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## Romanized Protestantism.

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**T**HE term protestant was born April 19, 1529, at Spire, in Germany. It is a word of high and holy significance. The positive and formal principle of Protestantism is that nothing not taught in the Holy Scriptures, the authoritative rule of faith and practice in the church, enters as an essential element into the Christian system. Romanism converts baptism and the supper into agencies of spiritual transformations. They are no longer merely mechanical things, water and bread, but they are spiritual realities dealing in character, eternal life, changed relations toward God, renewal of the sinful nature. Protestantism is supposed to affirm that spiritual changes are wrought by spiritual agencies, that no mechanical thing can effect a change in the character itself, altering a man's relation to God.

As to faith before baptism, the Scriptures assert its necessity. Nothing can lie more plainly on the surface of the New Testament than this teaching. The Baptist applies this in church life. He insists that no one may be baptized unless there be a credible profession of faith in Christ. It may be crude, it may ultimately be found to be unreal, but there must be a confessed faith before baptism. The Romanist asserts that there is a real faith in the child. Speaking of the Jewish children circumcised, the Catholic writers say, "Faith was presumed in them." Speaking of infants baptized, the Catholic writer says, "So in baptism infants can be made heirs of heaven, when faith can be presumed." It seems absurd, yet a real and undeveloped faith is affirmed. The Westminster Confession reads the same as the New Testament about the priority of faith, but it can see no place for it in the child. It therefore commands baptism for the infant because it finds faith in the parent. The Church of England places the faith in the sponsor who answers for the child. All three of these are companions in reading the New Testament, in listening to the command concerning the priority of faith, in evading its plain meaning, a personal conscious faith in and before baptism. The Romanist comes nearer the New Testament than the others in his affirmation of a real faith in the child baptized.

The Catholic writers unite in declaring that in baptism we receive a supernatural life by the application of water. This seems to make of the religion of Christ a merely mechanical thing, so much spiritual life. By a mysterious correlation of force a few drops of water are changed into character, regeneration, a new attitude toward spiritual things, new affections engendered. Its entire procedure seems out of place in a religion of spiritual realities, of repentance, brokenness of heart, faith, poverty of soul, purity of mind. But the unvarying word of the Romish church everywhere and always is, regeneration through baptism, eternal life through the tips of the priestly hands. Protestants ought to be different from this, by an almost infinite remove. It ought to have a place for baptism as a positive command, as a test of obedience, as a mark of the confessing life, as an outward confession of a spiritual change wrought by the Holy Spirit. Protestantism is and ought to be a spiritual religion, depending not on things, but on spiritual conditions. As a matter of fact there is a large element of nominal Protestantism that is thoroughly Romanized. Jamieson, Brown and Tausset's Commentary is widely known. Many Baptist ministers have publicly commended it as the best available commentary to be had. Two of its authors are Presbyterians, one of them a professor of divinity. So far as its teachings on baptism are concerned, Pope Leo XIII. would heartily commend its orthodoxy. It says, "Infants are charitably presumed to have received a grace in connection with their Christian descent in answer to the believing prayers of their parents or guardians presenting them for baptism,

which grace is visibly sealed and increased by baptism. They are presumed to be then regenerated until years of developed consciousness prove whether they have been actually so or not." The Church of England prayer book teaches the same doctrine in an unmistakable way. Millions of professed Protestants today are suffering from the retention of Romanizing beliefs. In every community is the expressed purpose of parents to have a child baptized speedily lest something might happen to it. What Protestantism means today is the conception of a true teaching that will utterly remove all vestiges of any change wrought by the ordinances of Christ in and of themselves. A real spiritual Christianity cannot exist in harmony with baptismal regeneration or infant baptism.

A union of evangelical protestantism is possible on the supposition only, the rejection of the Romish teaching of any efficacy in the church ordinances. Infant baptism had its origin in the prior belief of a regeneration through the waters of baptism. However much evangelical pastors may insist that the baptism of infants is merely a dedicatory ordinance, one has but to mingle among the people of a community to know that it has a practical hold on the common mind as making the future of a child safer.

The Baptist churches have a ministry to the present age. In many sections of the church there is a growing dependence on the acts of baptism and the supper. The Baptists must utter a protest to their fellow Protestants. The greatest calamity that could happen to the organized Protestantism of today would be the cessation of the Baptist affirmation, the ordinances for believers only.—*Hightstown, Pa.*

## Sincerity.

F. L. FRÄZER.

**S**INCERITY is a jewel of rare worth. A virtue that is seldom found untainted with the vileness of duplicity.

As Christians who love home, church and country, we yearn for something that will make it easier, to work up a common-sense enthusiasm in the various branches of religious effort, and find, when we have solicited whole memberships of Young People's and Missionary Societies, and even churches, for the sole purpose of instilling into others, this ever-necessary enthusiasm in and hunger for hand-to-hand effort with the unsaved, to rescue them from everlasting separation from God,—how few can be depended upon, to stand by, and co-operate in the greatest and grandest mission mankind ever was, or ever shall be, privileged to engage in.

I am not pessimistic when I speak the truth, and say that sincerity of purpose does not characterize the motives of a large percentage of individuals who unite themselves with the professions of Christ's name. Nothing proves this spirit of spiritual insincerity more conclusively than the absolute failure, on the part of a host of professing Christians, to co-operate with the faithful pastor, whose heart is bleeding and yearning for the unapproached, untouched, unconserved, unsaved multitude that throngs every community. Failure to show the proper sympathy with him who struggles with all his physical and nervous energy, to overtake an unfinished work left him as the heritage of insincere Christianity.

Why is it that many of the young ministers of our day have to be given a few days every now and then "to recuperate"? Why do so many brains throb and pulsate to such a distressing degree that when the sermon is completed in preparation or delivery, hours are needed to bring the mind and body again into a workable condition? Why do so many "break down with nervous prostration"? And more searching a thousand-fold is the question, Why, in your close acquaintance and mine, why in our fields of sparkling opportunity, do scores, yea hundreds

of precious souls wander about with their spiritual sight withheld from the brilliant visions and more blessed realities of a transformed life? Let me answer in part. Because those who shun, do not reflect the bright rays of the "Spirit's" "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," against which there is no law.

Be sincere. God demands sincerity as the passport to his vineyard of activity. Even God cannot use an insincere professor. Humanity, needs, and honors, the honest heart and true, that flinches not in the hour of opposition, but shines brightest and appears most beautiful in the light of the fire of temptation and testing.

The bone of the future church and nation is the child. Be sincere for the child's sake. No eyes see more. No ears hear more. No judgment "sizes up" so correctly. No mind thinks more rapidly, nor is any so susceptible to outer influences, than that possessed by the tiny men and women who look up into the older face, and journeys on to the gates of Eternity, better or worse for having even looked.

Dear friend, whoever you are, wherever you be, whatever your condition. Have you professed to be "a child of the King," "a follower of the Lamb"? I pray you for the sake of the faithful few who realize to some extent more than others the value of the soul, be sincere, and throw all your God-given energy with theirs to help win the world for Christ.

Make the home life what it ought to be by your sincerity, and by your dauntless enthusiasm, make every organization to which you belong, throb and pulsate with a new life born of God.

gaze into the eyes of the coming home, church, and nation, and make your first thought to be, In His great Name I will use all the gifts he makes me possessor of to help graft these tiny lives—with all their possibilities—securely into the great parent vine. That when eternity unfolds her pages, and when the writing of that hand that now records our life is seen, the record stands that that small deed, or word, or thought, that in the setting of sincerity parted from us to take a lodgment in another soul—has under the mysterious increase law of God, multiplied a thousand times ten thousand fold within the hearts of men.—*Milton, Pa.*

## Origin of the Penknife.

**D**O you know why the little pocket-knives are often called penknives? Perhaps some of you have often wondered, and did not like to ask. You use a steel pen at school, but when Washington lived there were no steel pens. At that time, and until the year 1820, pens were made out of the quills or large feathers of the goose and other birds. Now these quill pens, being soft, got out of order and split, so they had to be remade. Most writers kept a sharp knife to remake these pens, so the knives got to be called "penknives." The word "pen" is from the Latin word "penna," which means a feather; so when we say steel pen we talk of a steel feather, which is absurd; but then the language is made up of very funny words and phrases, and the little word "pen" is now used only for the piece of steel with which we write. What becomes of all the pens made? One firm in England makes two hundred million pens every year, and there are several other makers who send out nearly as many more; then in the United States we make at least two hundred millions every year. Where do they all go to? It is not often that you can pick up old pens, and yet a vast number must be lost every day.—*John de Morgan.*

The value of the educational institutions established and controlled by Baptists in the United States is, according to a government report thirty-five million dollars, which is larger than any other Protestant denomination except the Methodist.