

Our Contributors.

THE JESUITS.

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WE COME TO THE LAST COUNT.

What is known as the Edict of Nantes, was passed by Henry the Great, towards the close of the sixteenth century. It granted toleration to the Protestants of France. "Never was an edict, law, or treaty more solemnly ratified, more irrevocably established, more repeatedly confirmed; nor one whereof policy, duty and gratitude, could have more ensured the execution; yet never was one more scandalously or absolutely violated. It was the result of three years' negotiation between the commissioners of the king, and the deputies of the Protestants was the termination of forty years' wars and troubles was merited by the highest services, sealed by the highest authority, registered in all the parliaments and courts of Henry the Great, was declared in the Preamble to be irrevocable and perpetual." But in 1685, the edict was revoked through the influence of the famous Jesuit confessor, Father Latellier. In affixing his signature he cried out "Now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." Heavy fines were laid upon those who did not adorn their houses on saints' days, and heavy blows if they did not kneel when a Romish procession passed along the streets. They were not allowed to be doctors, booksellers, printers, or grocers. No apprentice could be taught a trade in their shops. If they were heard to sing hymns in public or private, they were sent to prison; their psalm book was publicly burned, and the Bible was taken out of their houses. Their places of worship were broken into and destroyed; their ministers were sent out of the land, or shut up in jail. The sick could only be attended to by Romish priests; and the bodies of those who died were often torn out of their graves and left to be devoured by wolves and vultures." Hundreds of thousands fled the country, the most intelligent and industrious—the bone and sinew of the inhabitants. They found refuge principally in dear old fatherland, which then, as always, proved "a comfort to the afflicted, a help to the oppressed." They proved a great boon to the land of their adoption. Spitalfields and St. Giles in the Fields, still retain many of their descendants—among whom fall to be ranked such noble names as Romilly and Labouchere.

France has never recovered from the two black acts—the St. Bartholemew massacre, and the revocation of the "Edict of Nantes." Verily there is a God. Not in vain do the souls of the "noble army of martyrs" beneath the altar cry, "How long O Lord, holy and true, wilt thou not avenge our blood?" He who claims "vengeance is mine, I will repay," has power and will yet pour out his "vials of wrath" on that land.

UNITY AND VARIETY.

In looking at the Church of Rome, the thoughtful observer cannot fail to be struck with the blending of unity with variety in her conformation. There is an unmistakable oneness in the object she contemplates, while there is at the same time the utmost diversity in the resources she employs. Acting on the principle, "This one thing I do," she thinks that every species of instrumentality may be legitimately wielded, in order that that one thing may be attained. In every conceivable way does she suit herself to corrupt human nature, and carry out the convenient doctrine of being all things to all men. She has talents the most versatile, and consciences the most flexible of any corporation, civil or ecclesiastical, in the universe. She provides convents for the ascetic and the mystic, carnivals for the gay, missions for the enthusiast, penances for the man suffering from remorse, sisterhoods of mercy for the benevolent crusades, for the chivalrous, secret missions for the man whose genius lies in intrigue; the *Inquisition with its racks and screws for the man who combines detestation of heresy, with the love of cruelty, indulgences for the man of wealth and pleasure, purgatory to awe the refractory and frighten the vulgar, and a subtle theology for the casuist and dialectician.* "To him who would scourge himself into godliness [says the eloquent Channing] it offers a whip; or him who would starve himself into spirituality, it provides the mendicant convents of St. Francis; for the anchorite, it prepares the death-like silence of La Trappe; to the passionate young woman, it presents the raptures of St. Theresa and the marriage of St. Catharine with her Saviour; for the restless pilgrim whose piety needs greater variety than the cell of the monk, it offers shrines, tombs, relics, and other holy places in Christian lands, and above all, the holy sepulchre near Calvary. When in Rome, the traveller sees by the side of the purple-lackeyed Cardinal, the begging friar. When under the arches of St. Peter, he sees a coarsely draped monk holding forth to a ragged crowd, or when beneath a Franciscan Church, adorned with the most precious works of art, he meets a charnel house, where the bones of the dead brethren are built into walls between which the living walk to read their mortality, he is amazed if he give himself time for reflection at the infinite variety of machinery which Catholicism has brought to bear on the human mind."

The most opposite qualities meet in her. For convenience sake, she can assume the most opposite forms. Thus, for example, forty years ago, we find her the seeming friend of freedom. The world awoke, as if from a dream, to discover St. Peter's chair occupied by one who spouted democratic ideas, who vindicated the claims of constitutional government, and who held out, after a millenium of misrule, to

his enthusiastic worshippers the prospect of a new era. It was indeed a new thing under the sun to have a patriot in the person of a Pope—to have patriotic songs awaking responsive echoes in the heart of the holy Father, and to have trees of liberty planted under his paternal benediction, beneath the very shadow of St. Peter's. But the glittering vision turned out a mere mirage dexterously contrived to deceive those whose souls panted after the sweet and refreshing waters. It was a hollow sham got up to gull a people who were bent on bursting their bonds, on asserting their manhood and restoring the glory that was wont to encircle the name of Rome. The times demanded such a demonstration. The thrones of tyranny tottered. The foundations of long established dynasties were being upheaved. The popular element was in the ascendant. True to the accommodating policy of his system, the Pope, when he could not breast the tide of reform, suffered himself to be borne along on its bosom; when he could not put the drag on the wheels of the revolutionary car, he mounted into the driver's seat and grasped the reins. He would regulate when he could not restrain. It was, however, a second edition of Phaeton in the chariot of Sol. He soon found the seat too hot for him, and was only too glad to make off for Gaeta, disguised in the livery of a postilion.

In the day of his distress, his eyes turned wistfully towards those accomplished men who had before proved themselves friends in need. The Jesuits stepped in to prop up the vacant chair, and to help the old exile back to it. Ever since they have been, even more truly than the soldiers of France, his faithful bodyguard. In every court and Cabinet of Continental Europe, they swarm. Princes are puppets in their hands. With characteristic cunning have they been working.

THE HOLINESS THEORY.

In accordance with the suggestion of several members of the Synod of Toronto and Kingston, we give the portions of the address of Dr. Middlemiss, which bear more directly on the erroneous teaching charged against the appellants in what is known as the Galt case.

Dr. Middlemiss, after referring to the appointment of assessors, and to the procedure of Session, in seeking to ascertain, from the parties themselves, the views they were disseminating as they had opportunity, said: It will be seen that, so far as Christian doctrine is concerned, the questions put to the appellants here in substance, all of them, on one point, namely, Whether, in the communication of His grace or saving goodness to the Christian believer, God does, in any case, in this life, go beyond delivering him from the condemnation and the dominion of sin? Whether, that is, He delivers him also from sin as a living operative resident within Him, so that he lives, or may live, without being guilty of any sin in thought, word or deed? We are all agreed that the Christian believer, the man who is born of God, the man who is in living union with Christ by faith, is not only, from the moment of his union with Christ, delivered from the guilt of his sin, but also from its dominion, so that sin does not reign in him, and he cannot live in sin. But the question is, Whether God in any case goes beyond this in the present life, and so completely frees the believer from sin, that he lives entirely without sin, and has therefore no occasion to confess it and ask forgiveness?

I must crave the patience of the Synod while I endeavour to make this matter plain; because it is the core of the difference between us and the appellants, and we had no little difficulty in getting frank and straightforward answers from some of them who did not consider that we were not dealing with them judicially or magisterially, but paternally, and that it was their duty frankly to tell us what they held and were teaching others, and not to challenge our right to interrogate them and to call us to prove charges against them, like men charged with crime standing on their rights before their judge. But to the point.

That God should permit the existence of sin in the Christian believer, whom He has delivered from its condemnation and its dominion, is but a part of the great mystery of the existence of sin under the government of One who is infinite in power, wisdom and goodness—the perfection of all that is great and good. That He does not utterly destroy or extinguish, in this life, the corruption of our fallen nature, besides delivering us from the guilt and reigning power of sin, adds nothing to the essential and insoluble mystery of the existence of moral evil or sin. Sin is in me, as it is in the world, by God's permission, and it is permitted, in the one case as in the other, only that it may be overruled for good. That it is in me by my birth is only a part of the one mystery. By God's permission another (not God, but a creature) has injured me morally; it being a part of the awful mystery that one creature can be the author or cause of sin in another as well as in himself. But that sin is in me, whether reigning in me in my natural fallen state, or dwelling in me after it has been pardoned, and its reign broken, is not God's doing. If, being a believer, sin still dwells in me, a living, actively rebellious resident, I owe it to another creature, and not to God. To Him I owe only the dethronement of sin, with the forgiveness of it. He is the author only of the good that is in me; not of the sin, whether it reigns or only dwells in me. All this, I take it, is universally understood and accepted among us as fundamental truth.

It is further understood and universally accepted that God has made provision for our complete deliverance from sin and all its evil consequences; and our faith looks forward to the time when the last vestige of sin shall be swept from the earth. Finding us in a helpless state of sin and misery—

wretched outcast infants (Ezekiel xvi.), if not abortives (1 Cor. xv.) whose helplessness language cannot exaggerate, God has provided, in and by Christ, for our being made entirely worthy of Himself in character and condition. We know that His purpose shall not fail of its accomplishment; and it is a matter of express revelation that, at the second coming of Christ, the destruction of the last enemy, death, will complete the bestowment upon us of all the good secured for us by His great sacrifice. But complete as is the provision, and sure as is the fulfilment of the divine purpose, God does not at once, or in our present life, bestow upon us all the good provided for us. He has the power to do so. But we cannot infer from the infinity of His goodness and power, either the measure of the goodness He will communicate to any creature, or the time and circumstances of His communication of good. He communicates from the fountain of His infinite goodness freely, as to measure, time and circumstances. Not only could He, if it pleased Him (and His pleasure is wisdom, ordain that perfect sinlessness should be attainable in this life by the believer; but he could ordain that sinless perfection should be simultaneous with our conversion or believing reception of Christ, or in other words, that no believer should ever be guilty of any sin from the moment of his being united with Christ by faith. And further, if it so pleased Him, He could ordain not only that perfect freedom from all the consequences of sin should be attainable in this life, but that such freedom should be the actual experience of every believer. In short, the power and goodness of God are sufficient to make every Christian entirely free from sin, suffering and death, from the time of his conversion, so that no believer should ever sin, suffer or die, but either be taken to heaven immediately, or kept here, for a longer or shorter period, without sinning or suffering, and then translated, as Enoch and Elijah were. But God has not so ordained. We need not enquire why He has not. We know that His pleasure is wisdom. And it is our wisdom to accept His appointments with humble confidence and gratitude. In communicating to believers from the fountain of His infinite goodness, He is pleased to free them, in the hour of their union with Christ, from the condemnation and the ruling power of sin, and to make them His sons and daughters. "There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be." There is much that remains matter of promise to the believer, all his life here. He is not exempted from suffering, while in the body; nor shall he have experience of the redemption of the body, till Christ comes again. And the question now raised by the case of the appellants is not, Can God so communicate of His goodness that the believer shall or may, with or without conditions, be, at anytime in this life, entirely without sin, and so live that he has no sin to confess? but, Does He make such communication, or has He promised to make it? Aside from all the verbiage that has become associated with what is known as the holiness movement, and eschewing all ambiguous language and doubtful terms, that is the question. The appellants affirm that God does make such a communication of His goodness and that they themselves have experience of it,—that He imparts to them such grace—grace in such kind and measure—that they live without sinning in thought, word, or deed. I do not enter upon the discussion of the question, in its doctrinal aspect, as my brother Dr. Torrance, will follow me in that line. But I will say that on no subject is the characteristic emphasis of our Standards more apparent than when they teach that God imparts to no man, in this life, such a measure of His grace as is necessary to his living entirely without sin. And in accordance with the explicit teaching of its Standards, this Church has always been distinguished by the clearness and strength of its teaching in opposition to all such views and claims as those of the appellants. It has always taught that God has not promised to extinguish in us, in this life, the corruption of our fallen nature; but that, on the contrary, He permits it to "remain in them that are regenerated," and that, though it is "pardoned and mortified," "yet both itself and all its motions are truly and properly sin" (Confession of Faith, V. 5). It has always taught that "no man is able, either of himself or by any grace received in this life, perfectly to keep the Commandments of God, but doth daily break them," etc. (Larger Catechism, Question 149). It has always taught that "no mere man," i.e., no man who is not more than a man, "is able in this life perfectly to keep the Commandments of God" (Shorter Catechism, Question 82). The Synod will note that the appellants endeavour to evade our reference to the Shorter Catechism by saying that it denies only the unbeliever's ability to render perfect obedience to the Commandments of God, and that they, as believers, are not mere men. Do they not see what an absurdity they ascribe to the great and good men who composed the Catechism, in supposing they thought it needful to construct an article of religion to guard us against the error of believing that a graceless man can render perfect obedience to the law of God? And do they not see that in their very endeavour to evade our reference to the Catechism they implicitly admit our whole charge against them? By similar implication they admit our whole charge in their endeavour to evade any reference to the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer. By our "debts," they say, is meant not our sins, but our obligations to Christ which we can never adequately fulfil. To say nothing of the essential inconsistency of asking the forgiveness of what is not sinful, do they not know that in the parallel passage in Luke's Gospel the fifth petition reads, "Forgive us our sins, as we also forgive every one that is indebted to us?"