

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN.

CCXXXIV.

I may be asked, when Lansing declares that the Popes, with the consent of the Church, have authorized the title "Our Lord and God the Pope," how I know to the contrary, since I can not be supposed to have much first-hand acquaintance with the various editions of the Canon Law, and other official documents of the Roman Church. I will therefore explain the principle of my affirmations and denials.

If a real Protestant authority, a careful scholar and a Christian, indisposed to bring up any matter of scandal against Rome except on incontestable evidence, says that he has seen this or that statement or title in an authoritative document, of course this entitles him to the title of an authority on the point of inquiry then is, what is the meaning or application of the statement or title?

However, it so happens that the real Protestant authorities, such as Milman, Stanley, Salmon and Creighton, say nothing about any such thing. Milman, of course, adduces all manner of Papal assumptions which Protestants reject; but having twice read through his "Latin Christianity," and once very carefully and very lately, I have found no such title mentioned in it. Having also twice read through Creighton's work on the Papacy, and once lately, I have noticed no such statement in him, nor in Salmon, or Stanley, or Bryce, or Herzog-Piltz, or French, or any other Protestant writer of this high rank. Such a result is not conclusive, for we have to allow for lapses of attention, but it certainly has very great weight.

Now, as Dr. Faust of Washington rightly says, the vulgar controversialists, like Lansing or Christian, whose stock in trade consists of all manner of blackguard assaults upon "Romeanism," picked up pell-mell wherever they are found, without the faintest regard to the truthfulness of the sources, deserve no attention of themselves. Yet as it is precisely these billingsgate writers that principally sway the multitudes, we have to pay them a regard out of all proportion to their real worth, or rather worthlessness. As a highly esteemed Methodist friend says: "Keep hammering away at these vulgar, but potent lies, and sooner or later they will be broken to pieces."

Moreover, when we attack a vulgar falsehood, we often find that the roots of it, though not always its indecency, reverse their natural growth, and strike up to higher levels. For instance, Merle d'Aubigné is an intense partisan Protestant, but he is not a billingsgate writer. He is a scholar and a true Christian, nor is he a slanderer. Nay, he vindicates the memory of Hildebrand from the reproach of selfishness and insincerity. Yet it is now recognized that he is of absolutely no authority. He knows names and dates better than Coffin, but his statements of fact are hardly worth more than those of some of the infamously bad historians of the city of Cambridge places in her schools, for historical consultation by her scholars.

For instance, though Tetzel is not of much account, yet we are bound to give even the devil and Tetzel their due. Now Dr. Merle gives all the current Lutheran lies about Tetzel, some of them mere revivals of popular lampoons centuries older than he, without intimating a suspicion of their untruth. Nay, unscrupulous as Luther is against the Dominican pardoner, Dr. Merle reproduces even stories which Luther himself disdains to take up, such as the fable about the "indulgence to commit sin" supposed to be granted to the Saxon nobleman, and turning out a warrant to rob Tetzel himself. So also he gives, as authentic, the appalling insult said to have been offered by Tetzel at Harburg to the Blessed Virgin, although the whole body of the Halle clergy and magistrates solemnly bore witness to the slanderousness of the story, and Luther himself retracted it, not reviving it until Tetzel was dead and no longer able to refute it.

However, Merle d'Aubigné is much worse negatively than positively. His portraits of the Reformers are all follow Queen Elizabeth's reaction about her own picture, that there must be no shadow. In his description of Luther, for instance, which, by the way, with much independent freedom and picturesqueness, who would ever imagine the hideousness of Luther's teachings concerning sexual relations? In his sketch of the close friendship supposed to have subsisted between Martin Luther and Melancthon, who would suppose Philip's sneering doubts about Luther's personal morals, and his appeal to the impending marriage to make a more decent man of him? Who would have thought that this devoted friend, waiting till his master was dead and gone, would talk about the slaps in the face he sometimes had from him, and would say that he was ready to reunite with the Catholics on easy terms, as having already long borne the yoke of bondage?

Lansing, who gives a glowing description of Luther's largeness of heart, and in many respects a very just one, says that Loyola appears to have had a real friend. In fact, as Sir James Stephen shows, the friendship between Loyola and Xavier was a singularly beautiful one, and nothing shows more luminously the unselfishness of St. Ignatius than that he could bring himself to dismiss St. Francis to the Indies. I doubt whether it did not shorten his life. Yet, as Dean Hodges says, we may expect great things from a soul that lived so entirely in Jesus.

Now, I may be mistaken, but I can not well believe that David and Jonathan, or Orestes and Pylades, or Damon and Pythias, or Loyola and Xavier, were in the habit of kicking and cuffing each other. Therefore I am obliged to put Martin's and Philip's peculiar intimacy apart as sui generis. Perhaps it was friendship, but it so it seems to have been a friendship after the canon

of Augsburg, rather than according to those of universal humanity. However, let us insist on this friendship, for if Melancthon was not Luther's friend, I don't know where Martin ever had another.

I need not say that I never knew from Dr. Merle of Martin's and Philip's proposal to reduce the common people throughout the world to slavery. Here at least seems to have been a point in which they were sweetly agreed. Nor did I learn from him of Luther's ferocious and effective exhortations to the wholesale massacre of the defeated peasants, who were cut down at his word to the number of seven times the victims of St. Bartholomew's. It is for making known some such things, which Protestantism had prudently kept in the shadow, that some zealous Evangelicals of Germany have proposed cutting off for the worse ears. Happily, he went home before they carried out this pious and high-minded suggestion.

In my youth I remember the glowing admiration with which I read Merle d'Aubigné's description of the heroic young Landgrave Philip, of his courage and continuing zeal for the worse gospel. I cherish the ideal to this day, and I believe that in it there is something of reality, perhaps as much as in Wordsworth's "King Child and Seraph blended in the mien of Pious Edward," applied to the cold-hearted Tudor boy and persecuting bigot.

I need not say that my image of Philip of Hesse did not include his roystering drunkenness, his tyranny, his life-long inconstancy, and his final bigamy. Nor did I know that his fellow patron of the Reformation, the Elector John Frederick, a man of firm and dignified character, but like himself a reveller and a drunkard, gave up his opposition to the Landgrave's bigamy, and being threatened by him with exposure of facts of character which would have made him liable to the death of fire.

If then a work comparatively as high in rank as Merle d'Aubigné's turns out to be utterly worthless as an authority, of course everything said by such a man as Lansing or Christian ought to be as utterly discredited. If then such a statement is contradicted by a person that we regard as an authority, it is as an out-and-out lie.

Still, the most peremptory conclusion concerning a contingent fact is necessarily provisional. As a Baptist editor has pertinently written to me, improbability must always give way to fact. A denial may be warranted, but only on condition of a prompt retraction if even the most worthless writer can show that in a particular case he chances to be right. I have never been able to agree with my friends who were so provoked with Dr. Ward for accusing me of an infamous slander against John Milton. He spoke on what seemed conclusive evidence, and as soon as the fact justified me, he promptly revoked his denunciation.

Nobody, not even the most virulent, imagines that Rome suppresses the Pope to her God. Every Pope has to seek his own salvation from his sins once a week. However, some say that Rome has occasionally availed herself of the Saviour's appeal to Psalm 82 (81) to call the Pope God by delegation. The Rev. Sydney Smith, S. J., denies this. It would be quite a triumph for Mr. Lansing to prove that he had blundered into a fact.

CHARLES C. STARRUCK.

Andover, Mass.

Walking With the Saviour in the Shadow of the Cross.

What was the lesson that the Hidden Life of Nazareth was designed to teach? It was simply this, that the highest and most perfect kind of life does not consist in one occupation more than another, not in severe penances, not in active zeal, not in works of self-denial, not in order to spend living remote from all in order to spend one's life in contemplation and prayer, but simply in doing the will of God from day to day.

ST. TERESA THE MYSTIC.

Now there are degrees, stages, a progress, in this holy and sublime state of certain favored and very pure souls; and these stages, as we may call them, are most clearly misapprehended and misrepresented in Mrs. Field's articles. What she gives us in regard to St. Teresa's case, and quoting from an unnamed author, as "subtle and nameless influences of the cloister, vague reveries, efforts to obtain perfection beyond the limits of human nature," were her gradual progress to the heights of contemplation in the mystical life when he soul cries out with St. Paul: "I live, not yet I; but Christ liveth in me." In this divine and consummate union lay St. Teresa's strength. There was no question of returning health any more than of vague reveries. She herself has said it: "The soul which has attained to this state never departs from that centre where she is at rest with God; neither is her peace ever disturbed, without solitude as to what may befall her, she lives in such entire forgetfulness of self that she seems to have no longer any being of her own, and desires to be nothing, except so far as she may be able to increase, though in the smallest degree, the honor and glory of God, for whom she would gladly lay down her life. . . . Do not imagine, however, that such a person ceases to eat or sleep, or neglects faithfully to fulfill all the obligations of her state. As to exterior works, far from fearing them, her only trouble is that all which her strength permits her to do for God, she is unable to do for God, for whom she would gladly lay down her life. . . . Do not imagine, however, that such a person ceases to eat or sleep, or neglects faithfully to fulfill all the obligations of her state. 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