

A BREATH OF LUTHER

A COARSE, rugged, plebeian face it was, with great drags of cheek bones—a wild passion, and energy and appetite. But in his eyes were floods of sorrow and deepest melancholy; sweetness and mystery all were there. Often did there seem to meet in Luther the very opposite poles of man's character. He, for example, of whom Richer had said his words were half battles, and who he first began to preach, suffered unheard-of agony.

"O Dr. Staupitz," said he to the Vicar General of his order, "I cannot do it. I shall die in three months. Indeed, I cannot do it."

Dr. Staupitz, a wise and considerate man, said upon this—

"Well, Martin, if you must die, you must—but remember that they find good heads up yonder too. So preach man, preach, and then live or die, as it happens."

So Luther preached and lived, and he became indeed one great whirlwind of energy, to work without resting in this world; and also before he died he wrote 400 books—books in which the true man was—for in the midst of all they denounced and cursed, what touches of tenderness lay! Look at the Table Talk, for example. We see in it a little bird, having alighted on the bough of a pear tree, that grew in Luther's garden. Luther looked up to it and said—

"The little bird, how it cowers down its little wings, and will sleep there, so still and fearless, though over it are the infinite starry spaces and the great blue depths of immensity! yet it tears not—it is at home. The God that made it, too, is there."

The same gentle spirit of lyric admiration is in other passages of his books. Coming home from Leipzig, in the summer season, he breaks forth in living wonder at the fields. He says—

"Erect on its bountiful taper stem, and bending its beautiful golden head—within it the bread of man, sent to him another year."

Such thoughts as these are as little windows through which we gaze into the interior of the serene depths of Martin Luther's soul, and see visibly across its tempests and clouds, a whole heaven of light and love. He might have painted—he might have sung—could have been beautiful like Raphael—great, like Michael Angelo.

As it was, the streams of modesty and energy met in the active spirit. Perhaps, indeed, in all men of genius, the great quality strongly developed, might force out other qualities. Here was Luther, a savage kind of a man as people thought of him—a wild Orion of a man—a man whose speech was ordinarily a wild, wild torrent, that went tearing down rocks and trees, and behold him speaking like a woman or a child! A tolerant man, but with nothing of sentimental tolerance. He went to the real heart of the matter. When his reform associates made a vast fuss about a surplice somebody or other wanted to wear, he ended the matter with

"What ill can a surplice do us? Let him have three carplices if he will. That is not our religion, nor interferes with it at all. Domine inverte me. This is what we have to think—this is what we must think the especial Christianity."

Nothing of what is commonly called cant, or pride, or ambition, was in Luther. It was this that made him no higher than the lowest man with a soul, nor yet, however, less than the highest. Thus, when he was threatened with the anger of Duke George, if he went to Leipsic, yet said nothing on earth could prevent him. If it rained Duke Georges for nine days running, there he would go. Well, and this man, who thought and acted in this way, passed a whole life of suffering. He was a deeply melancholy man. More labor had fallen on him than he could rightly bear; it was in vain to be released; he toiled and sorrowed on. Even with Satan himself, the evil principle of the world, he was destined to use high argument. Men would laugh at that, and a cheap game, indeed, was ridicule; but he it recollected that in Luther's day, God and the devil were equally real, and that he thought he was from the first, as in that vision of the crowded house-tiles of the old city of Worms, a man specially selected to fight with devils. Well, then, he sat alone one night: he was translating the 131st Psalm, and pondering its deep significance; he had fasted for two days, when the devil rose before him and opened the famous dialogue—addressing Luther with crimes, threatening him with hell, and terrifying him to recant. All which the Christian put an end to at last, by taking up the ink bottle and throwing it at the devil. The mark made by the ink on the wall is shown to this day; the memorable spot, a spot that

may mark at once the greatness and poverty of man! The terrors of a delusion which any doctor's or apothecary's apprentice could explain now-a-days; but also of a courage that could rise against what seemed to be the bodily personations of darkness and despair, and of enmity. No braver man than Luther ever lived in Europe.—*Carlyle.*

THE FORM OF RECANTATION.—The following form of recantation, said to have the approval of the Archbishop of Canterbury, was read on the evening of Easter Sunday, at St. Peter's Church, Colchester, by a convert from Romanism, Mr. Augustine Mills, for many years acolyte, or clerk, to the Roman Catholic Chapel in that town:—

"I, Augustine Mills, hereby solemnly declare, in the presence of God, that I believe Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.

"I believe that 'We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not our own works or deservings.'

"I believe that the doctrine of 'Voluntary works, besides, over and above, God's commandments, which are called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety.'

"I believe that 'The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, worshiping, and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing vanity invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God.'

"I believe that 'transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of bread and wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.'

"I believe that 'The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner; and the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith.'

"I believe that 'The Queen's Majesty hath the chief power in this realm of England, and other her dominions, unto whom the chief government of all estates of this realm, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil, in all causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign jurisdiction.'

"I believe that 'The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England.'

"I make the above declaration, and every part of it, in the plain and ordinary sense of the words as they are commonly believed by Protestants, without any equivocation or mental reservation, and without believing that I am or can be absolved of this my declaration, by any authority of the Pope, or any other person or persons whatever.

(Signed)

"AUGUSTINE MILLS.

"Witness: C. S. LOCK, Incumbent of St. Botolph's."

"CIVILIZED MURDER."

This title would not be at all an inappropriate one for our remarks on another and a kindred subject. Our Federal capital is becoming notorious for outrages which might not inaptly be denominated *civilized murder*. But neither is the phrase, in this instance, applied to them, nor is it exactly one of our own construction. We find it in the New Orleans *Christian Advocate*, appropriated to designate an outrage in that city of similar character to those which have recently been perpetrated at Washington. The case is thus related:

CIVILIZED MURDER.—Thursday morning folds of crape, black and long, hung at the office next door our own—Cuddy, Brown and Co. The day before, at Pass Christian, whither the parties went from this city, a duel was fought between R. W. Eslin and M. Cuddy, a member of the above firm. At the first shot Mr. Eslin was wounded in the arm—at the second Mr. Cuddy was shot through the body, dead! The falling out, we understand, began about a few bales of cotton. While writing this some ladies came into our office, asking our signature to a petition to the Governor, for commuting the sentence of a young man named Costello, who, in a drunken frolic, urged on and inflamed by bullies, some time ago, killed a watchman. He is sentenced to be hung next Friday. He begs only to be spared death by the rope and imprisoned for life, at hard work in the penitentiary. O Justice! where are thine equal scales?

Well, indeed, may it be asked, where are the equal scales of Justice? What is the difference between those two crimes? None whatever—there can be none. Morally and religiously they are in the same category. If it be murder in the one case, where the offender kills a watchman, what else but murder can it possibly be in the other case, where he kills a *negro*? The motive was the same in each instance. It was to be revenged for some insult or injury, real or fancied. Passion was excited, and it could not be restrained. There was no moral or religious influence to check or control it. Call themselves Christian men they might, and probably did. But it was all a sham—*yes*, indeed, is too much of that which passes current for Christianity in the world.

As respects the inequality of justice presented in such cases, it is undoubtedly discreditable to any system of judicature, whether heathen or Christian. Heathen systems, indeed, were seldom so unjust—for it is to be unjust since inequality of justice is no justice at all. True justice is an even-handed principle. In murder, least of all, has it any partialities.—*N. Y. Protestant Churchman.*

THE NEXT DISPENSATION.

In the history of the earth which we inhabit, plants, molluscs, fishes, reptiles, mammals—had, in succession, their periods of vast duration; and then the human period began—the period of a fellow-worker with God, created in God's own image. What is to be the next advance? Is there to be merely a repetition? an introduction, a second time, of man made in the image of God? No; the geologist in those "tables of stone," which form his records, finds no example of dynasties once passed away, again returning. The dynasty of the future is to have glorified man for its subject; but it is to be the "Kingdom" of God himself, in the form of man. In the doctrine of the two conjoined natures, and of the terminal dynasty of Him in whom those natures are united, we find that required progression, beyond which progress cannot go. We find the point of elevation never to be exceeded, meeting coincident with the final period never to be terminated—the infinite in height harmoniously associated with the eternal in duration. Creation and the Creator meet in one point and in one person. The long-ascending line from dead matter to man has been a progress Godwards; not an asymptotical progress, but destined from the beginning to furnish a point of union; and occupying that point as true God and true man, as Creator and created, we recognize the adorable Monarch of the future.—*Hugh Miller.*

SITE OF BABYLON.

At the meeting of the British Association at Glasgow, Scotland, Dr. Julius Oppert, read a paper on the "Geographical and Historical Results of the French Scientific Expedition to Babylon." With reference to the site of Babylon, the learned speaker observed: "I spent almost two years on the spot of Babylon, and covered with a netting of triangles more than five hundred British square miles. I have been fortunate enough to find, in all particularities, the true situation of ancient Babylon, conforming to the territorial necessities, combined with the numerous hints transmitted to us by the Holy Scriptures, the Greek authors, particularly Herodotus, Diodorus, Strabo, and Curtius; also the Babylonian Talmud, and the cuneiform inscriptions, as far as their contents may now be considered as satisfactorily known. By a most ample point of view, I was successful enough to discover the old Chaldean and Assyrian measures of length, and that discovery has been solemnly sanctioned in the Berlin Academy by the illustrious Bockh, so high an authority in ancient metrology. Observing the startling fact of the same size and grandeur of all Babylonian square bricks on one side, to be of the identical size of all stone tablets on the other, I measured 550 bricks, and all the stone slabs I could find, with the utmost accuracy, and I found then that the side of the brick square was to the side of the stone square like three to five; that the former of an amount 0 m. 315 was the Babylonian foot, while the latter was the Babylonian cubit, and 0 m. 525 long, and, by a surprising, but not fortuitous coincidence, this value of 0 m. 525, is exactly the length of the Egyptian cubit. I found that the Chaldeans had a greater measure of 560 cubits, viz: 600 feet, and this greater measure was the stadium of the Chaldeans of 189 m. only fourteen feet longer than the Olympic one. As Nebuchadnezzar and Herodotus assign both the circuit of the walls of Babylon a length of 480 stadia, the square side of 120 will be 22,620 metres—fourteen miles; and my trigonometrical survey has proved the truth of my reasoning. Babylon thus filled a space of 613 square kilometres, viz: a little more than 200 square miles; but this huge surface was not all inhabited; in the exterior enclosure, made by Nebuchadnezzar, were contained immense fields, that, in case of siege, provided the city with corn, and protected her from the horrors of famine.

A VERY GENTLE HEART.—A Scotch boy had delivered a message to a lady, but did not seem in a hurry to go. Being asked if there was anything else that his mother had bid him say, Jack whimpered out, "she said I wasna to seek anything for comin' but if ye gied me I was to take it." We need scarcely add that the hint was taken, and Jack's services were amply rewarded.