

*histoire tragique*. Arnould kindles enthusiasm, frequently referring one for further details to the useful TLF edition of *La Tricarite* (see *FS*, XLV (1991), 315). One suspects however that, in spite of the considerable critical apparatus he provides, some corners of these enchanted fields remain obscure.

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JEAN CALVIN: *Lettres à Monsieur et Madame de Falais*. Texte établi, annoté et présenté par FRANÇOISE BONALI-FIQUET. (Textes littéraires français, 404). Geneva, Droz, 1991. 233 pp. Pb 36 Sw.F.

The letters Calvin wrote to Jacques de Bourgogne, seigneur de Falais, and his wife have been published before, most of them in an eighteenth-century edition, and all in the *Opera Calvini*. This re-edition is however welcome, since it makes accessible again a particularly interesting and homogeneous group of documents. Jacques de Bourgogne was a distant relative and an important court official of the Emperor Charles V; in the early 1540s he followed his wife in adopting reformed beliefs. Calvin, who was fully aware of the exemplary importance of so eminent a convert, began writing to the couple in 1543. The letters are formal and cool at first; but soon a more relaxed, conversational tone appears, especially after he had met the pair in Strasbourg and again in Basle. Calvin writes not only about the spiritual condition of the Falais, and not only with words of consolation when the Falais possessions are confiscated, but about a multitude of other subjects well beyond the call of the pastor's duty: Calvin's migraines, his wife's illnesses, househunting in Geneva for the couple, the stock of grape juice he has laid in for them, various financial transactions, the problem of finding a wife for Pierre Viret, choosing a suitable chaplain for the nobleman (there are some gems of character evaluation). Calvin patiently writes and rewrites the apology which Jacques de Bourgogne wanted to present to the Emperor, and much space is dedicated to the discussion of details of the text and, finally, its publication as the *Excuse de Jacques de Bourgogne* (1548). The interest of this collection of letters is that it gives insight into Calvin's personality and personal relations, showing the warmth of friendship of which he was capable (even if this friendship ended badly, when M. de Falais sided with his doctor Jérôme Bolsec against Calvin in their very public quarrel over predestination in 1550); the last letter, which the editor dates to 1554, is a dignified and firm letter of farewell. Françoise Bonali-Fiquet provides an excellent and succinct introduction giving the necessary context to the letters; and on the whole the notes are helpful and informative. One or two points seem doubtful; the suggestion (p. 139, n. 3) that Sebastien Castellio might be chosen to translate the *Excuse* into Latin seems aberrant, and the identity of 'Jean de Rochefort', described as 'inconnu' (p. 82), has been established by Rodolphe Peter (*Annuaire de la Société des amis du Vieux-Strasbourg*, XIV (1984), p. 17): it is the same person as the Valérand Poullain who is much mentioned elsewhere in the letters by name. These are quibbles, however; all in all it is a neat and workmanlike edition of an interesting and valuable correspondence. If I have one regret, it is that Mme Bonali-Fiquet did not choose to add the *Excuse de Jacques de Bourgogne* itself to the dossier. Perhaps that will come next?

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