³ Agrippa describes in a letter the symptoms and treatment of the plague raging this summer at Antwerp. Ep. 85, Lib. v. pp. 952-954.

⁴ Ep. 81, Lib. v. pp. 947-949.

covers her. She had been well for nearly a whole month, was in all things prosperous and joyous, fortune smiled on us from all sides, and already we were engaged in furnishing a new and larger house, against the new days that were coming to us, when on the last St. Lawrence's-day a violent pestilential fever attacked her, with abscess of the groin: remedies of every suitable kind were instantly applied; nothing that could help us in the house, or out of it, was overlooked; the most diligent watching and attendance were added, and I did not withdraw one step from her side by day or night; nobody fled from her, so much was she beloved by all: already on the fourth day she appeared a little better; but, woe is me, no remedies availed, and on the seventh day, which was the seventh of August, at about nine in the morning, with great difficulty, but a clear intellect, a soul firm towards God and an innocent conscience, while we stood round she rendered up her spirit, the plague pouring itself through the entire body in large blotches. Ah, she is dead, to my greatest sorrow, to my greatest hurt, to the greatest disadvantage of our children, to the greatest grief of all who knew her. Within twenty-three days of the age of twenty-six, she was known everywhere for her goodness, and loved and revered for her rare modesty. She lived with me, as you know, for eight years all but a month, always in the utmost love and peace; there never was between us anger upon which the sun went down. All my hard fortune, poverty, exile, flight, perils, she bore with me in patience, and already all our troubles were

surmounted, and we were about to lead thenceforth a cheerful, quiet life. The Princess Margaret was seeking her because of the virtues that she heard ascribed to her on every side, and there were several opportunities of wealth and honour in our hands. She had been dead only two hours when there came to our house fresh tidings of prosperity. Nothing would have been wanting to our happiness in this world had she but survived; but woe is me, she has perished, and with her for me has perished all. My spirit is beaten down, my mind prostrated, and my life still in danger from contagion; there remains for me no consolation. My house is left in the hands of the nurse and Hercules, ill guarded. My sons, with the little nursemaid Mary, taken to another house, were, after a few days, through the sordid petulance of a wicked girl, turned out and obliged to find a new asylum. I am alone in some tavern with one servant, and he sickening. I lie apart, day and night weeping for my dearest wife, enduring torture. Augustine and Aurelius visit me daily; they never deserted me and my dear wife, in any affliction, any peril of contagion. Oh, that you had been by, my Forbot, how much solace you would have brought. Ah, how often did she speak of you when dying—how often sigh for you. She bade me speak to you her last farewell, and write this, praying that you will forgive her if she ever sinned against you, and devoutly pray for her to God. But in her former illnesses she vowed a visit to St. Claudius; this burden, in dying, she imposed upon you, supplicating you, whenever you

return to the home country, or chance to travel near, that you will turn for her sake to the threshold of that saint and offer for her holy prayers and waxen images, that you may free her from this vow. This I now beg of you in her name, and I will myself do the same thing for her, if I survive. And I beg you that the money which you were to have spent in buying for her a gold chain, you will now put to better use in alms or oblations for the repose of her soul. Much remains, my dearest Forbot, of which I must speak with you, about the disposal of the residue of my life, and the provision for our unhappy little ones. But these things require to be discussed by speech. I have indeed good friends here, who advise me wisely in this way and in that; but in you my firmest trust is placed for counsel: so my dearest, dying wife enjoined, that I should look to you as to my friend and the protector of our children. Farewell, and pray to God for me and for the salvation of my dearest wife, your kinswoman, of whose salvation, however, I am so far from having doubt, that I implore her constantly with pious prayers to be my intercessor before Christ."

Hercules and the elder nurse Maria died, the younger nurse and a servant also caught the plague, and with difficulty were recovered¹. Regular physicians had fled from the town, and the most active and able man who remained was an unlicensed practitioner, to whom, when he was persecuted afterwards by the brethren of the craft in Antwerp, Agrippa gave a most emphatic testimonial of

¹ Ep. 84, Lib. v. p. 951.

praise¹. Over Cornelius himself and all his children the disease passed, leaving them untouched, nor was the bereaved man suffered to remain long weeping "in some tavern;" his friend Augustine Furnario took him into his house. And it was in this hour of affliction—when she was gone for whom he would have rejoiced to prosper—that there seemed to be no bound to his prospect of advancement in prosperity. Henry VIII. of England was inviting him, and offering great things, which he did not choose to accept. The chancellor of the Emperor Charles V. wished to attach him to his master's court, and tempted him with brilliant offers of advancement if he entered the Imperial service. Furnario received letters from Italy, in which a marquis, whom Cornelius had known—Monferrat, probably—entreated him to come to Italy with all his household, while, at the court of the Netherlands, Margaret offered honourable conditions of service, with emoluments less tempting. "Which I shall choose," Agrippa said², "I know not. I would rather live free than go into service. It becomes me, however, to consult not my own pleasure, but the well-being of my children."

¹ Ep. 7, Lib. vi. p. 959.

² Ep. 84, Lib. v. pp. 951, 952.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN GAOL AT BRUSSELS.

AGRIPPA, during a few months before and after the death of his second wife, enjoyed at Antwerp high repute as scholar and physician. Every man of letters visiting the town made haste to call upon him, sometimes with, sometimes without letters of recommendation from others of the learned¹. There are various indications in his correspondence of this sort of life. A student of occult knowledge asks help from him². A stranger lodging in a tavern rises with the light to hasten to Agrippa's house, and being told by the old woman who has become house-keeper in place of the deceased wife that he has slept abroad, hurries back to his inn and asks the philosopher to dinner³. To a friend impatient to be visited, and to be shown Schepper's table of geomancy, he writes that he will certainly come at the end of a week, but that he has been detained by attendance on the death-bed of his own physician⁴.

¹ Ep. 2, Lib. vi. pp. 954, 955.

² Ep. 6, Lib. vi. p. 959.

³ Ep. 5, Lib. vi. p. 958.

⁴ Ep. 17, Lib. vi. p. 969.

When first established happily in Antwerp, Cornelius had lost no time in setting about the fulfilment of a natural desire to get his writings printed, but it was not until the year (1530) following his wife's death that some of them were published.

One of the first things that appeared was the *Historiette* of the recent Double Coronation of the Emperor at Bologna by Pope Clement VII. This was the beginning of his labour in the office of Imperial historiographer and keeper of the archives. It is a minute description of the ceremonies observed, and other incidents of the coronation, drawn up after the manner of old chroniclers, from the details forwarded at the time out of Italy to Margaret, and by her entrusted to the Imperial historiographer, for prompt digestion and publication¹. The event happened at the close of February, in the year 1530, and the finished history was presented in the same year, without any loss of time, to the princess at Brussels. Wherefore, Agrippa told her, in reading it, she would pardon him if its language were not worthy of a pomp so famous, and he promised at the same time that he never would be wanting in faithfulness of narration, diligence of investigation, or industry in the celebration of her honour and that of her race, but that he would labour all his life to make it certain that the place she had given to him was

¹ H. C. A. *Armatus militibus Equitis Aurati, Casarea Maiestatis à Consiliis et Archivis Indiciarii, De Duplici Coronatione Caesaris apud Bononiam Historiola*. Opera, Tom. ii. pp. 1121-1145.

not ill bestowed¹. To her minister he wrote at the same time, saying that he had fulfilled Margaret's commands, and dedicated to her the first fruits of his new vocation, the dignity of which he commended, and of which at the same time he did not omit to hint that, among the Greeks and Romans, historiographers who celebrated the great deeds of kings lived with them as witnesses of their acts, were treated with all honour, and paid also with liberality². There was much need for a suggestion of this kind, because Cornelius had office given to him, and work found for him, and salary promised to him in a formal document, assured by the Imperial seal; but he had not, up to the time when he wrote thus, received a ducat.

This difficulty ceased to be a temporary one upon the publication of the *Vanity of Sciences and Arts*. In December, 1530, Cornelius had a printed copy of this work, which he could send to a friend, greatly deploring the innumerable printer's errors it contained. The treatise upon the Nobility and Pre-eminence of Woman, at last dedicated to Margaret, in fulfilment of the intention cherished by its author in his youth, had been issued a short time previously, in a little book, together with the *Essays upon Matrimony, upon Original Sin, upon the Knowledge of God, the Avoidance of Gentile Theology, the Expostulation with Catilinet, &c.*³ The little book of *Essays* did no mischief, but the publication of the *Vanity*

¹ Ep. 3, Lib. vi. p. 956.

² Ep. 4, Lib. vi. p. 957.

³ Ep. 8, Lib. vi. p. 961. But of either of these early editions I do not know where there is now a copy to be found.

of Sciences effected finally the ruin of the author's fortunes.

What the book was, and under what circumstances it was written, we have seen. The writing of it was, I have no doubt, suggested by Erasmus, through his *Morise Encomium*, or Praise of Folly. In that pleasant satire we find passages that seem to have supplied directly the idea of Agrippa's volume. This, for example: "Ay, but (say our patrons of wisdom) the knowledge of arts and sciences is purposely attainable by men, that the defect of natural parts may be supplied by the help of acquired ones. As if it were probable that nature, which has been so exact and curious in the mechanism of flowers, herbs, and flies, should have bungled most in her masterpiece, and made man as it were by halves, to be afterwards polished and refined by his own industry, in the attainment of such sciences as the Egyptians feigned were invented by their god Theuth as a plague surely and punishment to mankind, for they are so far from augmenting happiness that they do not answer that end for which they were first designed, which was the improvement of memory, as Plato in his *Phædrus* cleverly observes." Erasmus also had treated the callings of the lawyer, the physician, the divine, in successive sketches, much upon the plan which Agrippa seems to have expanded; he had spoken also precisely as Agrippa spoke of the scholastic theologians, and was not more friendly than Agrippa in his satire on the Pope and on the monks. But in the interval of nearly twenty years that had elapsed between the publica-

tions of the Praise of Folly and the Vanity of Science, the great struggle against church corruption had become every year more earnest and momentous. Harder blows were exchanged; Agrippa, too, was not content to risk a mortal combat with corruption in the church, he must needs fight in earnest against vices of the court, and therefore had more than the priests for enemies. The mere attack on the deficiencies of art and science was no dangerous proceeding. It expressed a feeling of the time when many were becoming conscious that a great deal of the wisdom of the day was made of words alone. Agrippa's volume had not been long published when a scholar at Comines sent to the author for inspection and correction a work very similar in plan¹.

At this period for him so critical, the patroness was lost whose friendship had been sought so long, and for so short a time enjoyed. Margaret died at the age of fifty-two, and the second work of the historiographer—also complete before the close of the year 1530—was to narrate at some length the story of her life in the form of a polished funeral oration². This panegyric is the last of Cornelius Agrippa's published speeches. A short speech composed for the son of Christiern, King of Denmark, to be delivered by him in the presence of the Emperor, written at Antwerp; and another that had been written at Paris, for use by a relative, on being admitted bachelor of

¹ Ep. 9, Lib. vi. pp. 961-963.

² Oratio, habita in funere divæ Margarete Austriacorum et Burgundorum Principis æterna memoria dignissimæ. Opera, Tom. ii. pp. 1098-1120.

theology, are all his other writings of this kind that have not been already mentioned. The funeral oration was dedicated formally to Jean de Carondelet, Archbishop of Palermo, lately Margaret's ecclesiastical councillor, who, upon her decease, had civil charge over the provinces that she had ruled¹. The letter to the Archbishop was dated from Mechlin, in which town Cornelius was staying, probably to look after his salary, in the last days of the year 1530.

At the beginning of the next year he was at Antwerp again, busy with his printer. On the thirteenth of January he was sending to press the close of the first book of Occult Philosophy. He had designed to print the whole, but was checked by prudential suggestions. He complained to his printer that the bookseller had sent him copies of the *Vanity of Sciences* in loose sheets, and not bound as he had promised; asked for an account of copies sold, and himself forwarded some money received for copies purchased from himself, promising at the same time that he would look money up from other sources². It is to be supposed, therefore, that he was publishing these books at his own risk.

The printing of the first issue of Cornelius Agrippa's *Occult Philosophy*, by John Graphæus of Antwerp, was completed in the month of February, 1531, after which date the book was sold by him at the sign of the Lime Tree, in the street called the *Lombardenveste*³. It is

¹ Ep. 10, Lib. vi. p. 963.

² Ep. 11, Lib. vi. p. 964.

³ *Henrici Cor. Agrippæ ab Nettesheym, à Consiliis et Archivis Indiciarii*

elegantly printed, paged only by the numbering of the sheets, from A to V; is entitled Agrippa's Three Books of Occult Philosophy, and sets out with an index, giving heads of chapters to the entire work. But at the end of the first book the publication closes with the following announcement: "TO THE READER.—Candid reader, the author of this most divine work intended to bring to light also the second and third book, which are indeed promised to readers at the beginning of the work, but suddenly almost, and unexpectedly, the death of the sainted Margaret, as well as other cares, changed his course, and compelled him to desist from what he had begun. But it is not to be doubted that when he has understood this little book not to be scorned, and to be not wholly unwelcome to the learned, he will edit also the other two. At present receive this, and embrace with good will the most occult mysteries and secrets of the divinest things that are contained in it. Farewell."

Prefixed to the work is a copy of the Imperial privilege to Agrippa, dated the seventh of January, 1529, granting him six years' copyright of this and other writings, namely, the Declamation on the Vanity of Sciences, the Commentaries upon the *Ars Brevis* of Raymond Lully, and the Collection of his Letters and Orations. Then follows the author's address to the reader, in which he does not doubt that a great number of persons will be

sacrae Cæsare Maiestatis. De Occulta Philosophia. Libri Tres. Antuerpiæ, Anno MDXXXI. The book is described from my own copy. It is very rare.

attracted to his book by the rarity of the subject, of whom many will read carelessly and misunderstand, many will cry out against it even before they have quite read the title, call him a wizard, a demoniac, a superstitious man, and a magician. He reminds his readers that the Eastern magi were the first who came with worship to the Lord. He advises those who cannot overcome their hatred of a name to leave his work unread, and asks people of more equanimity to read with discretion, throwing aside what they do not like as matter not commended to them, but narrated only. "I confess," he says, "that there are many very vain things and curious prodigies taught for the sake of ostentation in books of magic; cast them aside as emptiness, but do not refuse to know their causes." . . . Again he says, "where I err, or have too freely spoken, pardon my youth, for I was less than a youth when I composed this work, so that I might excuse myself and say, When I was a child I spoke as a child, I had knowledge as a child, but now that I am a man I have put away from me childish things, and a great part of what is in this book I have retracted in my book upon the Vanity and Uncertainty of Sciences. But here again you perhaps reply to me, by saying: If you wrote this when a youth, and retracted it when older, why have you now printed it?" He then explains how, when it was first written, he had meant some day to mature and complete it; but after a time, corrupt, rough, and defective copies began passing from hand to hand in Italy, France, and Germany; "and some, I know not whether more

through impatience than through impudence, designed to commit that crude work to the press. Mastered by this evil, I thought it would be less dangerous to edit the work myself, a little improved by my own correction, than to let it get abroad in undigested fragments from the hands of other people. Besides, I thought it no crime if I saved a specimen of the toil of my youth from perishing. I have added a few chapters, and have also inserted many things which it would be incurious to have passed over, these the critical reader can detect easily from the inequality of composition; for I did not wish to write the entire work anew, and, as they say, to weave the entire fabric afresh, but to correct a little, and infuse a little brightness. Wherefore, again I ask you, candid reader, not to judge the book according to the time when it is published, but to pardon the curiosity of youth, if you find in it anything displeasing."

He adds next his letter to Trithemius, written when the book was written, twenty years previously, with the abbot's answer; then, finally, he dedicates his publication to the Reverend Father in Christ, and most Illustrious Prince Hermann, Count of Wied, Archbishop of Cologne.

Hermann, Archbishop of Cologne, was showing kindness to Agrippa; his other friend of the same family, the literary Hermann, Count of Neuwied, had died suddenly at the age of thirty-nine, in the preceding year. The goodwill of the Archbishop, Agrippa was, by predilection and by policy, disposed to cultivate; he had attachment to

the family, and he was in need of clerical support. He might be in need even of a patron, for since Margaret's death his dependence on the favour of the Emperor had been more uncertain than ever, and his *Vanity of Sciences* having made enemies of courtiers, treasurers, and priests, nothing could have better pleased those eager to ruin him than that he should have immediately afterwards published his book of *Occult Science*, which gave them their revenge in the opportunity of persecuting him as a magician.

The salary that had been promised him as historiographer, and upon the credit of which he had been obliged to incur debts, was never paid; he was, moreover, traduced to the Emperor, and libels of the most malignant and absurd description, founded on his character of wizard, began to be industriously set afloat. His book of *Occult Science* was freely read; and in the same year that it was published at Antwerp there appeared an edition of it in Paris also¹. In this year, too, the *Vanity of Sciences*, printed for the first time the year before in quarto, at Antwerp, was reprinted, with correction of the many printer's errors, both at Antwerp and Cologne; and two editions more of the same work appeared in the year following². The books excited at once very much attention and no little praise, whereby was increased the virulence of the hostility they braved.

The financiers were glad of an excuse that covered

¹ Ep. 26, Lib. vii. p. 1083.

² *Jöcher's Gelehrten Lexicon: Fortsetzung.* Art. Agrippa.

their neglect in payment of Agrippa's salary. Certainly Margaret had ordered them¹ to pay him what was just when she appointed him historiographer; and to his first applications for some payment, made to Count Hochstraten, who was in charge of the finance, or to the Archbishop of Palermo, chief of the council, the reply always was encouragement to be at ease upon the subject, since he would not fail to receive the remuneration proper to his office. It was his misfortune to put faith in these fair words, and by his trust in them at last to be reduced to the most wretched state of debt and want. After the death of Margaret, his only trust was in Charles V., to whom he for months paid suit; but the end of it was only the stirring in the Emperor of extreme wrath against him for the matter written in his book upon the Vanity of Sciences, and he would even have been put to death had not two reverend and learned cardinals pleaded his cause at court, and actively assisted him at home: these friends being Everard de la Mark, Bishop of Liege, and the Cardinal Campegio. The steward of the Bishop of Cologne's household, who was a scholar, and Agrippa's friend, had presented the offending books to Hermann, who received them favourably². Cornelius was at that time—towards the end of January, 1531, in great want—and had just learnt how much peril he had escaped, from anger that

¹ The groundwork of the succeeding narrative is taken from Agrippa's statement of his case to the new Regent, Mary of Austria. Ep. 21, Lib. vii. pp. 1020-1027. This is the reference, on money matters in Brabant, when no other is cited.

² Ep. 14, Lib. vi. p. 968.

had been raised against him by the priests. They had touched even the mind of the late Princess Margaret, so that he might have perished if she had survived, while he was actually then in peril from the Emperor, to whom offence against the cowl had, through King Ferdinand, been represented as offence against religion. "Emperor Charles," he says, "is in great wrath, and denounces me with I know not what blistering menaces, so that I know not what to expect from my book on Vanity, except that which I promised myself in the preface¹." At this time a Reformer writes him, with grace and peace in the Lord, encouragement to persevere in the free profession of the glory of Christ, and asks him for a present of his works².

Creditors were gathering about Cornelius. Nominally he had an income, actually he had not wherewith to support his children; and his liberty was threatened. For more than a year and a half he had held the post of historiographer, abandoning for the Imperial service opportunities of private practice, betaking himself to court, living with money borrowed from the usurers³, upon the credit of court promises, the worth of which he should have learnt at Lyons once for all. His best friend, the Genoese citizen Furnario, was far away; Father Aurelius was also absent; but the Cardinal Campegio befriended him, so did Signor Luca, the Cardinal's secretary, and the venerable Bernardo Paltrini, his steward. These friends obtained from Everard, Bishop of Liege, promise of intercession

¹ Ep. 15, Lib. vi. p. 969.

² Ep. 16, Lib. vi. p. 969.

³ Ep. 21, Lib. vi. p. 976.

with the Emperor. To Everard, Bishop of Liege, the poor philosopher accordingly addressed himself; he was a gentleman, he said, and told what were his antecedents; he was capable of efficient service, he said, and hinted at his acknowledged powers; promises had been made to him, and they had not been kept; he wished either to have his appointment cancelled upon payment of his services thus far, or to be maintained in it upon a fair and honest footing¹. He pleaded thus from Ghent upon the twelfth of May, and but a few weeks afterwards he was in gaol for debt at Brussels.

In vain, more weary of petitioning than any man could be of reading his petitions, he had besieged with his suit for common justice at its hands the privy council of the Emperor. "While I follow the court," he said, "absent from home, my family hungers, my sons weep, creditors beset me, a mortal poverty increases to my hurt, my liberty is insecure." He asked either at once the means of paying what he owed, or an order that time should be granted him, during which his liberty should be assured, while he sought elsewhere for the means of paying². The council washed its hands of him, referring him to the Emperor himself; for seven months he had followed the Emperor with his vain suit, living in inns, to his great hurt and loss, while waiting on the court, away from his unhappy little ones at Antwerp. The Emperor had been made deaf to him, stood as a statue to his supplication; cared no more, he says, for his incessant

¹ Ep. 18, Lib. vi. pp. 970, 971.

² Ep. 21, Lib. vi. pp. 975-977.

cry than for the croaking of a thirsty frog. What could he do but appeal from Cæsar in the interest of Cæsar's honour to his private councillors? The Emperor, just at that time, was not too fortunate; he had no little need of friends. Agrippa and Agrippa's family had served his ancestors. Agrippa could serve him. He urged again his offers and his claims, besought not so much for the payment due to him as for protection of his person from imprisonment, for the life of his little children, for dismissal, for rejection, for a definite permission to despair¹.

Petition was not wholly fruitless. The most pressing creditor, Alexis Falco, was restrained from seizure of Agrippa's person during fifteen days; but he defied the order of the council, and together with John Plat took constables of the town of Brussels, seized the philosopher, and conducted him ignominiously through the open streets to gaol. He wrote from his prison to Bernard, the steward of Campegio, who might cause the council to maintain its own decision, and to set him free from an imprisonment incurred through no crime, no dishonesty, but the injustice of the Emperor and the neglect of those who served him². Bernard was a prompt friend. He applied at once on behalf of Agrippa, in the name of Cardinal Campegio, to the Archbishop of Palermo, president of the council: the Archbishop promised to interfere. Bernard offered to return in an hour, to be told the result of his interference. The Archbishop objected to that offer, but sent word to Cornelius that he should take

¹ Ep. 22, Lib. vi. pp. 977-980.

² Ep. 23, Lib. vi. p. 980.

courage, and that a messenger would soon be sent to tell him of his liberation¹.

The result of intercession seems to have been a prompt bringing of Agrippa's case before the judges, and the same plain speaking which in the *Vanity of Sciences* had made of the Emperor a mortal enemy, and had exposed the author to the vengeance of offended priests and courtiers, was now used by him with a perilous boldness in the presence of the judges also. "You would not," he said², "concede me time to pay my debts; you would not credit me with the pledge of the Emperor. Why am I to implore of you clemency, when you deny me justice? Do you account the Emperor one of those men who are not bound by their promises? In harshness, avarice, ingratitude, open breach of his written word, what excellent material you offer me for writing Caesar's praise. Tell me whether it is fit that I should be bound by oath to the Emperor for two years, as the keeper of his records, and, my dues from him being withheld, my service to him be compulsory? While I have been following him about for the last year as a beggar, I might have died of hunger had not the most reverend apostolic legate, Cardinal Campegio, sustained me. Possibly you may say that I share this evil with many others, that not I only live upon other people's tables, but that almost all the Emperor's retainers, satellites, and doorkeepers, even those of his chamber, do the same, whom we see going the round of other men's dinners, as seekers of table-talk or parasites,

¹ Ep. 24, Lib. vi. p. 981.

² Ep. 25, Lib. vi. pp. 981-983.

to the no slight shame of the Emperor himself. Here let me say I wish you sometimes heard what I hear very often; saw what I see. Certes, if you had at heart the credit of the Emperor, you would advise him otherwise, and would not let your eyes blink as they do at his avarice, as if it were not base in him to let his pensioners go ragged for lack of their pay, his nobles without salaries do suit to others for their meat, to suffer me, his historiographer, to be dragged into suits before you, and vexed with the terrors of a gaol, while I have Cæsar for my debtor, and he being passed over, you order me to beg among my friends the means of paying what I owe. What equity is this of yours—what justice?" Has he not, he asks, suffered enough contumely without being ordered now to beg for charity? "Rather," he cries, "confess or deny that the Emperor is in my debt. If he owes money to me, take his pledge, accept him as my bail, unless you hold that he is unfit to be trusted. But if he owes me nothing, free me from my oath of service to him, and I will not only find wherewith to pay my creditors, but will soon turn this calamity into a matter of rejoicing." Just and bold speech, utterly unwise, doubtless, but would to God all men disdained, as Agrippa did, to cover honest feeling with false words. Such direct language being added to the general strain in the Vanity of Sciences and Arts, we need not wonder that the Emperor hated Agrippa to the death; and, as the Sieur Clavigni of St. Honoré relates¹, would have brought him

¹ *Use of Suspected Books*, cited by Bayle.

to an end as tragical as that of Lucilius Vanini (who, for his hard words against the Dominicans, on accusation of magic and atheism, was a few years later burnt alive, his tongue having been first cut out), had not the Cardinal Campegio and the Bishop of Liege prevailed in intercession.

In a judiciary protest Cornelius pleaded that Alexis Falco had, by a violent and illegal seizure, taken from him far more than the value of his debt—namely, the fair fame of his debtor; and, contenting himself with that, ought to be allowed to claim no more¹. To the Emperor himself he sent a note, as a last effort, begging that if his clemency would not permit him to pay what he owed, he might have the benefit of his indignation in dismissal from his post and freedom to depart; if there was no more hope for him, he asked leave to despair². Thus he was plunged into the old perplexity; escaped, as he said, from Tartarus at Lyons and restored to upper air, not many months elapsed before he found himself at Brussels fairly tumbled into Tartarus again.

¹ Ep. 26, Lib. vi. pp. 983, 984.

² Ep. 27, Lib. vi. p. 984.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF MARRIAGE AND OF MAGIC.

ERASMUS at this time was saying to Agricola: "About Cornelius Agrippa some learned friends have written to me from Brabant, but in such terms that they seem not to approve of the man's violence, and to ascribe to him more care in collection than judgment in selection. To some it is not disagreeable that he has thus far happily opposed the theologians and monks, and that, too, under the shadow of the Emperor, whose councillor he professes himself, and under the protection of the Cardinal Campegio. But I fear lest the man's courage bring great ill-will on polite letters, provided all is true that my friends write to me. I have not yet happened to see his book, nor has he ever written to me¹."

Agrippa revered Erasmus; when he did write to him, it was in the tone of one who looked up to a higher spirit, but he did not write until he had an opportunity of doing so without appearance of intrusion. It arrived

¹ *Erasmi Epistolæ* (ed. Lond. 1642), Lib. xxiv. Ep. 18, p. 1319.

a few months afterwards in this way: A young priest named Andrew, pious and modest, had been engaged in out-of-the-way studies, and having two questions in Magic which he wished one of the wise men of the world to answer, having also, as it would appear, leisure and money, he set off to find Erasmus, who received him kindly, but, having heard his questions, laughed at them, and ridiculed magical study. Andrew, therefore, begged an introduction to Cornelius Agrippa, which was readily conceded, and so set on foot a correspondence between Erasmus and Agrippa¹: "Greeting to you, illustrious man, your name here is in everybody's mouth, especially on account of the book you have issued on the Vanity of Studies, concerning which many of the learned have written to me—I myself not yet having seen it—that it contains, in all conscience, liberty enough, though as to other things opinions differ. I will take care to get it as soon as I can, and devour the whole. This Andrew, a priest, in my opinion modest and pious, has come hither to see Erasmus; but having hoped for a treasure, has found coals. Now he is hastening to you, expecting to draw from your breast a greater flow of wisdom. He seems to have a special love for your talent, and carries your book on Occult Philosophy as his constant companion on the way. I do not commend him to you, but ask rather to be commended to you through him. When I shall have read your book, I will write to you more

¹ *H. C. A.*, Ep. 31, Lib. vi. p. 993.

fully. In the mean time, I pray for your prosperity. From Friburg in Brisgau, Sept. 17, 1531."

The priest who took this letter was a true enthusiast. Hearing that the Emperor was expected at Strasburg, he went thither to await Agrippa, who would follow in his train; then he went with the same idea to Spire, and waited there three weeks, at the end of which time he learnt that the Emperor would not be at Spire before Christmas, if he came at all that winter. Andrew, therefore, set off with his questions to Cologne and Brussels, and having thus travelled in search of him, not without toil and risk, more than two hundred leagues, he humbly sought Agrippa's resolution of his doubts, asking it as from a philosopher, who was as a prince out of whose presence nobody went empty away, on whom especially the command was laid, *Freely ye have received, freely give*¹.

The letter brought by this man from Erasmus was received gladly by Cornelius as an opportunity of expressing his respect for that fine-witted scholar. He expressed a sincere wish that Erasmus would condescend to read his book with care, promising that in religion it expressed nothing hostile to the Catholic Church. He expressed also gently his ambition for the friendship of Erasmus; and a couple of months afterwards, having received no reply, though he had, indeed, been absent from Brabant and might have missed a letter, he again wrote, ex-

¹ Ep. 32, Lib. vi. pp. 995, 996.

pressing "love and reverence¹," and begged pardon for his audacity in asking that, at leisure, a word might be written back to him sometimes. Erasmus was good-natured, but had not quite made up his mind as to Agrippa's character; he wrote at intervals two notes that were both short and kind, chiefly consisting of excuses for their brevity; a little more experience of Agrippa's single-heartedness, and closer understanding of his courage, at last conquered the reserve, and this was the letter², written some months later: "I wrote to you at first in few words, to the effect that the doctrine of your book on the Vanity of Sciences had pleased some of the most learned in these parts. I had not then read the book, but soon afterwards, having obtained it, I bade a famulus read it aloud at supper, for I had no other vacant time, and am myself compelled to abstain after supper from all study. I liked the *δεινότης* (courage) and the eloquence, nor do I see why the monks should have been so angry. As you attack the bad, you praise the good, but they like altogether to be praised. What I advised you before, I would advise you now, that if you conveniently can, you extricate yourself from this contention. Take Louis Barguin for a warning, whom nothing ruined but his simple freedom towards monks and theologians, he being a man otherwise of unstained character. I often advised him dexterously to disentangle himself from that business, but the hope of victory misled him. But if you cannot fly, and must hazard the fortune of war, see that you

¹ Ep. 6, Lib. vii. p. 1003.

² Ep 40, Lib. vii. p. 1056.

fight from a tower, and do not trust yourself into their hands. Of this, before everything, take heed that you do not mix me up with the matter: I am burdened with more than enough ill-will, and this would trouble me, while doing you more harm than good. I asked the same of Barguin, and he promised, but deceived me, trusting more to his own courage than to my advice. You see the end. There would not have been the smallest danger had he yielded to my counsel. Many a time I harped to him that monks and theologians are not to be overcome, even if one had a better cause than St. Paul had. Now, therefore, if I have any influence with you, again and again I would warn you that the task you have undertaken leads to perilous encounters, and may cost you the power of advancing in your studies. At present I have not leisure to say more, for I am writing to several friends. Farewell. Friburg, April 21, 1533."

These letters from Erasmus are peculiarly characteristic. Their warning was ere long fulfilled, but still to priest or prince Cornelius spoke as his heart dictated. A faithful servant they lost in him who resented his plain speech.

During some months before and after his imprisonment at Brussels, an attempt was made to enlist Agrippa's energies into the service of the Queen of England, Katharine of Arragon, the question of whose divorce was then before the Pope, and had been made matter of discussion in the schools of Europe. Orator for the Emperor Charles V. at the Court of Henry VIII. was Agrippa's friend Eustochius Chappuys, the same by whom he had

been helped in Savoy and Switzerland. Chappuys had all due faith in his friend's vigour and ability, and when he found in the *Vanity of Sciences* a passage that implied strong condemnation of the King of England's project of divorce, it occurred to him to ask his friend to write something in aid of the cause of Katharine. He wrote accordingly from London, on the twenty-sixth of June, 1531¹, renewing old acquaintance with Agrippa, calling his attention to the passage in his book, and asking him to speak his thoughts more amply. Nobody, he said, could state the case more faithfully and ably than Cornelius could, if he chose. The passage to which Chappuys referred was in the sixty-third chapter, and said, "I have heard in these days of a certain King who is persuaded that he has a right to put away a wife to whom he has now been married more than twenty years, and wed his mistress."

We have already seen what were Agrippa's views of marriage. It was binding only for this world; death ended it, but nothing short of death justified separation of a married pair, except the one reason which has been declared alone sufficient in the Gospel. The cause of Queen Katharine was, indeed, naturally that of Charles V., and Agrippa was a writer bound to the Imperial service; but Chappuys appealed to his convictions only, and by them he was impelled to take his place among the supporters of the falling Queen.

But Agrippa's way of life was at that time beset with sorrow. He was on the threshold of the prison, and in

¹ Ep. 19, Lib. vi. pp. 972, 973.

peril of his life : Chappuys invited him to make an enemy of one more king. There were others, he said, stronger for the battle to which he was summoned. He cared not, indeed, for the opinion of the Sorbonne; he knew the arts of its fraternity, and would like to ask of it, by way of problem for solution, What is the influence of gold upon theology? The proposed task certainly tempted him, but he was not at liberty to undertake it without having asked the permission of the Emperor and of his sister Mary, Margaret's successor in the Netherlands, but of them he could get nothing but ill-will, because of his recent book upon the Vanity of Arts. If Chappuys meant himself to urge the matter, no time was to be lost, because the Emperor would, in a few days, be leaving Brussels. "As for me, I am uncertain where to remain, whither to turn. There is no place here in which I can prosper, unless I will bid farewell to truth and honesty." Agrippa sent his friend a copy of the funeral oration on the Princess Margaret, with his own manuscript corrections of the printer's errors. Chappuys having sent several of the books published on the subject of the King's divorce, Cornelius asked for more of those which had been written on the Queen's side, that of the Bishop of Rochester, which he had received, having much pleased him. He dated from "this inhospitable court at Brussels," on the nineteenth of July, 1531, and begged that the reply might be addressed to him under cover to the steward, at the house of his sole ~~Mecenas~~, Cardinal Campegio, his defender from the wolves who ravened for him as their

prey. On the tenth of the following September, Eustochius wrote a very long reply from London¹, the purport of which was praise and encouragement. The King of England, he said, was not so much ill minded as ill advised, and however bent on a divorce, yet liberally disposed to stand aside and see his whole case discussed fairly. Queen Katharine, he said, too, would herself in a few days write to the Emperor and to the Regent Mary, asking from them, on behalf of Cornelius, permission to employ his powers in her cause. The Queen was herself liberal, and Chappuys would take care that she did not omit amply to reward her champion. Towards the close of November, Chappuys wrote again on the same subject, sending more encouragement and more material², but at that time Agrippa's life had become overgrown with other hopes and cares, therefore the subject was pursued no further³.

He had been released from prison by the intervention of his patrons, and assured the payment of a very humble salary in a patent signed and countersigned by many names, with Cæsar's eagle in red wax to make assurance perfect. Well content with this, and once more putting trust in princes, the historiographer departed from the court before which he had been disgraced by an imprisonment, and in which he met daily with insult. He retired to

¹ Ep. 29, Lib. vi. pp. 986-993. ² Ep. 33, Lib. vi. pp. 996, 997.

³ Bayle points out Burnet's error in stating in the *History of the English Reformation* that Cornelius Agrippa was employed to advocate Henry VIII.'s divorce from Katharine. It is hardly necessary to add, that as to the discussions held by the Sorbonne and other points relating to this subject, abundant illustration of this passage in Agrippa's life is to be found in Burnet's *History*.

Mechlin, because here he could maintain a house at small expense¹, and very shortly afterwards took for his third wife a native of the town². Surely his heart must have yearned for human solace and companionship; twice he had found entire happiness in marriage, and now left helpless with young children about him, he again looked to a woman's tenderness for aid. This time he sought a blessing and obtained a curse. He has himself told the world not a syllable of his third wife. She was faithless; if report spoke truly, infamous. Rabelais, not many years afterwards, scoffed at Agrippa because, while his eyes were on the sky, he remained blind to his own shame³. He did, indeed, look heavenward, though he was no believer in astrology, for the last hope he had of gentle solace upon earth was gone; men saw his shame, God only was witness to his sorrow.

For the one reason that was valid in his eyes, three years after this marriage, Cornelius Agrippa was divorced, from his third wife at Bonn, and there remained for him then only to wander out alone into a hostile world and die⁴.

In what spirit the endeavour of this persecuted scholar to maintain with narrow means a little home at Mechlin was regarded by the court, a very trifling matter is suffi-

¹ Ep. 21, Lib. vii. p. 1023. ² Wierus, *Opera* (ed. Amst., 1660), p. 111.

³ *Le Tiers Livre des faits et dits heroïques du bon Pantagruel*, chap. xxv. "Bien sçay-je que luy un jour parlant au grand Roy des choses celestes et transcendentes, les laquais de cour Et il, voyant toutes choses etheres et terrestres sans bezicles ne voyoit sa femme brimbalante et oncques n'en sceut les nouvelles." It is stated by Wier that his master's third wife was a Mechlin woman; that being the case, it is natural to assume, not from direct authority but inference, that the date of marriage is as here given.

⁴ Wierus, *De Præstigiis Dæmonum*. Lib. ii. cap. v.

cient to disclose. He applied for exemption from the bear-tax, a concession commonly allowed to every person holding rank, however mean, under the seal of the Emperor. Trifling and common as the favour was, it was refused. Midsummer-day came, and the first instalment of the little salary was due. Agrippa's creditors presented themselves, and he himself went to Michaud, the treasurer, who said he should be paid immediately¹, wrote a form of receipt, which Agrippa signed, firmly intending that the whole sum payable to him should be distributed among his creditors. But as he meant to devote the whole of his salary as historiographer to payment of his debts, he left himself, for the support of his family, no income at all, except what he could earn elsewhere. For this reason, and to avoid the pressure of such creditors as were disposed to put his liberty in peril without profit to themselves, it became necessary to leave Mechlin. Relying, therefore, upon offers of assistance, generous in every sense, that had been made by the Archbishop of Cologne, Cornelius passed into Germany with his whole household, leaving at Mechlin a poor woman in charge of a small house and of some furniture, which was to represent the home he should revisit when his means allowed. While he owed money, he proposed, by exercising at Cologne or Bonn the strictest parsimony, and by devoting to his creditors the whole of his official salary, to pay his debts if possible; at any rate, to do his duty as an honest man.

¹ The preceding and succeeding details are from Agrippa's representation of his case to the Princess Mary, the new Regent, Ep. 21, Lib. vi. pp. 1020-1027.

The Archbishop of Cologne was unquestionably pleased at the manner in which the first book of Occult Philosophy had been inscribed to him. On the second of February, 1532, he wrote to Cornelius in cordial terms, invited him to Poppelsdorf, where he was then residing, promised the payment of all travelling expenses, and his worldly help when he arrived¹. Agrippa said that he would be with him in Lent, and did then visit him²; he was, indeed, glad to be near Cologne, where he was just then republishing his smaller works—the *Treatise on the Pre-eminence of Woman*, the *Expostulation with Catilinet*, &c.; they were issued in that town during the month of May. A companion volume, uniformly printed, of the *Vanity of Sciences*, dedicated to Augustine Furnario, was issued in the following September; this, I believe, is the most perfect edition extant of Agrippa's most important work. It is well to remark that the person who commends it to the reader dates from the Sorbonne. To the collection of his smaller works it should be observed, also, that Agrippa did not omit to fulfil an old promise, by appending certain of his letters, which made known the treatment he had received at the court of France, as well as his correspondence subsequently with the Duke of Bourbon. During this year there was in progress, also at Cologne, the printing of the first complete edition—the one which was to contain all three books—of the *Occult Philosophy*.

In Brabant, the issue of Agrippa's writings was im-

¹ Ep. 1, Lib. vii. p. 1001.

² Ep. 4, 5, Lib. vii. pp. 1002, 1003; Ep. 10, Lib. vii. p. 1008.

peded by the opposition of the theologians of Louvain. Late in the preceding year his publisher had warned him¹ that he had intimation from reliable authority of the design of the Count Hochstraten to publish an edict prohibiting the sale or the reading of the book upon the *Vanity of Science*. Cornelius, who was at that time attempting to recover, through friends, books of his own that he had lent or lost in Paris or elsewhere, and also to obtain other volumes which it was desirable for him to consult while his own works were passing through the press², immediately applied himself to the protection of his literary interests. He prepared a dish for the men of Louvain, as he said to a friend, not without use of salt and vinegar, and even a little mustard, but without using a drop of oil. He meant to publish his reply to them, though very likely he would only thereby bring himself into new troubles, as a new truth usually begets new hatred. But he could not endure, he said, Egyptian slavery, he must revolt against it³. His friend Bernard Paltrini, of the household of the Cardinal Campegio—who was himself studying occult science, writing chronologies and commentaries—advised him to be quiet, praised his satiric power, but exhorted him not to let impulse conquer reason⁴. Agrippa was not to be turned from an assault on sophists. He was accused, directly and by implication, of impiety, of a capital crime, and the advice of

¹ Ep. 30, Lib. vi. p. 998.

² Ep. 34, Lib. vi. p. 997; Ep. 7, Lib. vii. pp. 1004-1006.

³ Ep. 3, Lib. vii. p. 1002.

⁴ Ep. 7, Lib. vii. pp. 1004, 1005; also Ep. 8, Lib. vii. p. 1006.

the Cardinal Campegio was, that he should defend himself; while by the Emperor it was demanded that he should recant all the impeached opinions¹. The terms of the accusation made against him had been placed in his hands on the fifteenth of December, 1531. He had set to work upon them in the room of Bernard Paltrini in the Cardinal's house, and before the end of January had delivered his Apology to the Head of the Senate at Mechlin, with the understanding that it was not to be given to the world until the case had been decided.

Ten months afterwards, Cornelius complained to his friend the Cardinal, that the theologians had not responded to his justification of himself, and that he had not been declared clear of offence. As for the tone of his reply, it was not, he thought, more vehement than slander should provoke; he did not know how to speak mildly to such men as those whose maledictions he rebutted. He had no fear of their learning; he did fear their violence, which raged against him with impunity. Nevertheless, although they had the ear of Cæsar, he could meet them boldly, trusting in his innocence, and asking for no more than a just judge². To the Cardinal, therefore, his Apology was dedicated.

At about the same time—on the seventeenth of September, 1532—Cornelius Agrippa, being at Frankfort-on-Maine, looking after the interests of his new books in the great literary mart, wrote thus in a letter to Melancthon:

¹ Preface to the *Apologia*. Op. Tom. ii. p. 258.

² Ep. 12, Lib. vii. pp. 1011-1013.

"Eternal war has arisen between me and the Louvain theologians, into which war I have been led by the audacity of truth. But I have been compelled thus far to fight, subject to the decisions of a judge who is the enemy of all truth, and I lose courage, glory, substance, faith, under an angry tyrant with whose obstinate ingratitude for all the service I have done him these two years past I have borne hitherto, and by patience and constancy I should almost have subdued it, had not fresh truth incessantly brought down on me fresh hatred. I hope either that this Nebuchadnezzar may some day return from the shape of a beast into that of a man, or that I may be enabled to depart out of this Ur of the Chaldees. May God keep you in safety and prosper you, according to the desire of your Christian mind. Salute for me Martin Luther, that unconquered heretic, who, as Saint Paul says in the Acts, after the way which they call heresy worships the God of his fathers¹."

No notice having been taken of Agrippa's Apology against the Louvain theologians, which he dedicated to the Cardinal Campegio, later in the year he added a Complaint against the Calumnies of Theologians and Monks, which he inscribed to his friend Eustochius Chapuys, and before November he had sent both of them to press at Basle². They were the last works of the ill-fated scholar.

More than once in the course of his writings Cornelius Agrippa speaks of himself as a knight-at-arms fighting

¹ Ep. 13, Lib. vii. p. 1018.

² Ep. 14, Lib. vii. p. 1014.

alone in a great battle. As a Reformer, that was truly his position. A defect of judgment caused him to dread greatly the separation of himself from the main body of the Church calling itself orthodox. He claimed to be on its side, and thus lost the support he might have had as one of the main army of Reformers. Nevertheless, Luther himself did not wage war more openly and honestly against all Church corruption than the plain-spoken Agrippa. Let it be owned, then, that he was very properly repudiated by the corrupt Church to whose skirts it was the great misfortune of his life that he felt bound to cling. All the neglect and contumely that he was condemned to bear while living, even all the power of the calumny by which his memory has until this day been overwhelmed, are traceable to the one cause, that in the momentous struggle of his age, he laboured very righteously and very bravely, but alone. He was a solitary knight in the great battle, and, unluckily, the side on which he called himself a combatant was that against which he dealt all his blows.

CHAPTER XV.

THE LAST FIGHT WITH THE MONKS.

IT would seem to have been no hard task for an honest and straightforward monk to show grave reason for combating Agrippa's faith in his own orthodoxy, but they were not the honest and straightforward monks who laboured to condemn men of his stamp. The Louvain theologians might have been formidable critics had they been more used to reasoning than sophistry, but they were notoriously mean of spirit, men who could feel a quibble better than an argument, and therefore the best they could do was to attack Agrippa's *Vanity of Sciences* with trivial carpings that it cost no trouble whatever to expose to scorn. Cornelius declined to obey the Emperor by making public recantation of opinions that had been unfairly represented; he preferred to silence his antagonists, "to appeal," as he said in the preface, to his published answer, "from the judge asleep to the judge awakened, from the half instructed to the perfectly informed. For the Emperor cannot condemn one whom the law hath not judged, lest (as the Apostle says in the Acts), judging me according to the law, he command me to be persecuted contrary to the law." He proposed, therefore, to prove

to the Imperial parliament of Mechlin that he had said nothing in contradiction to the teaching of the Holy Catholic Church¹. The articles of accusation formally preferred against his book were forty-three in number; the citation of a few will show the character of all, and justify the brevity with which they will be here discussed.

The title of the book was truncated, no allusion was made to its treating on the excellence of the Word of God; the scope of the whole declamation having been in this way passed over, and the work, taken seriously, and not as a declamation at all, but as an argument against the Arts and Sciences, for the refutation of it there was quoted the opinion of St. Augustine, that a good education is of service to the theologian. As in the case of the title of the work, so also throughout its whole substance, tortuous ways of attack were preferred; and the Louvain theologians, although the book against which they protested lay unusually open to direct assault, seem to have been sophists utterly incapable of open fighting. Disingenuous representations of the meaning of a passage here and there, everywhere a stolid inability to see the drift of words spoken in satire, or to understand which points in a case are significant and which are insignificant, ignorance of Greek and

¹ *Nobilis Viri H. C. A., Armato Militiæ Equitis aurati, ac Utriusque Juris Doctoris, Cesareæ Maiestatis a Consiliis et Archivis Indiciarii, Apologia adversus Calumnias, propter Declamationem de Vanitate Scientiarum et de Excellentia Verbi Dei, sibi per aliquos Lovanienses Theologos intentatas.* Opera, Tom. ii. pp. 257-330. For this and for what follows, till the next citation.

want of skill to write Latin grammatically, or even to spell, were the qualifications put most prominently forward in this instance by Agrippa's enemies. In the course of their articles of accusation against him, the monks of Louvain misspelt even their word of condemnation; they wrote dampnat for damnat, as if one should write condempn. The word Idolatry they began with a Y. The genitive of alius was in their grammar aliis—"aliis generis" of another kind. Their reasoning was like their spelling and their grammar. They saw heresy in Agrippa's statement, that an art is good or bad according to the character of him who exercises it. They transferred to him as a heresy of his own, and aggravated by misquotation, the opinion cited in jest from St. Augustine, that "merchants and soldiers are incapable of true repentance." They urged it as a heresy against Agrippa that he declared no gloss, whether of men or angels, to be of authority beyond the limit of God's Word; the knowledge of God's Word having been given to men by no Sorbonne, no company of scholars, but only by God and Christ. If they oppose me here, Agrippa writes in the brief comment set by him opposite each article of censure, if they oppose me here, plainly they are the heretics; to add to the Scriptures, or subtract from them, is an offence against the Holy Spirit. Upon other topics they would quote with the same want of wit or tact fragments of sentences. "Although," said they, "the Preacher declares Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity, yet the wise man ought to be understood as speaking now in his own cha-

racter, now in the character of a man who admires with astonishment the things that are in the world, sometimes after the manner of fools, at other times after the manner of the prudent."—"And why," Cornelius inquires in the margin of this paragraph, "am not I to be read with the same intelligence, O ye malicious sycophants!"

Having printed the whole paper of indictment with curt marginal notes opposite each article, he treats of each head of the accusation in detail, so that in forty-three little chapters he demolishes the forty-three assertions of his heresy. The same University of Louvain had attacked Erasmus, and had been instructed by that scholar as to the licence proper in a Declamation, which form of composition may be enlivened by evasive arguments and by cross reasoning employed either in mockery or jest. "I have been commended by the learned," said Agrippa, "for the Declamation now attacked, and from them never heard that it was heretical, though they have indeed objected against it a too fearless use of liberty of speech. If that be a vice in me, it is mine in company with many great and holy men, and I would not have fallen into it but for the example they had set. I am not afraid to confess that it is an inbred vice which makes me unable to flatter, and apt now and then to speak more freely than is thought expedient for tender ears. I own that I have offended many by true speech; . . . I know, too, that I am a man liable to err, but always of a sincere mind, and I profess myself to be a Catholic, nor do I think that I have pushed so far the licence of my Declamation

as to have separated myself from the orthodox faith, or that I need fear to receive the admonition and correction of superiors, who will themselves remember that they are men capable of erring in their judgment." Certainly, he had never gone so far as St. Thomas Aquinas, who, in a quodlibetal disputation, asserted that the body of our Lord in the Eucharist was better represented by beef than by bread and wine, because thereby the original substance was more nearly resembled. In this way, protected by the form in which they appeared, the most absurd and heretical positions had been taken, without fear of censure, by grave theologians. But of the masters of the Church in Cologne and Louvain, bent upon interfering where they could not reason, What did it profit you, Cornelius inquired, when you must needs combat John Reuchlin? Were you not then weighed and found wanting? What victory did you obtain over the noble Count Hermann of Neuwied? Had you not publicly to revoke your calumnies and to confess your falsehoods? With your infamy notorious, without a character for truth, what did you gain in contest against Erasmus, Faber Stapulensis, Peter of Ravenna? "Certainly," he exclaimed, with a just instinct of the truth, "your days are numbered and the measure of them is completed by the Lord; your victories shall cease, the voice shall die out of your schools, and the splendour of your sophisms become obsolete; you decline now to your fall, it is quite clear that you are soon to perish."

Again, he told them, that their brutal ignorance had

raised the spark of the Lutheran evil into a vast conflagration, because there was nothing disturbed at the outset that might not have settled, had Luther been treated with more civility, and had he not been opposed by the dishonesty and avarice of certain monks, and by the tyranny of certain prelates. The manner in which, in this Apology, Cornelius Agrippa spoke of Luther to the men who were denouncing him for heresy, is the one feature of it interesting to the student of his life. That he swept with a strong hand through the webs of sophistry in which the monks endeavoured to entangle him, we may take easily for granted. But it was urged by the sophists that in his book he had called Luther "the unconquered heretic." Upon this head, what would he answer? "I know not," he said, "whether by chance there may not be some superstitious theologians who would grudge Luther the name of heretic, as one shared by him with the Apostle Paul, who, before Felix, professed that he served God after the sect which the Jews called heresy; but I make no doubt that our masters of Louvain approve of me for having called Luther a heretic, only it offends them much that I have called him unconquered whom they and their associates at Cologne were the first men dogmatically to condemn. But I am not ignorant that Luther has been condemned for heresy, only I do not see that he is vanquished, when to this day he gains ground in his battle, and reigns in the mind of the people which is won to him in spite of authority by the dishonesty, ignorance, malice, and falsehood of many

of our priests, and monks, and masters. I speak of the event, not of the doctrine, against which, though it has been opposed in the best manner of the schools, judged with all strictness and subjected to the most august condemnation, all efforts end unprosperously." He proceeds to point out the defections to the side of Luther even from among the chosen champions of the Church. If Luther be conquered, he asks, why the cry for a general council? Why so much effort on the part, not only of priests, but of popes and great potentates? I know, indeed, he says, that Luther is most stoutly fought against, but I do not yet see that he is conquered. "First, there descended into this arena Hochstraten and Eckius, so fighting as to earn nothing but ridicule. Then succeeded monks, vociferating among the common people rude abuse of Luther; what did they thereby but scatter among the multitude those questions which before were discussed in Latin by the learned, and confined within the limits of the schools. So they impelled Luther to write in the vernacular, and heresy was then sown broadcast. The schools of Louvain, Cologne, and Paris afterwards came out with their bare articles and dogmatical censures, which, while they spread abroad the smoke and fire of books committed to be burnt—as if fire could put out fire—made Luther's works more to be sought after, more sold. At length there appeared the terrific bull of Leo, which is so much scorned by the Lutherans that they have not hesitated openly to jest at it, with contemptuous scholiæ and glosses. An Imperial decree was added, with no better

success. The slaughter-houses were next opened: what else resulted but the cutting off heads from a hydra? Is this the conquest of Luther? I speak of the event, not of the doctrine, and I wish that Christ were not preached as religiously by some of these heretics as by our teachers. Was Arius conquered when his sect occupied more churches than the orthodox? Is Mahomet conquered when there are more men of his creed than Christians? Again, I say, I speak of the event, not of the doctrine. How have I sinned, then, if I have called Luther an unconquered heretic? Would that I lied, and that Luther had been conquered as happily as he has been boldly provoked to war. I wish he were not unconquered heretic, and even, also, conqueror of heretics, to the great shame of our teachers. For who conquered the Anabaptists? Who has withstood the Sacramentarians? Was it not Luther alone? Show me one writing out of your academies by which you have moved them so much as a finger's breadth. Of what use are you in the Church, if it be enough to say: We condemn, because so has the Church decided? (And to decrees of the Church our teachers fly whenever they are hardly pressed, and there abide, unable to produce the Scripture that defends them.) Certainly, rustics who have not learnt the alphabet, and idiots, can profess as much. If that sufficed for the reconquest of heretics, oh, now would I welcome Martin Luther, who, while our masters slept and snored, alone watched for the Church, and alone freed it from the strong and violent heresies of Anabaptists and Sacramentarians, who

were getting possession of almost all Germany. But I seem here to approve of Luther, and herein I do, indeed, approve of him. But be not enraged; I approve of him as of the serpent in theriaca, which though in itself deadly, is in this form poisonous to poison." He ends by urging, that if they would conquer Luther they must conquer by arguments drawn from the Word of God; that if they must needs argue with fire and sword, they will provoke retort with fire and sword, and only make the storm blacker around them. They must use, also, against Luther better reasoning than they had brought against Agrippa, who professed himself a Catholic and not a Lutheran, and who, if he had fallen into human error, was not obstinately bent on persevering in it, and who had not fallen where he could not rise.

Together, with this Apology, when it was printed in the course of the next year, Cornelius Agrippa published and inscribed to Chappuys his Complaint against the Calumny of the monks and schoolmen, whom he denounced in his title to the complaint as being most wicked sycophants, who had dishonestly and treacherously sought to slander him before the Emperor¹. In this essay he does not so much rebut attack, as carry war into the country of his enemy. He speaks of his own wrongs not more in sorrow than in anger, yet with a strange tone of philosophic melancholy sobering his wrath. It is the

¹ H. C. A. ab Nettesheym. *Querela super Calumnia, ob editam Declamationem, de V. S. atque excellentia Verbi Dei, sibi per aliquos scelerrimos sycophantas, apud Cæsarem Majest. nefarie ac proditorie intentata.*

last thing he ever wrote. Who would not think it better, he exclaimed, ignorant of everything, to stretch out his legs and sleep securely, with both ears locked up, than labouring, and studying, and watching for the good of others, to become surrounded by a net from which there is no extrication. I attacked only the evil men who brought religion and truth into discredit; and I am passionately denounced by classes that I sought to raise, by men who could not see in me a benefactor. They have stirred up against me the wrath of the Emperor, and caused him to be deaf to my supplication. I am condemned—unheard-of tyranny—before defence is heard, and to this tyranny the Emperor is provoked by superstitious monks and sophists. I have carried my mind written on my face, and wish the Emperor to know that I can sell him neither smoke nor oil. But I have lived honestly, having no reason to blush for my own deeds, and little to blame in fortune, except that I was born into the service of ungrateful kings. My folly and impiety have been, I own, worthy of condemnation, in that, against the warning of the Scriptures, I have put my trust in princes. I wished to live as a philosopher in courts where art and literature are unhonoured, unrewarded. If I am not wise, surely it is herein that I am most foolish, that I have trusted my well-being into the power of another, and, anxious and uncertain of my future, rested hope on those whose deeds I find unequal to their promises. Truly, I am ashamed now of my lack of wisdom. I am denounced as a heretic and a magician. As for my magic, I confess that I have

done wonderful things, but none that offend God or hurt religion; many have been amazed at them, but they were the unlearned, to whom it is not given to know the causes of the things they see. Many things are done by the powers of Nature, which ignorance or malice will attribute to the demons rather than to Nature or to God. As for my teaching, if I had planted thorny syllogisms, produced docks and thistles in my writing, with such salad on their lips the asses who have judged me would have found my produce to their taste, and have devoured these books of mine with pleasure. I have planted something higher than their reach, and they become furious against me. "I think, therefore, that in these days, my Eustochius, there is no bliss greater than ignorance, nothing safer than to teach men nothing, when almost nothing can be written at which there shall not be some to take offence; but they who teach and know nothing, or nothing but the meanest and the basest things, are far removed from this fear, from these dangers, for of little things large ruin is impossible; and he who grovels cannot tumble far; but he who seeks to climb the heights, seems to be seeking his misfortune. As pleasant—and with more safety, as pleasant—is the marsh to the frogs, the mire to the hogs, the gloom to the bats, as to the doves the housetop, or the clear sun to the eagle. Therefore Pythagoras in Lucian, having wandered through all shapes in his own round of metamorphoses, confesses that he enjoyed life far more when he was a frog than when he was a king and a philosopher. Which persuasion seems to me so suited to

the present time, that to know nothing and teach nothing, and to differ, as one might say, in nothing from a beast, is now the happiest and safest course; at the same time it is that which makes a man the most acceptable to those courtiers and satraps, who commonly bestow their favours upon creatures having most resemblance to themselves." So the Complaint ends, and with it ends Agrippa's literary life.

While the Apology and the Complaint were being prepared at Basle for the last Frankfort book-fair, in the year 1532, the printer being Cratander, who was not to omit sending one copy to Erasmus, a few copies to the author, and three to the Cardinal Campegio¹; at Cologne, the printers, Soter and Hetorpius were engaged on the Occult Philosophy, which it was hoped would be ready for publication against Christmas². This was to be dedicated to the Archbishop of Cologne, and was not to have appeared at all, had he refused the dedication³. Agrippa had no other patron left. In Brabant the officials mocked him when he applied for his pension. A new way of evasion had occurred to them; he had forfeited his right to it by non-residence, and by not giving the whole of his time to the duties of his office⁴. "But," he said, "I am not absent while I have a furnished lodging on the spot; moreover, I am historiographer, not to the Duke of Brabant, not to the Count of Flanders or

¹ Ep. 16, Lib. vii. p. 1015.

² Ep. 14, Lib. vii. p. 1014.

³ Ep. 4, Lib. vii. p. 1002.

⁴ Ep. 21, Lib. vii. p. 1024, and for what follows.

Holland, but to the Emperor: neither am I absent while I live within the empire, seeing that wherever I may be I am able to perform my duty, by which I am not bound to one spot like a sponge, but of which the vocation is to see the world and take note of events and things. Did not my predecessor in the office, Jean le Maire, dwell now in Italy and now in France, everywhere enjoying his due stipend? Neither was I tied by the Emperor to any stated place of residence, but was inducted into a liberal office, the privileges of which, and its duties, were to be interpreted with liberality. Nor have I, although absent from Brabant, neglected any of my duties, for I have during this time planned a history of the French war, waged for the Emperor by the Duke of Bourbon in Italy; and I have collected, with great care, the records of the present Turkish expedition, sent from the camps themselves in Italy and Germany." Nevertheless, he was not paid. When use was not made of the subterfuge, he was told that the Turks swallowed up all public money. He never received, or expected to receive, anything as a servant of the Emperor; and had removed not only his family, but also his library, to Bonn, where he lived, closely beset by the legions of the sophists, and wrote to Erasmus that Louvain was aided by Cologne and Paris, but that he would maintain his freedom. "You," he said, "will laugh, and some will wonder: I, in the mean time, will overcome or die!"

Not to omit any just effort on his own behalf, Agrippa

¹ Ep. 17, Lib. vii. p. 1016.

wrote to the new Regent of the Netherlands, Mary Queen of Hungary, a detailed statement of his case as servant of the crown. It abated not a word of the truth as he felt it, and at its close he asked for pardon to his sorrow if, unused to feel his way, he had chosen rather to attack her highness with true warnings than mislead her with blandishment and flattery. He added, "If you will some day admit me into your society, you shall not be ashamed of my homage, or repent the benefit you will confer¹." This letter to the Regent, Cornelius sent through a liberal and learned man, who was her private secretary and his friend, John Khreutter, and he asked Khreutter so to deliver what he sent the Queen as to secure her actual reading of his case, or, if possible, to contrive that he should himself read the letter to her, and be watchful on his behalf against the men by whom his words and acts were constantly misrepresented. He sent to Khreutter, at the same time, all the letters bearing on the case, and would have liked the royal lady to have all of them read to her, if possible².

Surrounded closely by the monks, Agrippa had, not only in Brabant, a desperate cause to maintain. The Dominicans of Cologne suddenly pounced upon his books of Occult Science while they were yet passing through the press. They were not issued at Christmas. Conrad Colyn, of Ulm, a Dominican monk, who at Cologne held office as Inquisitor, denounced the forthcoming volume to the senate as in the highest degree open to suspicion. He

¹ Ep. 21, Lib. vii. pp. 1020-1027.

² Ep. 20, Lib. vii. pp. 1017-1019.

urged the senate to command that Agrippa's printer should submit all the printed sheets to the Inquisitor, that is, to himself, who would decide whether they were fit for issue to the world. The press was stopped, and the printers, Soter and Hetorp, applied to Agrippa, for the sake of his own credit and their pockets, to defend his cause¹. This was not very difficult, because the Archbishop of Cologne, Agrippa's friend, the patron to whom these books of Occult Philosophy were dedicated, was not without power to control the senate in a matter of Church discipline. Moreover, as Cornelius could urge upon the senate the book had received the assent of the Emperor's whole council, and was to appear under Imperial privilege, what right, therefore, had this black monk, out of his great reverence for the Prince of Darkness, raving under the title of Inquisitor, to arrogate to himself a sceptre above Cæsar's²? The printer, when Cornelius addressed his plea to the senate, had been compelled by that body to submit what he had printed to the monk. But, as for the author, he did not appear with his head bowed before the senators; they were his own townsmen, who by their way of interfering in religious matters, and by misgoverning their University, had made the town ridiculous among the learned, and he very plainly told them they had done so. Looking down as from his own height upon meaner men, he rained upon the heads of the senators a torrent of unwelcome truths. They had banished

¹ Ep. 24, 25, Lib. vii. pp. 1032-1033.

² Ep. 26, Lib. vii. pp. 1033-1046.

liberal arts, and all good literature from the city by their imbecility as—what he called after the Cologne monk who had commenced the onset upon Reuchlin—Peppercorn Christians. He proved to them, in their own way, that their champion, Jacob Hochstraten, writing against Luther's heresy, displayed himself as the most pestilent of heretics, while as for Conrad of Ulm, now the Cologne Inquisitor, he had promoted Luther's cause so well by opposition, that there seemed to be not a man in the whole town of Ulm and the adjacent county who had not turned Lutheran, and he had even brought about the overthrow of his own monastery, with the expulsion of himself and all his brethren. Having defended his own books of magic, in the next place Agrippa laid hands on the University, exposed the immorality of certain rectors and professors, the mismanagement which could allow the degree of Master of Arts to be given, as it had been given recently to one John Raym, who could not read and could not sing, and knew only one mass by heart, who therefore, having been accepted as a brother teacher and ordained a priest by the Cologne theologians, was obliged to go to a boys' school at Deventer and learn his grammar. He reminded them of sundry other scandals of this character, and called upon them to purify their University, if they were not willing to let it utterly decay. It might be said that all this was the affair of the rectors and principals of the schools, and certainly, added Cornelius, if you leave it to them you will always stick in the same mire. The University is yours, mainly they are your

sons who are instructed in it. The affair is yours. Why do you not invite knowledge from without, and train sons able to take knowledge abroad? Who ever sends youth in these days to be educated at Cologne, whence they have banished all good scholarship, where learning and eloquence are under ban, and books that contain novelty of research upon choice subjects may not be printed, sold, read, or possessed? Nobody can deny that your city and your citizens surpass in magnificence all others in Germany; in literature only, which alone gives life and perpetuity to all the rest, you are deficient, and your glory, therefore, is but as that of a picture on a wall. I shall be glad if you will hear my warning; if you will not, I have done my duty, and shown good-will to my native place. As for his own affair, he said he was prepared to serve Cologne by publishing his book there; in other towns printers were ready for it. Of heresy it contained nothing, but if their theosophists wished to convict him as a heretic, a book of his would very shortly be issued at Basle, written especially to raise that issue, upon which they were at liberty to try their strength, if they had any.

The lecture to the Cologne magistrates contained nothing that was not very true. Cologne, chiefly on account of the controversy set on foot by Pfefferkorn, really had fallen into ridicule among the learned; and, in spite of all the wealth of the town, its University was really in the state Cornelius described. He rightly pointed out the cause of the hurt and its remedy, declaring himself censor of the

men from whom he could not but disdain to receive censure. It was not to them that he intended to prefer any petition. As the printer wrote to him upon the subject of the prohibition, "the whole matter depends on the Archbishop and his ordinary: nevertheless, I could wish you had not written so sharply to the senate¹." It was in the power of the Electoral Prince Hermann of Wied, Archbishop of Cologne, to command his ordinary to remove the veto set by him, according to the order of the senate, on the issuing of Agrippa's volume. He had a good ostensible right to declare that, as the book had been examined and passed by the council of the Emperor, and would appear with Imperial privilege, it was in defence of the Imperial dignity that he felt bound to interfere. Agrippa wrote three letters to him, claiming as a right, more than as a favour, that he would put an end to the short triumph of the sophists, who, at the date of his last note, had hindered him for six weeks, and who then had a fair prospect of inflicting serious damage on himself or on his printer, by making it impossible for the work to be brought out in time for the next Frankfort fair². As for the tumid and inflated sophists, whose brains were all in their bellies, and whose wit was on their platters, at once his accusers and his judges, how, he asked, could it be possible or right to endure them with unruffled mind? The Archbishop chose this time for a distinct and very courteous offer to Cornelius of employment under honourable

¹ Ep. 32, Lib. vii. p. 1049.

² Ep. 30, Lib. vii. p. 1048; also Ep. 27, 28, Lib. vii. pp. 1045, 1046.

conditions at his court, and promised that considerations of his own convenience should dictate the arrangements made. The offer was so worded as to be grateful to the sensitive and chafed mind of the persecuted scholar; and it was accepted thankfully¹. Very soon afterwards the interdict upon the publishing of the Occult Philosophy was removed; before that happened, a letter from the Inquisitor, Conrad of Ulm, had become public, in which he replied to the vicar of the Carthusians, by whom he had been addressed on behalf of Peter Quentel, a printer of the town, who wished to issue at his own expense Agrippa's work, but had first sought a theological opinion on the copy. The letter got into the hands of Soter, and ran thus: "Greeting and commendation, venerable father Vicar. I do not wish to contend against it, since the book is full of natural things, and does not extend to the seduction of the simple. Suffer it to be printed, if they wish²."

The complete work on Occult Philosophy was published, therefore, at Cologne, in the year 1533³, and dedicated to its author's patron, the Archbishop. In the same year also there was published, at Cologne, Agrippa's Commentary on the *Ars Brevis* of Raymond Lully⁴; and that he might put forth all his strength against the sophists and theosophists, he also published, with a dedication to

¹ Ep. 29, Lib. vii. p. 1047; Ep. 46, Lib. vii. p. 1059.

² Ep. 38, Lib. vii. p. 1050.

³ It is the copy from which the second and third books have been sketched in the first volume of this narrative.

⁴ Jöcher's *Gelahrten Lexicon*. I have not met with this edition.

his old friend Cantiuncula, his attack on the Dominicans written at Metz,—the Disputation touching the Monogamy of Anne¹. He also edited the publication at Nuremberg of some of the writings of a pious Cistercian monk, Godoschalcus Moncordius, which he believed to be conceived in the pure spirit of the Gospel, though not elegantly worded². The criticism on the Louvain theologians had met at Basle with strong objections, and when partly printed was returned upon the author's hands: a printer in another town then undertook to publish it³. While such occupation with the printers kept Cornelius amused, he was relieved in some degree of worldly care by genial intercourse with the Archbishop and his friends. In the summer of the year 1533 he was with his patron, who made holiday at Wisbaden. The Archbishop, who was more than sixty years of age, was of a weak and gentle disposition, easily led by advisers. In the preceding year he had been showing at Paderborn great zeal against the Lutherans, condemning not a few to death and then remitting sentence. In the next place travelling towards a belief in the necessity of some reform, he lived to act upon it, and lived also to be excommunicated. Although no scholar at all, he cultivated the society of learned men, and by the friendly churchman's help, Agrippa, with a little income that enabled him to feed his children, could recover some of his old cheerfulness⁴.

¹ Ep. 35, 36, Lib. vii. pp. 1051-1053.

² Ep. 37, Lib. vii. p. 1054.

³ Ep. 39, Lib. vii. p. 1054.

⁴ Ep. 44-48, Lib. vii. pp. 1058-1061.

CHAPTER XVI.

EXILE AND DEATH.

WHERE now is the Agrippa who began the world averse from strife, and who, when at the outset of his career as a scholar he was attacked by the monk Catilinet, addressed his enemy with the soft voice of Christian expostulation? Alas for him, he is the same man still. His violence in later years was but the struggling of a spirit, pure and sensitive, against a torment urged beyond its powers of endurance; it is true in one sense that he fought but as the deer fights when at bay. Young motherless children were about him, who looked up to him for sustenance. Because he was unable to abase his soul below the level to which God enabled him to raise it, he met danger upon all the paths he tried, and during his whole life the men who brought him into peril were especially the meaner classes of the monks. There was a feminine element perceptible in his whole character,—the natural gentleness, the affectionate playfulness, the quick, nervous perception, the unworldly aspiration, and the want of tact in dealing with the world; the impulse to seek happiness in a domestic life belonged to this part of Agrippa's nature, and to the same part of it belonged

his scolding of the monks and courtiers. There may have been much of the man's vigour put into his way of speech, but I think that Cornelius resented wrong and cruelty much as a true woman might resent it, and that the hard fighting to which he betook himself at last was not that of a man by nature violent, but—paradox as it may seem to say so—the inevitable issue to which he was led by all that was most truly amiable in his nature. In the last letter of his on record he is found inviting the most learned Dryander to a supper, in the name of the Archbishop of Cologne, and he writes his invitation while beset by sore distresses, in a genial, airy tone, that speaks to us of the man who, twice married, never let a sun set on dispute with either wife; who won entire love in his home, clung to his friends, and fondled his dogs even foolishly.

Very touching is his complete silence on the subject of his last great sorrow. He was resident, in the year 1534, at Bonn, feeding his boys on the salary he earned from the Archbishop, and suffering the ruin of his whole ambition as a scholar from the wicked libels of the monks. He was forty-eight years old, and to his own eyes it must almost have seemed that he had lived in vain. To all his miseries was added in that year the certainty that he had taken to his heart a faithless wife¹.

But let us look into Agrippa's house, and see it as the monks were at that time describing it among the people.

¹ Wierus, *De Præstigiis Dæmonum*. Lib. ii. cap. v. Opera (ed. cit.) p. 111.
"Ubi conjugem Mechliniensem Bonnæ repudiasset anno MDXXXV."

This we may do by help of a well-known story which is told with all faith by Delrio, but Delrio copied it out of a book that had been published in Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish, known in French as the *Théâtre de la Nature*, in Italian as the *Stroze Cicogna*, and in Spanish as *Valderama*¹. Here it is, as it was issued from the mint²:

"This happened to Cornelius Agrippa at Louvain. He had a boarder, who was too curious, and Agrippa having once gone somewhere, had given the keys of his museum to the wife whom he afterwards divorced, forbidding her to allow any one to enter. That thoughtless youth did not omit, in season and out of season, to entreat the woman to give him the means of entering, until he gained his prayer. Having entered the museum, he fell upon a book of conjurations—read it. Hark! there is knocking at the door; he is disturbed; but he goes on with his reading; some one knocks again; and the unmannerly youth answering nothing to this, a demon enters, asks why is he called? What is it commanded him to do? Fear stifles the youth's voice, the demon his mouth, and so he pays the price of his unholy curiosity. In the mean time the chief magician returns home, sees the devils dancing over him, uses the accustomed arts, they come when called, explain how the thing happened, he orders the homicide spirit to enter the corpse, and to walk now and then in the market-place (where other students were accustomed frequently to meet), at length to

¹ *Apologie pour tous les grands Personnages qui ont esté faussement soupçonnés de Magie*. Par S. Naudé, Paris (ed. La Haye, 1658), p. 423.

² Delrio, in *Disquisitionum Magicarum*, Lib. ii. Quæst. xxix.: "An Diabolus possit facere ut homo vere resurgat?" (ed. Colon. 1657), p. 356.

quit the body. He walks three or four times, then falls; the demon that had stirred the dead limbs taking flight. It was long thought that this youth had been seized with sudden death, but signs of suffocation first begot suspicion, afterwards time divulged all."

Another writer, of the generation following that of Agrippa, who gave license to much malicious wit by getting credit—or discredit—as a writer on occult philosophy, has indeed heard that Agrippa was no conjurer, but thinks¹ "if it be true, as they relate, that he often delivered public lecture, when at Friburg, from nine until ten o'clock, and immediately afterwards, namely, at ten o'clock, began lecturing at Pont à Mousson, in Lorraine, they must sweat a good deal who would rub out of him the blot of magic."

At Paris, too, where it may be remembered he was detained while labouring to get away from France, and where he lived not on the best terms with the French court, he used, it was said, a power that he had of reading in the moon descriptions of what happened elsewhere, at any even the greatest distance. "During the French war in the Milanese, when Charles V. had entered Milan, not once only what had been happening at Milan in the day was told in the same night at Paris."

Other stories made him just as good a servant to the Emperor Charles V., by virtue of his might as a magician. The Imperial army, they said, conquered sometimes by his help.

¹ *Natalis Comes. Mytholog.* Lib. iii. cap. xvii. Quoted by Schelhorn in his *Amenitates Literariæ*, Tom. ii. p. 589 (ed. Franc. et Lip. 1725). The same person is the narrator of the next story.

Nevertheless, the Emperor's wrath against Agrippa was ascribed to his unholy power. He had proposed, it was said, by magical means, to discover hidden treasures for his master, and for that reason his self-denying master caused him, with two other nobles implicated in the same crime, to be banished from his empire¹.

The truth seems to be that Cornelius was really banished out of Germany, or under the necessity of flying for his life. At the beginning of the year 1535 he had divorced his wife at Bonn², and at the same time the increasing violence of enemies, whom he had irritated by his own denunciation of their ignorance and malice, and to whom he had given a weapon by the publication of his books of Magic, had not failed of effect upon the Emperor. To the Emperor, as before said, the book upon the Vanity of Science was the real affront. The end of all seems to be expressed in a sentence of Delrio, wherewith he illustrates the position that good princes most rarely pardon wizards. "Emperor Charles V.," he says, "did not excuse Agrippa the penalty of death, but, when he had fled into France, doomed him to exile, and in France he died³."

He died at the age of forty-nine, having lived but a few months as a wanderer. His purpose is said to have been to have found his way to Lyons, there to publish certain of his works⁴. Very soon after his death at Lyons

¹ Delrio, Op. cit. Lib. ii. Quæst. xii. ² Wierus, Op. cit. cap. v. p. 111.

³ Delrio, Lib. v. Quæst. ii. p. 749: "Quomodo inquisitio in hoc crimine instituenda?"

⁴ Wierus and Melchior Adam (*Dignorum laude Virorum. . . . Immortalitas*, ed. Francof., 1705; in the *Vita Germanorum Medicorum*, p. 8) are the authorities for the succeeding account of Agrippa's death. See also Naudé, Op. cit. pp. 426, 427.

his collected works were published, and although, in deference to the priests, many of the things republished were garbled, and the *Vanity of Sciences and Arts* suffered especially¹, although, too, in deference to the cupidity of booksellers, a spurious and foolish fourth book of *Occult Philosophy* was added, which Agrippa's pupil Wier, careful for the honour of a master at whose hearth he had sat, and whose memory he dared openly to cherish, denounced as an imposture; still there was in the Lyons edition of Agrippa's works the matter that Agrippa must have been most anxious to see fairly produced before the world: there first appeared the complete set of letters which afford the best help to a refutation of his slanderers.

It must have been a friendly hand that took these papers from the chamber of the dead Agrippa. They were sent on to their destination. The poor scholar died hunted, exhausted, and almost utterly forsaken. He did not live to reach Lyons. He had not long crossed the French border before King Francis caused him to be seized and thrown in prison for his publication of the correspondence that discredited the queen-mother. His few friends at court had influence enough to beg him free. But when free he was penniless and homeless. He could think only with anguish of the little children he was forced to leave, a divorced wanton their only shadow of a mother, and their father far away, hunted

¹ A very full list of the passages omitted will be found in Schelhorn. *Amœnitates Literariæ* (ed. cit.), Tom. ii. pp. 518-525.

and dying. God only knew, perhaps God only cared, what was the fate of these orphans; it is enough for us to know that God does care for such as they. Cornelius reached Grenoble and died there, as his persecutors said with triumph, at a mean place, suffering from sordid want. Yet the same men asserted, that when travelling he had the skill to pay his way with what appeared to be good money, but changed afterwards to bits of horn and shell. The truth is, the sick man was received into the house of a friendly gentleman, M. Vachon, Receiver-General of the Province of Dauphiné. The house is in the Rue des Clercs, and afterwards belonged to the family of Ferrand. There died Cornelius Agrippa, forty-nine years old. If spirits walk when restless in their graves, his may have done so, for they buried him within a convent of Dominicans.

The people were instructed very shortly afterwards with a minute account of the magician's death, which I will give as it is to be found in the works of a contemporary. It was an unlucky coincidence, perhaps, that Agrippa really had a little black dog, called Monsieur, among his pets. Simon the Magician, Sylvester, Dr. Faustus, Bragandin of Venice, all had dogs. Cornelius Agrippa had one. He would remain for a whole week together working in his study, having for companion the pet dog, which he suffered to sit on his table, or run loose among his papers. "Wierus," Delrio says, "denies its having been a devil, as others more truly affirm." We have accepted one statement of the manner of Agrippa's death; let us now hear what is more truly affirmed by the

grave priest and learned traveller, M. Thevet¹: "At last, having betaken himself to Lyons, very wretched, and deprived of his faculties, he tried all the means that he could to live, waving, as dexterously as he could, the end of his stick, and yet gained so little, that he died in a miserable inn, disgraced and abhorred before all the world, which detested him as an accursed and execrable magician, because he always carried about with him as his companion a devil in the figure of a dog, from whose neck, when he felt death approaching, he removed the collar, figured all over with magic characters, and afterwards, being in a half-mad state, he drove it from him with these words: 'Go, vile beast, by whom I am brought utterly to perdition.' And afterwards this dog, which had been so familiar with him, and been his assiduous companion in his travels, was no more seen; because, after the command Agrippa gave him, he began to run towards the Saône, where he leapt in, and never came out thence, for which reason it is judged that he was drowned there. In perpetual testimony of his base and depraved life, there has been composed over his tomb this epitaph."

The epitaph is in bad Latin hexameters and pentameters, of which the following is, as to sense and grammar, an exact translation. The words have been arranged in the way now usual with compositions of this sort, instead of being paraphrased in metre, and I leave untouched the doubt there is as to where dog, man, cake, or spirit, is the subject of the sentence.

¹ Thevet, *Portraits et Vies des Hommes Illustres* (ed. Paris, 1584), Tom. ii. p. 543.

THIS TOMB

SCARCELY THE GRACES KEEP, BUT THE BLACK DAUGHTERS OF HELL;
NOT THE MUSES, BUT THE FURIES WITH SNAKES SPREAD ABROAD.

Alecto

COLLECTS THE ASHES, MIXES THEM WITH ACONITE,
AND GIVES THE WELCOME OFFERING TO BE DEVoured BY

The Stygian Dog,

WHO NOW CRUELLY PURSUES THROUGH THE PATHS OF ORCUS,
AND SNATCHES AT
THAT OF WHICH WHEN ALIVE HE WAS THE COMPANION,
AND HE LEAPS UP AT HIM.

And He

SALUTES THE FURIES BECAUSE HE HAD KNOWN THEM ALL,
AND HE ADDRESSES EACH BY HER OWN NAME.

O WRETCHED ARTS,

WHICH AFFORD ONLY THIS CONVENIENCE
THAT AS A KNOWN GUEST HE CAN APPROACH

THE STYGIAN WATERS.

So like a Pagan spat the Monk upon the Christian's
grave !

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AGRIPPA, HENRY CORNELIUS.
 Leading Events of his Life.

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1486.		Born at Cologne, 1, of noble parentage, 12; character of his education, 13, 14; sent early in life to the court of Maximilian the First, and serves there as secretary, 15.
1506.	20.	At Paris, on secret service, unites with some students, members of an association of theosophists, 25,
1507.	21.	in an attempt to establish by stratagem and force the authority of Senor de Gerona in the neighbourhood of Tarragon, 26—38,
1508.	22.	is beset by the Catalonians, 39—49, and narrowly escapes with his life, 50, 51; quits Spain and reaches Avignon, where
1509.	23.	he communicates with his associates in France, abandons the scheme of violence, and returns with them to the study of mysteries, 54—63; assisted by them, 64, he expounds before the University of Dôle Reuchlin's book on the <i>Mirific Word</i> , 65—93, with such success as to be made Doctor of Divinity, 94; at the same time seeking the patronage

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		of Margaret of Austria, 95—97, he writes a treatise upon the Nobility and Pre-eminence of the Female Sex, 98—111; in the same year he marries Jane Louisa Tyssie, of Geneva, 111, 212, 213; and also in the same year, and in the beginning of the next year,
1510.	24.	writes three books of Occult Philosophy, 118—211, the manuscript of which he shows to Trithemius, 213—220, who approves but warns him against publishing, 220—222. He has already been denounced at Ghent for his Hebrew studies by Catilinet, a Franciscan monk, who preached in this year the Lent discourses before Margaret and her court, and who by his sermons provoked Margaret to wrath against Agrippa, 222—223; therefore he cannot offer to her his essay upon the Pre-eminence of Woman, 224, and goes back into the service of the emperor, 225, by whom he is sent with an embassy to the court of Henry VIII., at London, 226—229, where he lodges with Dean Colet, 230—240, and whence he addresses to the monk Catilinet a Christian expostulation, 240—249. Returns to Germany, and goes home to Cologne, 250, where
1511.	25.	he delivers Quodlibetal Lectures on Divinity, 250—252, before rejoining the emperor, who sends him as a soldier to the Italian war, 254—257. Attached to the Council of Pisa by the Cardinal of Santa Croce, 258—260, he lectures on Plato in the University, 261, and

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| | | with other members of the council is excommunicated by Pope Julius II., 261, 262. Returning to the army, 263—265, | | | a poor country girl accused of witchcraft, 66—64. Having incensed the monks, he is |
| 1512. | 26. | he remains in Italy, 265—304; is taken prisoner at Pavia by the Swiss, 266—270, but soon released, 271. He has obtained a patron for his scholarship in the Marquis of Monferrat, 268, and is, at the close of the year, settled in his chief town of Casale, 275. | 1520. | 34. | hunted from Metz, and journeys with his wife and son through wintry weather to Cologne, 65, where he lives with his mother and sister, 66, in a town as to tolerance another Metz, 67—83, |
| 1513. | 27. | Reconciled to the head of the Church, by Leo X., 276, engaged by turns in war and study, 277, | 1521. | 35. | expecting employment by the Duke of Savoy, 80, until the death of his wife Louisa, 82, 83, after which he retreats to Geneva, still flattered with promises from Savoy, 84, practises physic, and becomes known as a friend among the Reformed clergy in Switzerland, 85—101. |
| 1514. | 28. | he is sent on a brief mission to Switzerland, 278, is knighted in battle, 288, obtains good friends, 278—280, and | 1522. | 36. | Marries again at Geneva, 102; abandons hope in Savoy, and |
| 1515. | 29. | expounds before the University of Pavia the Pimander of Hermes Trismegistus, 281—286. He is admitted by that University as Doctor both of Medicine and Law, 287, 288. Francis I. invading Italy, 290, Agrippa fights in the battle of Marignano, where he loses manuscripts, 291, 292, and by the victory of the French is reduced to beggary, 292. Being helped by the Marquis of Monferrat, 294, he writes and dedicates to him two spiritual treatises, one on Man, 295, the other on the Triple Way of Knowing God, 296—304. | 1523. | 37. | accepts public office as physician and counsellor in the Swiss town of Friburg, 103—109; is generously treated by the Swiss, 104. |
| | | VOL. II. | 1524. | 38. | Tempted by dazzling offers, and refusing invitations from the Duke of Bourbon, he accepts office in France as physician to the queen-mother, 110—114, and removes with his family by her command, 119, to Lyons, three more children having been born to him, of which one died before the end of August in this year, 115. |
| 1516. | 30. | Offers of patronage from sundry persons, 1—6, and a brief | 1525. | 39. | To a fourth son, born at Lyons, the Cardinal de Lorraine and Dame de St. Prie are godfather and godmother, but no salary is paid; and Agrippa, attached to the queen-mother's service, learns |
| 1517. | 31. | connexion with the Duke of Savoy, 7—10, end in acceptance of office as | 1526. | 40. | what hell it is in suing long to bide, 119—150, 210—222. He offends the queen by anticipating success to the arms of Bourbon, 219, and by expressing his unwillingness to be employed in a vain art as an astrologer, 145—147. Thwarted in aspiration and ambition by the monks and courtiers, he consoles himself with the writing of his Declamation on the Vanity of Sciences and Arts, and on the Excellence of the Word of God, 151—209. |
| 1518. | 32. | advocate and orator to the free town of Metz, 13—65, where he labours as a physician among the plague-smitten, 26—30. Hears of his father's death, 33. | | | |
| 1519. | 33. | Enters into a contest with the monks who had reviled Faber Stapulensis for his denial of three husbands to St. Anne, the mother of the Virgin, 36—50. Beards the inquisitor, Nicolas Savin, 51, and saves from his clutches | | | |

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1527. 41. Slighted at Lyons, and left by the queen-mother to starve, he corresponds with the Duke of Bourbon, 222, 228, and is on the point of entering his service when the duke is killed, 229. Labouring next to find a living out of France, 230, and invited by admirers of his genius who live at Antwerp to establish himself there, 230,
1528. 42. he sets out for that town by way of Paris, 232, with an ailing wife, four children, baggage, and servants, 233; but at Paris suffers ruinous delay for six months at an inn, through the evasions of the court and the Duke of Vendôme's refusal of his passports, 235—245. Crosses the frontier alone without a pass, 246, leaving the family to be brought on by a relation, 247, 248.
1529. 43. At Antwerp he begins to thrive, 249, is appointed by the Regent Margaret Historiographer and Indiciary Councillor to the Emperor Charles V., and commences at last the printing of his works, 250. Another son is born to him, 250; but when his home is full of happiness, his wife dies suddenly of plague, 251—255, to his intense grief, 255. In the time of his despair, 257, 258, he is much sought by princes, 259, but remains
1530. 44. at Antwerp as imperial historiographer. He does the work of his office, 261, but does not get its pay, 262. Margaret of Austria dying, Agrippa writes her funeral oration, 264; but in this year he prints his *Vanity of Sciences and Arts*, 262, which contains enough truth about courts to offend the emperor, and enough truth about church corruption to offend the monks, 263, 264.
1531. 45. A few months afterwards he prints one book of his *Occult Philosophy*, 265—269, and supplies the monks and courtiers with an easy method of traducing him by calling him Magician, 269. He duns the emperor in vain

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- for salary, 270, himself beset by creditors, in debt to usurers, 271. He is invited to write in defence of Queen Katharine of England, 281—284. Cardinal Campeggio and the Bishop of Liege are his friends, 271, 272; but he is seized at Brussels and thrown
1532. 46. into gaol for debt, 272, 273, whence he makes his appeal for justice, not for mercy, 273—276. Warned by Erasmus that "monks and theologians are not to be overcome, even if one had a better cause than St. Paul had," 280, 281, but still faithful to his sense of truth, 281, Agrippa, with his salary again promised, leaves the court, 284, takes a small house at Mechlin, and marries a third wife, who proves unfaithful, 285. He is publishing editions of several of his works at Cologne, where the archbishop is friendly, 287; but their sale in Brabant is opposed by the Louvain theologians, 288, who have laid informations against the *Vanity of Sciences* before the senate of Mechlin, 289, 292—295. Agrippa replies to them with an *Apology*, 289, 292—300, and retorts with a *Complaint*, 300—303. His salary due from the emperor is still withheld, 303, 304, and he retires to Bonn, 304, whence he appeals to Mary of Austria, the new regent in the Netherlands, 305. His complete work on *Occult Philosophy* being in the press at Cologne, an interdict is set on it by the magistrates at the desire of the inquisitor, Conrad of Ulm, 305, 306.
1533. 47. Agrippa tells the magistrates some bitter truths about their university, 306—309; by help of the friendly archbishop, gets rid of the interdict, and issues the work in its complete state, 310. For a time he lives under the patronage of the Electoral Count Hermann of Wied, Archbishop of Cologne, 311—313, and so
1534. 48. resides at Bonn, 313, until

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1585. 49. the divorce from his unfaithful wife, 285, 313, which takes place in the same year, when, threatened with death by the emperor, he flies to France, 316; is there imprisoned for the publishing of letters on the subject of the queen-mother's injustice to himself, but soon set free by intercession, 317, and sinking under persecution, exiled from his helpless children, wanders until he dies at Grenoble, and is buried in a convent of Dominicans, 318. Lying monks commit his memory to execration, 314—320.
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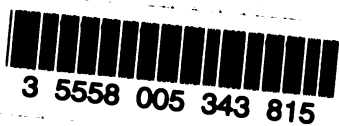
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