

SECRET HEART REVIEW. PROTESTANT CONTROVERSY.

BY A PROTESTANT MINISTER.

XXXIV.

In my last paper I have said that Luther advised Henry VIII. to retain Catherine of Aragon, and to be content with her, but if this could not be, to take Anne Boleyn as an additional wife. This advice was substantially Luther's, but it was given immediately by Melancthon. Henry and Martin had become too much embittered towards each other by their early passage of arms for direct intercommunication. Melancthon, therefore, makes himself the spokesman of his principal, and indeed goes farther than he. Luther declares polygamy lawful for Christians, but thinks it inexpedient and unseemly, though preferable to divorce. Melancthon, in his advice to the King of England, finds no fault with it, but directly recommends it. "The safest course for a second wife, without dissolving the first, and there is no Scriptural objection to this."

The Council of Trent, although it strongly affirms that a valid marriage between two baptized persons, in which the parties have actually lived together, is indissoluble except by death, has not deemed it expedient to anathematize the opinion of the Greek Church, that a divorce a vinculo may be given for adultery. The Greeks have been so conservative, not to say stagnant, in their ecclesiastical life, that there seems to have been no disposition among them to go beyond this one ground of divorce. The more restless and mobile spirit of the West, however, has not been so easily restrained. When once Protestantism, taking advantage of an exceedingly dubious interpretation of Christ's words had declared divorce a vinculo permissible for adultery, the first breach was made in the sanctity of marriage, which has steadily widened ever since, until now, in this most Protestant of all Protestant lands, as it boasts itself to be, marriage, so far as the law is concerned, is really, nothing but a mere concubinage, after a few legal preliminaries. In most cases, doubtless, it is a real Christian marriage, but this is because public sentiment is as yet higher than the law. Whether a balance will at last be struck by the degradation of public sentiment, or by the elevation of the law, remains to be seen. It is certain, however, that a really Roman Catholic country could never, under the name of freedom of conscience, allow its Protestant citizens to practice our American "morality of the poultry yard," giving it the name of Christian marriage.

encouraged by law? We can not yet be sure. Our people have a great deal of reserved moral force, and this has sometimes suddenly displayed itself with great energy, extinguishing public evils that had seemed hopeless of cure. Perhaps the war against polygamy which lies before us, and which may yet come to the shedding of blood, will turn our thoughts to the question, whether simultaneous polygamy is so very much worse than successive. When, as some increasingly probable, the civil regulation of marriage shall be vested in the National Government, the moral and religious influence which is now scattered and wasted among so many irresponsible states, can be brought to bear with a unity which ought to secure it much greater effectiveness. Even as things are, there are hopeful signs, which ought not to be overlooked. It is certain, however, that Catholicism has here a great responsibility, for helping to save conscience from moral profligacy. Protestantism, above all denominations, has little pedagogic power, little control over the morally rude. It was in view of this defect that, in treating of marriage, the eminent—President Woolsey of Yale has suggested the desirability of the spread of Catholicism among our American masses. It is certain that our Protestant churches and ministers thus far do not really seem to know which—moral profligacy or the flustering protest. In our own time, so far as I am able to recall to mind all that I have read in it for many years, seems to have confined itself principally to sneering at all attempts at a stricter legislation in the Church respecting marriage, without pretending to much concern for stricter legislation in the State. For instance, it has been laughing sarcastically over the Episcopal canon—proposed and passed, I do not know which—marriage a clergyman to celebrate a marriage where either party had a living husband or wife divorced on other grounds than adultery. With mocking glee, it decries this canon as ridiculous in theory and impossible in practice.

This matter is of such importance that I may yet have to discuss it at considerable length.

Charles C. Starbuck. Andover, Mass.

CONVERSION OF COL. R. M. JOHNSTON.

As Related by Himself. From Truth, a Catholic Magazine.

Dear Father Price:—You have requested me several times to send you some account of my experiences during the period before I became a member of the Catholic Church. Although I cannot be led to suppose that what a person of no greater importance than I am has to say about himself, even under a nom de plume, will be of any value to others, yet with intent to comply with the wish of a dear friend, I decide to submit to you a few pages.

However interesting to oneself be the trials of his own mind upon the most serious subject for his and all men's consideration, it would be a really pitiable vanity to suppose that they could be so to others. Yet it may not be amiss sometimes, for even such as I, to give some of the reasons for the satisfaction felt when those trials, the most perplexing and painful of all, were ended.

I was brought up a Baptist by parents in the memory of whose virtues I have always indulged with unexpressed fondness and gratitude. Our community was mainly Baptist, and I have never known one which had a larger number of constituents, particularly female, who were devoted to Christian obligations. These lived in unwavering faith in Christ, and died in humble hope of eternal life through the merits of His atonement. They knew no more of the Catholic Church than of an occult language. What they had heard was told by their enemies, most of them not better informed. I cannot but smile, though sadly sometimes, while calling back some of the things that used to be told about the Pope, Anti-Christ, the Scarlet Woman, and other men, women and things under his lead. With a simple-minded, uncultured people, there were no ways of converting such audacious misrepresentations.

and do so until the end of the world. The Paraclete did appear at Pentecost, and He is upon the earth now, fulfilling His mission to guide into all truth. And this is the infallibility so noisily railed at and so little understood. It means simply that mankind, those who entirely trust in this essential, indisputable truth, will be secure against ruinous mistakes in their faith in Christ.

If we ask a Baptist or another Protestant clergyman if he is infallible, he will answer "no" in emphatic denial. Put such a question to a Catholic priest, he will answer "yes, for I preach none other doctrines than such as my mother Church believes and teaches, assisted and guided, as she is by the Holy Spirit." There it is, a man like me, knowing himself to be blind, powerless to find his way out of the obscurity in which he gropes, beset by toils, pitfalls, snares, wrong-doings and temptations, is constrained to follow the guide who claims to know the way certainly instead of the one who admits that he does not.

A matter which, many books, that of the unhappy Lard, persecuted because he could not be hostile to the Church to the degree demanded by the rancors of his time, Janus and Anti-Janus, Miller's End of Controversy, Ives' Trials of a Mind, the debates between Gladstone and Newman and Manning, and the History of Civilization, and others. When I decided at last, I felt a peace beyond all understanding, and a surprise that I had not found before what then seemed so luminously clear. In Protestant forms of worship was the absence of authority in effecting conformity with discipline, variant as it is. Some of them of late years have held meetings for the trial of clergymen who preach doctrines not in harmony with their denominations, but they seldom amount to any well defined decision, or effect settled security, for Protestantism is committed against punishment for heresy, a word whose sense is known to a few.

Horsey, as I know, is a choosing to believe, or professing to believe otherwise than as the Church believes and teaches, while Protestantism professes to allow entire freedom in this regard. Yet trials are had on questions which seem of especial audacity, and discussions are had inside and outside of acquittal, sometimes in meet reprisal to the defendant, if he be manly, feels like priding himself for the notoriety which has been lifted, and the harmlessness of its consequences upon himself.

The Low Churchman regards the High Churchman with suspicion, and is in turn regarded with pity, and the Bishop, waxing High or Low, or oscillating between, can only pliously counsel or meekly reprove. Let a Catholic priest preach other doctrines than he has received from the Church: soon, very soon, he gets from his Bishop a mislive, brief, polite, yet fully significant, notifying him to vacate his rectory by such a date, when another will be here to accept it.

For the greater number of Protestants, devout, honest as the best, are kept out of the Catholic Church from ignorance of its doctrines, its history, its lives of illustrious men and women, its saints and martyrs, its vast achievements throughout all conditions of its existence, for the weal of the human race. Such as these need only information, prudently imparted.

The great defalcation under the sovereigns Henry and Elizabeth has spent its greatest strength, and thoughtful minds in Great Britain, noting and pondering upon the continuous recurring detection of the monstrous falsehoods upon which its claims were based, are either coming back to the one fold or lapsing into Agnosticism.

Conversions are counted by the many, many thousands every year. For at least there are not very many who do not desire to possess and hold the truth. Prejudice and bias are hard to overcome, because slow to be convinced that what they conscientiously believe tends to evil and misfortune.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON. Pentecost.

THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST WITHIN US.

"Know you not that you are the Temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1. Cor. 3, 16.)

The Church invites us to-day to a great festivity. We are to celebrate the anniversary of the descent of the Holy Ghost, the divine Comforter in every tribulation, the Sanctifier in our misery of sin, the author of His promises, His graces. According to His promise, our Saviour did not wish to leave His disciples orphans, but lovingly desired to remain with them until the consummation of the world, although in a different manner than heretofore, viz: by the Holy Ghost, whom the Father would send. This divine Paraclete and giver of all graces, He communicated to them to-day in the form of fiery tongues amidst the sound of a mighty wind, and consecrated their hearts to be the throne of God. And since that day, all those who were redeemed by Christ's Precious Blood, and washed and sanctified in the sacrament of regeneration, have become an abode, a temple of the Holy Ghost. By the unmerited mercy of God, this ineffable grace has also become our portion. Hence, to us, too, are addressed the solemn words of the apostle: "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Oh, may we never forget such dignity, never by a sinful life render ourselves unworthy of it!

A temple, erected by human hand ought, above all, to be clean and garnished. No filth, no dust, no cobweb can remain before the eye of man. And equally so should the living temple of God within us be always free from sin, and shine in the radiance of innocence and sanctity; for where the majesty of God shall dwell, there Satan must have no resting place. Pure must be the eye that turns not to concupiscence, pure the ear that listens not to odious invectives and obscene language, pure the tongue that sows no discord, disseminates no uncalumny, speaks no immodest, unbecoming word, belonging to others, pure the foot that treads not forbidden ways, the wide road to destruction, pure the heart that abhors every unclean emotion, that is closed to uncharitableness, to envy, that detests every breath of sin more than death itself.

But this alone is not sufficient. A temple built by human hand must not only be clean and free from dust, but must also be adorned with valuable ornaments of nature and art. And thus the abode of God, the soul, should not only be free from sin, but adorned with those Christian virtues so pleasing to God and the angels. As in the Church the cross is everywhere prominent, being the first and greatest ornament, so should the image of the cross, as it were the virtue of the cross, namely, humility, be the soul's greatest ornament; humility in riches, humility in honors, humility in all mind, advantages of body and mind, humility in youth, humility in old age. Next to the sacred sign of redemption, the eye is directed above all to the image of the Immaculate Virgin. Thus purity of heart follows humility as a glorious companion; in fact, both should be as intimately connected as are the Divine Son and His Holy Mother. Purity, innocence, virginity, O most magnificent jewel in the temple of God! O most beautiful flower of virtues! And as in a temple the pictures of saints come after those of the Crucified and the Madonna, so in a heart where purity and humility are enthroned, there all other virtues combine to form a great and glorious wreath.

There we will find the faithful observance of the fourth commandment, obedience towards parents; there, the command of charity; "Never do to another what thou wouldst have to have done to thee by another." (Tobias 4, 16) These are practised the seven corporal and spiritual works of Mercy, in fine, the exercise of all the Christian virtues as a constant service of God, praising and glorifying the Most High.

This, beloved Christians, should be, according to the doctrine of faith, the temple of God within us. But is this actually the case? Alas! of how many must it be said: No, it is not. Their soul is no longer a temple, but only a heap of ruins; it is no longer God's abode, but the horrible dwelling of sin and Satan. Alas! O Christian, if you must acknowledge this of your soul, then the fearful words of His apostles are verified in you: "If any man violate the temple of God, shall God destroy it; for the temple of God is holy, which you are." (1. Cor. 3, 17) Ah! no, repent, let your heart be touched by the voice of grace, and be true penance be again what you were in the happy days of innocence. We are again within yourself the temple of God by the worthy reception of the sacraments, permit God to live again in your soul by a Christian life of faith, by the conscientious avoidance of sin, by the faithful fulfillment of the duties of your state in life, by incessant striving for the acquisition of sanctity and sanctity. Then, indeed, will the God who now dwells in your soul, one day receive you into His realms of bliss. Amen.

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THE PERSONALITY AND POWER OF THE DEVIL. One of the worst signs of the evil days on which we are entering is a growing disbelief in the existence and power of the "prince of darkness." It is a strange fact that his best pupils, his ambassadors on earth, are the loudest in denying his personality and power. Voltaire and his followers do not hesitate to attack the Bible because it tells us of the doing on earth of "the evil one." Kant and German philosophers of his school distort the meaning of the word of God and say that the term devil is but an ideal of "the greatest wickedness." Rationalists and Pantheists, denying as they do the personality of God, refuse to believe in the existence of the devil, and not a few non-Catholic preachers agree with them.

It is a cardinal point of true Christian faith that the devil is a true person. He is one of the fallen angels, but in his fall, and even in his punishment, he retains much of the greatness of the angelic intelligence and power. An English poet thus describes him: "But bringing up the rear of this bright host, Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved; His brow was like the deep when tempest-groved, fierce and unfathomable thoughts are stirred; Eternal wrath on his immortal face, And where he gazed a gloom pervaded space."

We are told that "the demons believe and tremble," but certainly faith and fear require intelligence, as they are the acts of a thinking being. St. Peter, in his second epistle, assumes a belief of the faithful in the damnation of the fallen angels. "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but delivered them, drawn down by ropes to the lower hell, into torments. In the words of Christ to unrepentant sinners, 'Depart from me, ye accursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,' Milton thus speaks of the devil: 'The infernal serpent; he it was whose guile, stir'd up with envy and revenge, deceived The mother of mankind.'"

LORD RUSSELL.

Messenger of the Sacred Heart. The tribute paid by the London Times to the new Arbitration Commissioner, Lord Russell, of Killowen, is worthy of record both as a manifestation of the high esteem in which this great jurist is held, and as an evidence of the vast change in the opinions of men and papers that could write such a tribute from so implacable a foe to all things Catholic as the Times. "There is no one left among the judicial class," it states, "who could represent the British nation in the grave international inquiries that are now pending with greater dignity and authority than the Lord Chief Justice of England. His position is recognized and understood throughout the English-speaking world. Anybody of inferior rank, though of equal ability, might find it hard to conquer the confidence of the Canadians, or to impress the Americans with a proper sense of his high representative dignity. But the Lord Chief Justice has many advantages in these respects. He has been welcomed as an honored guest in the United States, coming as the head of the English Judiciary. He has been the leading counsel for this country in the Bohring Sea Fisheries arbitration, and there he gained a practical mastery of some of the most critical points in the controversy between the United States and the Canadians, which are also involved in the issues before the Anglo-American Commission. It is not, perhaps, irrelevant to point out that Lord Russell, as a Roman Catholic, would be a persona grata to a most important section of the people of Canada, including the Premier of the Dominion Cabinet, Sir Wilfrid Laurier."

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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Learn to Appreciate. Fault finding is much easier than generous appreciation. To find fault you have only to stand off and point out wherein the person or action or thing falls to come up to your ideal, which, by the way, may not be a good one. To appreciate requires a degree of insight and sympathy, and a search for the point of view which discloses the best qualities. If we were required to name the one thing which most contributes to the happiness of household life we should unhesitatingly select the disposition on the part of the members of a family to appreciate instead of finding fault with each other; to draw attention to the excellencies of others instead of harping on their defects. Such a disposition is better than money or beauty. It is a perpetual joy to the possessor, and it brightens the circle of everyone who comes within its orbit.

A Blind Hymn Writer. The oldest and best known hymn writer now living is a blind woman, Fanny Crosby of Park Avenue, this city. Her byms, "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour," "Rescue the Perishing," "Saviour, More Than Life to Me" and "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross," are known and sung where ever the English language is spoken, and, although blind from infancy, she has composed more than 3000 others. She is now sixty-five years of age, and before she made hymn-writing her life work was for many years a teacher of the blind. All of her poetical efforts are dictated to a secretary, and so faithful is her memory that she often composes a dozen or more hymns before she dictates them to her assistant. Her disposition is a sunny, hopeful one, and her cosy home is the abiding-place of cheerfulness and contentment. -New York Herald.

What to With a Bad Temper. Starve it. Give it nothing to feed on. Grow angry, do not yield to the temptation. It may for a moment or two be difficult to control yourself; but try it. Force yourself to do nothing, to say nothing, and the rising temper will be obliged to go down because it has nothing to hold it up. The person who can and does control tongue, hand, heart, in the face of great provocation is a hero. The world may not owe him or her as such; but God does. The Bible says that he that ruleth his spirit is better than he who has taken a city. What is gained by yielding to temper? For a minute there is a feeling of relief; but soon comes a sense of sorrow and shame; with a wish that the temper had been controlled. Friends are separated by a bad temper, trouble is caused by it, and pain is given to others as well as to self. That pain, too, often lasts for days, even years—sometimes for life. An outburst of temper is like the bursting of a steam-bulder; it is impossible to tell before hand what will be the result. The evil done may never be mended. Starve your temper. It is not worth keeping alive. Starve it.

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