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#### LUTHER AND LIBERTY.

An age of superficiality this must necessarily foster loose and disconnected habits of thought. We are so intent on the pursuit of the material that we have no time to examine the assertions of our "thinkers," and hence much that we garner and hold as truth is but the offscourings of prejudice—we will not say of falsehood, for many a current opinion has a truthful stamp upon it, and few are there who have the hardihood to relegate it to the domain of the unreal and fanciful. We take our knowledge second-hand, and we must, therefore, stand always in the same groove, thinking the thoughts and crying out the watch-words of past generations. This has always been the bane of intellectual progress. When men begin to think for themselves a new epoch is marked in the world's history. Right reason shakes off the manacles of custom and conservatism and takes a firm hold of the truth. They who have opened up the long vistas of truth, thought well and deeply—examined long and critically, and handed down to us the fruits of their labors. And we also have our work to do. Too many phantoms, vested in the godly raiment of knowledge, walk unchallenged among us. We are well aware that progress is the shibboleth of the century, but when we hear a venerable minister declaring that Luther was the champion of liberty—that he burst the chains of priestly despotism—we are apt to wonder what progress means.

Luther is a very old subject, and has been often dissected by historical and controversial scalpel. The world agrees that he was the veriest puppet that was ever pulled by the strings of lust and pride. It knows that his principles are subversive of morality and that his life was stained with gross licentiousness. These are hard sayings, but the writings of the Wittenberg "reformer" prove them to be undeniable.

Who does not know of his fierce denunciation of chastity—denunciation that pale with rosy cheeks of all who love virtue, and that has placed him on record for all time as the calumniator of every Protestant mother and maiden. "Awful blindness," he says; "relentless cruelty of the Popes. Diabolical precept of keeping chaste. What! make an obligation of keeping chaste, which is impossible to human nature?" Such degrading words would sully the literature of any country. And yet we are accustomed to hear him hailed as the apostle of all that is pure and true! Was he not content before pride obtained the mastery and perchance the thought of the days when he, in gown and with tonsured head, served God amidst his brethren, may have caused him, in very bitterness of remorseful rage, to pen the words that impugn the chastity of his mother. Let them who doubt our words read his life by Audin, and they will see that we have not exaggerated his hostility to chastity.

True, he wrote much on Christian Liberty; but liberty was to him a word of uncertain meaning. He incited the peasants to revolt, and history has no blacker page than those which describe the part he played in it. Munzer was the leader of the revolt. Everywhere he preached the doctrine of insurrection, and the peasants, eager with the hope of freeing themselves from the despotism of the German princes, flocked to his standard. Munzer, half-educated enthusiast that he was, promised them that God would aid them. Monasteries were sacked and churches were burned and the blood of faithful monks and nobles ran down the bands of the peasants.

This was the result of Luther's doctrine on liberty. If he believed in it, he should have benefited the victims of his teachings. But he deserted them in their hour of need—and, more, he commanded the princes to slaughter them:

"Come, princes, to arms. The

times are come—the wondrous times in which a prince can gain heaven more easily by shedding blood than I by praying. Strike and strangle the peasants."

We shudder at the cruel perfidy and cold brutality of the man, and wonder how anyone can hold him up as a defender of Christian Liberty.

Many other passages might be cited to prove that he cared little about human rights and that he was ever the first to use them as a stepping-stone to his advancement. His splendid abilities were directed to the furtherance of personal aims, and history has no record of an unselfish deed that might figure as a merciful angel in the long cortege of his lustful and treacherous actions.

#### THE FREEDOM OF THE HOLY SEE.

Notwithstanding the confident assertions of enemies of the Pope to the effect that the union of Italy under one king has settled finally that the Holy Father will never regain his temporal power, the question persists in cropping up in a manner very distasteful to the Italian Government. At the Liege International Conference of Catholics, recently held, resolutions in favor of the restoration of the Pope's temporal power were passed unanimously; and similar resolutions were passed at the German Conference of Cologne.

Professor Kurth, of the University of Liege, was one of the principal speakers, and in a speech, which was vehemently applauded, he declared that a question which affects the whole Catholic world, numbering much more than two hundred millions of souls, the dictum of one avaricious Government is not to be considered as settling this momentous question. It is a question which concerns all Catholics, and we must not rest content until the head of the universal Church be really free.

He asked: "Is the head of the Church free now?" and his answer was decidedly negative.

The religious freedom of the Catholic Church requires that its head be not the subject of or under the supervision of any national sovereign whose predilections are at the best local, and often personal, after the fashion of Louis XIV., who laid it down as a maxim: "L'Etat, c'est moi" or, "The State means me."

Professor Kurth asked: "Is the Church really free? Pope, Church, sound reason, and the evidence of facts say No. Our adversaries say Yes. This contradiction alone shows which answer is the right one, for where no consciousness of freedom is, there is no real freedom. By our protest every year, we want to show that the Church wishes in a peaceful way to regain its rights in order to make peace among the nations."

The unanimity of the conference in approving of the professor's sentiments is an evidence of unanimity on the part of German Catholics, and they necessarily assist in giving shape to the policy of the German Empire, of the population of which they constitute 36 per cent.

Protestant nations as well as Catholics understand that for their own interests it is important that the head of the Catholic Church should not be the subject of any local sovereign. This consciousness made England as anxious as any power to secure freedom for the Pope when the national boundaries of Europe were fixed by the Great Powers after the fall of the first Napoleon; and the same reasons which prevailed then must prevail now with such powers as England, Germany and Russia.

France, Austria and the minor powers of Europe, though apparently not anxious at present to intermeddle in the affairs of the Italian peninsula, will naturally turn to the consideration of this matter at some time or other, and the question must be settled yet in a more satisfactory manner than that of the present state of affairs.

The Catholic world may depend upon it that the question of the Pope's independence remains to be settled yet, and that the settlement will come before very long. The Catholic Congress of Cologne but echoes the sentiments of Catholics the world over, and those sentiments will yet be respected.

Only a few days ago in a speech at Naples, Signor Crispi declared that

"The social system is passing through a crisis of the greatest importance. So acute is the situation that it is necessary that the civil and religious authority should unite and work in harmony together against that infamous band on whose flag is inscribed the motto: 'No God, No King.' This band has declared war upon society. Let society accept the challenge and shout as its battle-cry: 'For God, King and country.'"

This is generally regarded as a re- treat from the anti-religious policy

which has hitherto been the policy of the Italian Government. It seems now to be conscious that in nourishing irreligion it has warmed into life a viper which aims at fixing its fangs into the very vitals of the Italian monarchy, and it wishes now to make peace with the Pope.

Crispi's words were uttered while he was declaring that the Government consents to the appointment, long since made by the Pope, of Cardinal Sarto to the patriarchate of Venice—an appointment which the Government has hitherto refused to endorse. Some go so far as to say that at last "the Italian Government has gone to Canossa, like Bismarck." Whether this be true or not, it seems probable that the Government is on the point of beginning a new policy of conciliation which will prove far more beneficial and acceptable to the Italian people than the policy of hostility which has been hitherto pursued, and may end in results which but a few days ago were not expected, or even dreamed of. The Government, which has hitherto favored Atheism, seems to be becoming conscious that its Atheism has brought into existence that very Anarchy of which it is now so much in dread. It is now the business of the Government to destroy the monster it created, and this it cannot do without making peace with the Pope.

#### THE BOURBON DYNASTY.

The Comte de Paris died as a good Christian and Catholic. We admire especially his last letter addressed on July 23 to his adherents and friends, when he knew that his end was drawing near. He said:

"At the moment I am about to appear before God, I do not wish to trace a line of conduct for my son, who knows my thoughts, but address myself to all those who have expressed a wish for the success of the Monarchist cause, and who will pray for me at the moment of my death."

After recalling all he did for the Monarchist cause, the Comte continues:

"My adversaries responded to my efforts with exile, in which I pursued the work begun in France. My object was always to preserve the traditional depositary. I transmit it to my son, and ask my friends to rally around him. I do not believe God has abandoned France. I think in order to recover her position she must again become Christian. My last wish is that all honest people may join my friends in accomplishing this work."

The Holy Father, while advising the French people to accept the Republic heartily, did not mean to impose upon them any obligation to believe Republicanism better than the Monarchical form of Government. He wished the French people to understand that they are not bound to stand by the effete monarchies of the past, whether Bourbon or Imperial; but he had no intention to make them believe that it is their duty to prefer a Republic to a Monarchy. We believe that the Comte de Paris appreciated the position, and though he differed from Pope Leo, XIII. in regard to the policy which the people of France ought to pursue, he remained throughout a true Catholic.

But we have too much respect for the dignity of the house of Orleans to admire the temper which the Duke of Orleans, the Comte's son, displayed after his father's funeral on the occasion of the visit of the Duc d'Anmale. The new chief of the House of Bourbon is reported to have burst into tears, saying:

"Exile killed my father. I will endure anything rather than inaction. I will risk my head to return to France, and if I am fortunate to reign I will risk my head rather than be driven out."

France has already pronounced upon the pretensions of all claimants to the throne, whether Bourbonist or Napoleonic, and she has decided against them all. The verdict of the country ought to be accepted by all parties; and while we cannot very severely regard the aspirations of the young duke, nor entirely condemn him for believing that the country needs the restoration of the old monarchy, we believe it would be extremely foolish for him to attempt to overturn that verdict by risking the lives of himself and his countrymen to re-establish a dynasty which has now no adherents worth speaking of—a dynasty which has been virtually defunct for half a century.

It is too late now to restore, or even to hope to restore, either the Bourbon or the Napoleonic dynasty.

The true salvation of France now depends upon the whole country uniting in defence of the Republican form of Government, which has stood the test of a quarter of a generation, and is now the only form of Government to which the people are really attached, in spite of all shortcomings.

#### LOURDES.

Dr. Boissarie, a French doctor, has given to the public a work entitled "Medical History of Lourdes." The author gives a plain and positive statement of facts that have come under his notice, and he has no hesitation in declaring that medical science is unable to explain many of the cures attributed to Lourdes. He takes a fact and views it long and carefully by the light of scientific principles. There is no room for imagination or devotional enthusiasm: he is there simply as an expert. When he cannot explain it he says so; and his example might well be imitated by a great many medical luminaries who go to Lourdes to enlighten the benighted Catholics, and return with much prattle of sublimated condition of nerves. The word "miracle" is not in their vocabulary, and yet they will have to go back some centuries to expunge it from the vocabulary of the world. Every year marks Lourdes as a favored spot of heaven. And no attempt has been spared to destroy its supernatural character. Bernadette was exposed for years to the closest scrutiny of an army of medical men, who examined her and watched her, and to-day they are where they began—baffled and mystified and powerless to explain the phenomena.

The first cures that took place were known quickly enough all over the country. Popular opinion exaggerated some and misrepresented others. Then it was that the Bishop of Tarbes commissioned Dr. Vergeze, a man of the highest reputation in the medical world, to examine the principal cases. The result was published, and provoked much adverse criticism and controversy. Still the facts remained, and the doctors, remembering that discretion is the better part of valor, became silent.

Some years elapsed and the question was again taken up, but the result was the same as before. The doctors classified the cures under three categories: 1. Cases which contained only a probability of a miracle. 2. Cases which, though surprising, might yet by some means be accounted for by a natural agency. 3. Cases which, without any contestation, were above the power of nature.

Later on Dr. Buchanan laid down in the *Lancet* similar principles. Medical science has thus proved to the world that there are certain events which have their origin and their being not from nature but from God. The scalpel does not mark all knowledge, and they who would fain believe it are like those described by Plato—men sitting with their backs to the window and refusing to see the light.

#### MR. GLADSTONE ON HERESY AND SCHISM.

Mr. Gladstone, even while he was occupied with the cares of Government, found time to write on theological subjects; but of course it was to be expected that his views on such matters would be written from his own standpoint, the point of view being that of a man who has been accustomed all his life to rely on his own judgment rather than that of the Christian Church through more than eighteen centuries.

This is the standpoint from which Protestants, however honest and talented they may be, necessarily form their judgment on Christian doctrine and practice. They would not be consistent with the palmary principle of Protestantism if this were not the case; but it is a standpoint which is not authorized to be taken, whether we regard the teaching of Holy Scripture or Christian tradition. Hence, we are not to be surprised if even Mr. Gladstone, with all his unquestionable genius, falls into error when he deals with this subject.

Our Blessed Lord in establishing His Church committed to it the duty of teaching all nations, not what the pastors and members thereof might evolve out of their own minds, but what He taught. Even Mr. Gladstone has not grasped this great truth; and his theological conclusions, starting from a mixture of right and wrong principles, have brought out conclusions, sometimes very true, though startling to the prevalent Protestant convictions, but sometimes as startlingly erroneous.

His well-known pamphlet on Vaticanism was published in revenge for the defeat of his Government by the votes of Irish members, on the education question. Since that time he has learned that Catholic faith is in no way inconsistent with loyalty to country; and though he has not made any formal renunciation of the errors

contained in his pamphlet, he has renounced them by his acts.

On the education question, too, he has learned that it is not the duty of a Liberal legislator to force on an unwilling people the particular kind of education which he deems to be most suitable for them—that kind which would ignore the existence of God, or of teachings which God has ordained.

All this shows that even Mr. Gladstone is not so infallible on questions of religion as he and his most enthusiastic admirers imagined him to be.

Later came his "Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture," with a purpose with which we are fully in accord. We welcome any reasonable assistance in stemming the tide of rampant infidelity; and Mr. Gladstone has used his powerful pen for this purpose. In this he reasoned on the side of truth, and his arguments are irrefutable. Yet we must confess that his pen was not always wielded in defence of the truth; and we believe no one is more conscious of this than himself, or more sorry for his erroneous views, especially those contained in his work *Vaticanism*.

The retirement of the eminent gentleman from political turmoil seems to have given him a new opportunity to deal with theological questions, and he takes advantage of it; for in the *Nineteenth Century* for August there appears an article from him on "The Place of Heresy and Schism in the Modern Christian Church." His natural kindness leads him in this article to great tolerance of almost any degree of doctrinal difference, and he pleads that our ideas of heresy should be modified and readjusted so that Christians of all sorts may co-operate harmoniously. Especially he recommends that his own Church should make this move so that a common belief in the Trinity and our redemption through the blood of Christ should suffice for a basis of unity between denominations. On this basis, he thinks, all Christians should learn to fraternize; and thus, the old Jewish law forbidding the making of graven images should be now regarded as unnecessary to be observed.

We submit, with all due deference to Mr. Gladstone as a profound thinker, that this way of dealing with what is supposed to be one of the commandments of God, is not respectful to God, if it is really forbidden by the first, or, as Protestants make it out, the second commandment, to make images. Of course we understand, that this is said as a concession to Catholics, but Catholics do not want a concession which implies that we are, or have been, breakers of one of the commandments of God.

This matter is of importance, because the Catholic faith does not change to suit the ever-varying whims of men. It is unchangeable, because it is the divine revelation; and so it would be an intolerable inconsistency for us to accept as a concession or favor such a change as Mr. Gladstone proposes to Protestants to make in their belief, as if the error were entirely on our side. The fact that the change is proposed to Protestantism proves that the error to be corrected is also in Protestantism and not in Catholic doctrine.

Scripture makes it clear that the words of the Catholic Catechism are correct, which are to the effect that it is not forbidden by the first commandment to make images "if we do not make them for gods, to adore and serve them, as the idolaters did."

That it was never meant by God to forbid absolutely the making of images, is clear from the fact that not long after God revealed the ten commandments to Moses, He ordered Ooliab and Beseleel, the skillful workmen who were chosen to use all their skill in the erection of the tabernacle and altar, and their appurtenances, to erect two cherubim or images of angels on the sides of the holy propitiatory. (Exod. xxxvii.) So in the erection of Solomon's temple there were cherubim on the oracle, and others on various parts of the temple.

It was, therefore, not forbidden to the Jews to make images which would enliven their devotion, without exposing them to the danger of falling into idolatry.

It is undeniable that the first Protestants adopted the Jewish, in preference to the Christian, arrangement of the commandments, dividing the first into two for the purpose of arising before the populace an express commandment of God against the making of images under all circumstances, so as to make it appear that the Catholic practise of showing respect to the images of saints is thereby condemned as idolatry. To make this representa-

tion of the case more credible the Hebrew word *pesel*, "a graven image," was translated "a graven image," whereas its proper meaning is *an idol*, as is evident from the use of the word throughout Holy Scripture. Thus, in admitting now that Catholics may lawfully use and show respect to images of the saints there is no need of the roundabout and rather absurd method of Mr. Gladstone, first in applying that God forbade entirely the use of images to the Jews, and secondly that the time has come when it is allowable for man to change God's law. That was never God's law; and there is no need of changing God's law in order to admit that Catholicism has at last become admissible into the category of Christian Churches. Mr. Gladstone, well-intentioned as we believe him to be, makes an egregious mistake in putting the matter in this way. It is Protestantism which committed the error in the first place, in asserting pertinaciously that all images and pictures are forbidden by the first commandment. But in taking this stand, Protestantism was never consistent. While maintaining this, Protestants always in practise showed reverence to the images of those who had no claim to be called saints, while they maintained that it is idolatry to reverence the images of the saints of God.

We cannot, without considerable difficulty, understand how the truth of the case escaped Mr. Gladstone's notice. The only solution of the matter which we can give is that while making his eirenicon, he wished to let his own Church down easily.

#### SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS AT MASS.

Detroit was the scene of quite a sensation during two Sundays, the one immediately before the State Fair was to be held, and the other during the Fair. The cause of the excitement was the march of fifty South Sea islanders to hear Mass at the Church of the Holy Redeemer. These islanders were brought to this continent to form the Samoan village at the World's Fair, and they have since been travelling from place to place exhibiting their war dances and other peculiarities under guidance of a manager. They are all Catholics, having been converted to the faith by the Marist religious order who began their mission on the islands in 1836. Many of the early missionaries were martyred and eaten by the savages, whose objects of worship were of the most absurd and frequently disgusting character.

The islanders were followed to the church by hundreds, including many Protestants, who were desirous to see how they conducted themselves. In the church they behaved with the greatest decorum and manifested the most fervent piety. The gentlemen who made the customary collection had been instructed by the priests not to bring the collection boxes to the pews which were occupied by the islanders, but when they saw themselves thus passed by they called the collectors back and each one deposited a coin in the boxes.

Many read the prayers at Mass from books, and others used rosaries, with the purpose of which they are quite familiar. They are very earnest in their devotion to the Mother of God. Their garb was the usual dress of this country, though at their exhibitions they dress as they were accustomed to do on their native islands. The dress they wear at their homes is decent though light and scanty.

The beholders were edified at their deportment in the church while they assisted at the same Holy Sacrifice at which they are accustomed to worship at their homes in the southern seas. One of the islanders became very ill while at Mass, but he refused to drink a glass of water in the house of God, and when carried out of the church, parched with thirst, before taking the water he made on himself, and over the water, the sign of the cross.

The earnest piety of these strangers from the Antipodes is a beautiful testimony to the zeal of the devoted missionary Fathers who brought to them the knowledge of the Saviour of mankind, and to the unity of the Catholic Church, which makes brethren of the people of every land. The color of the islanders is not black, but brownish or tawny, resembling that of the American Indian, but somewhat darker.

The Detroit *Free Press* made a strange mistake in describing the hymns sung by these islanders at the State Fair as Methodist hymns. They were the well-known hymns of the Catholic Church, and were sung in