

he had forged. The aid of the prince remained too important for him, just as he in turn had become an invaluable asset to the lords who under the aegis of his New Evangel plundered the churches, robbed monasteries, and depleted for their own riotous excesses the ancient funds accumulated for purposes of charity and religion by the successive generations of the Faithful.

Luther's greatest disappointment, however, was to see the application of his own methods by other sectaries. Here, in fact, we come upon one of the strangest psychological phenomena in history. Although he openly acknowledged the difficulty of private interpretation there can hardly be any doubt that Luther entirely deceived himself into the belief that once men had rejected the ancient Faith they would all invariably interpret the Scriptures in precisely his own sense. Only the evil-minded would fall to do so. Private interpretation, as conceived by him, would imply nothing more than that all men must now read out of the Scriptures exactly what he had read into them. Hence his violent denunciation of all sectaries who differed from him as "heretics," "fanatics," and "blasphemers," guilty of an unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

If the same self-delusion did not exist on the part of his followers, they at least fully shared with him the inconsistency of persecuting those who presumed to follow a private interpretation different from their own. Wherever a prince or a municipal council could be found to adopt the new creed that at once set themselves to the task of interpreting, banishing or delivering over to execution such as followed their own principle of private interpretation. Unfortunately, it was seldom difficult to find municipal councils or local rulers who had not long been greedy to find a suitable pretext for seizing upon the goods of the Church and of the poor. Religion was of but slight importance in determining such actions. The conditions which now arose are admirably described in an editorial for the Luther quadr-centenary, that appeared in the Protestant Episcopal organ, the Living Church:

"The Bible," said Luther, "belongs to all, and so far as is necessary for salvation is clear enough, but also dark enough for souls that pry and seek to know more" (quoted in Beard, *Hibbert Lect.*, p. 124). Zwingli and Calvin both cordially acquiesced; but when Luther and Zwingli tested the doctrine by their greatly differing teachings concerning the Holy Communion, Luther observed that if other people did not see things as he did it was their own fault, while Zwingli took refuge in calling names. Then both of them fell on the Anabaptists and the Socinians, both of whom cordially accepted the same "Bible only" principle, yet reached conclusions radically different from those of either Luther or Zwingli and then fought with equal violence against these others who did not deduce the same results from their reading of the Bible. The doctrine has run its course through four centuries and has produced the rationalism which so greatly characterized the German theology of the day before Germany fell, and which led to that divorce between theology and morals that created the super man and the whole Nietzschean philosophy. (April 15, 1921.)

As a striking example of this spirit let us take the man most familiarly known perhaps among all the Reformers after Luther, the man of whom Michelet wrote in the tenth volume of his *Histoire de France*: "If in any country of Europe there is a cry for blood and for a man who will torture, burn and murder, that man is at Geneva, ready and willing. He will begin by giving thanks to God and singing songs in his praise." It is Calvin, of course, to whom he refers.

With a feeling of terror and revulsion we read of the imprisonment, trial and execution of Servetus brought about by Calvin. The former had denied the mystery of the Trinity, but his great crime was that he had openly attacked the teachings of Calvin. Cast into prison by the latter's efforts, he lay there for weeks upon the foul straw of his dungeon, infested by vermin. When he prayed at last for the charity of being supplied with a shirt and some linen, the city council was willing to offer this slight relief; but Calvin induced them to refuse it. From the pulpit he thundered against his victim until he had compassed the condemnation of the unhappy man. "When the prison doors were opened," says J. M. Stone, "the people saw a figure like a corpse coming towards them. His hair had grown quite white in his dungeon; he looked like a very old man, though he was not quite forty-five. Some of the faces of the crowd were wet with tears." As the poor wretch cast himself upon the ground before the stake at which he was to be burned and pitifully bit the dust, Farel, the Calvinist minister, shouted to the crowd: "Behold him in the hands of the devil, who will not let him go." Here, in fine, is the concluding scene as given in Stone's thoroughly documented work, "Reformation and Renaissance."

"The feet of the sufferer were soon buried in flames, while his head was enveloped in sulphur and smoke, through which his lips were seen to move in prayer. When the fire reached his face, a terrible rattle was heard in his throat so that the people standing around shuddered with horror. Some of the men moved with pity, ran to help the executioner suffocate him with burn-

ing logs. One more sound issued from the midst of the pile, "Jesus, Son eternal, have pity on me!" Then all was still, and Calvin closed the window at which he had been sitting to watch the last agony of his hated victim." (pp. 335-336.)

Zwingli, too, the third of the great trio of reformers, knew how to make use of the city magistracy to promote his own form of religion in the canton of Zurich, while the greed, licentiousness and cruelty of Henry VIII. are sufficiently notorious. Under Edward VI. the Reformation itself was promulgated in England. It was finally established under Elizabeth. Mr. Arthur Pentz, in "A Gildsman's Interpretation of History," thus sketches the course of events from the viewpoint of a critic with neither Catholic nor Protestant affiliations:

"The Protestant religion," says Cobbett, "was established by gibbets, racks and ripping knives." A series of acts of Parliament were passed which by degrees put down the Catholic worship and reintroduced the Protestant form as it existed under Edward VI. Catholics were compelled to attend Protestant worship under enormous penalties, and when this act failed an act was passed compelling all persons to take the oath of supremacy, acknowledging her (Elizabeth) as the Pope supreme in spiritual matters on pain of death. Thus were thousands of people condemned to death for no other crime than adhering to the religion of their fathers, the religion, in fact, in which Elizabeth herself had professed to believe until she became queen and had turned against it, not from conscientious motives, but from considerations of convenience. "Elizabeth," says Cobbett, "put, in one way or another, more persons to death in one year, for not becoming apostates to the religion which she had sworn to be hers, and to be the only true one, than Mary put to death in the whole of her reign. . . . Yet the former is called or has been called 'good Queen Bess,' and the latter 'bloody Queen Mary.'" (p. 188.)

That severe penalties were at times inflicted upon heretics by Catholic princes, although not by the Church herself, we will know. Yet much is made of a few notorious instances that have been proved to be purely political. And when all the evidence is taken for the time of the Reformation itself, it will be found that a far larger liberty existed in Catholic regions, while the spirit of persecution was intensely bitter in all the countries of the Reformation. Catholic princes, it must be remembered, were never given theocratic power which Luther bestowed upon his princes. Against the Catholic conditions, the case of Queen Mary is often cited as an extreme example. Of her Mr. Pentz says:

"Mary was a devout Catholic. She sought the restoration of the Roman religion and the suppression of the Protestant sects to which the leading reformers and plunderers belonged. Altogether, 286 persons were put to death during her reign. Some of these may have been martyrs to their opinions, but the majority were the sectaries who had plundered the monasteries and who had sought by treachery to destroy the Queen herself." (p. 179.)

All in all, no reasonable historian can refuse to accept Dr. Cram's conclusion that: "Politically and socially, the inevitable outcome of the Renaissance and Reformation was absolutism and tyranny, with force as the recognized arbiter of action." That much we may consider as established beyond any doubt.

But there is still one fact to which special attention must be given. Nothing is more clear than the continual defense on the part of Catholic philosophers and theologians of the doctrine of popular supremacy and government by consent during the centuries immediately preceding and following the Reformation. It was to this strictly Catholic doctrine, to which the nations of the earth have again returned in modern days, that the Reformation sought to give the death blow. Congregationalists, it is true, still preserved the old Catholic guild traditions; Parsons, Cotton, and the Calvinists for a time drew similar ideas from the writings of those great Catholic spokesmen of democracy, the Jesuits, Suarez and Cardinal Bellarmine. But it was the Reformation that originated and supported the doctrine of the Divine right of Kings, while the "Conferences" of the Jesuit Father Persons, with their defense of democratic principles, were credited by such writers as the ultra-royalist Seller, in 1690, "with being the pestiferous source 'whence most of our modern enemies of the true rights of princes have borrowed both their arguments and their authorities.'" Government by consent, acknowledged in the Middle Ages and espoused in principle by all the leading writers in Catholic times, was stamped out by the Reformation, and in the "spacious days" that followed it was almost universally regarded as the "damnable doctrine of the Jesuits."

So it came about that the ideals of popular government were killed outright by the Reformers, and State and Church alike were delivered, shackled, into the hands of autocratic rulers, who were taught to invoke a Divine right. The prince was to decide the religion of his subjects. Luther had given the authority for this, although he meant such powers to be used by Lutheran princes only. But men were more logical than that. Politically and economically, the poor peasants were everywhere rendered more helpless than before. In various Reformation

countries they were again reduced to practical slavery or serfdom. The city workers, too, fared worse than ever, as the greatest English Protestant authority upon this subject, James E. Thorold Rogers, repeatedly shows in his many volumes. Autocratic capitalism was entrenched with a ruthless power. Little children were worked the mines from fourteen to sixteen hours under the lash of their drivers, and pauper children were taken from their parents and hired out in gangs like slaves and transferred to distant mining centers. Yet the Reformed religion raised no voice against these criminal proceedings. With the absorption of the goods of church and monastery, or guilds and pious foundations by the newly Reformed autocrats, pauperism, in its true sense, for the first time made its leprous appearance. The movement for popular rights that followed in more modern times was not an outgrowth of the Reformation, but a reaction against these results. In all its best expressions it is purely a return to Catholic, pre-Reformation principles.

TARDY AT MASS

Many people are falling into the deplorable habit of being late for Mass. With some it follows from irregularity in their methods of living. They have never disciplined themselves. Their meals are never taken at regular intervals. They have no stated hour for rising or retiring. They have no idea of punctuality.

If they have an appointment with another they do not scruple to make him waste his time waiting in vain for them. If they go to work they are continually being fined for late coming or lying in at the last moment, are utterly unprepared to begin their task with the proper composure and so waste sinfully their employers' time. If they have to catch a train they usually miss the one they aimed at as they pass their time amid the usually unattractive surroundings of a waiting room unconcerned as to the amount of anxiety, delay and trouble their failure will cause at their ultimate destination. They are human driftwood and would have to be remanded to the reform school to begin their task with the proper composure and so waste sinfully their employers' time. If they have to catch a train they usually miss the one they aimed at as they pass their time amid the usually unattractive surroundings of a waiting room unconcerned as to the amount of anxiety, delay and trouble their failure will cause at their ultimate destination. They are human driftwood and would have to be remanded to the reform school to begin their task with the proper composure and so waste sinfully their employers' time.

With others this obnoxious habit springs from presumption. In their homes, at their work, in office, shop or schoolroom they are models because subject to personal supervision and scrutiny. The watchful eyes of an immediate superior being eliminated they play upon the indulgence of the Unseen God.

Others still are steering close to the wind. They appreciate the difference between moral and venial sin and have the leaning that is fatal. They know the dividing line between fulfilling the obligation and not fulfilling it. So they go on trifling with God, not remembering that he who despises little sins shall fall gradually into the greater. Their service of God is not prompted by love but fear.

Another and a disreputable class is made up of those who deliberately calculate to arrive after the instructions or sermon, and so deliberately expose themselves to the danger of committing mortal sin.

Then there are those with whom the hearing of Mass is simply a matter of routine or environment and who are indifferent as to any sin.

At the back of the minds of all these is a perceptible decay of Faith. If they really understood the Mass and believed in it; and if, furthermore, they had an adequate idea of the weight of God's command to worship Him publicly and their obligation to correspond to that precept, we are sure that they would not insult Him or flout His order. To be late for Mass in greater or less degree is by that degree to profess a duller Faith. As it is by Faith we live, such dullness is a mark of lowered vitality, says Our Sunday Visitor.

It might be added that the late comers are usually the first to rush out of the house of God before the last prayers are finished.—The Monitor.

HOLINESS

A noted spiritual writer gives the following simple and easy measures of attaining sanctity in every-day life: To do a little better every day. Do not try to do more, but better. An attempt to do more often hampers us, weakens us, and makes us conceited, but the attempt to do better only satisfies. Let us say, for example: Today I will say such a prayer with more attention. I will perform such a duty more carefully, or I shall be more gentle with some friend or relative. Resolve upon one amendment and faithfully carry it out.

To take up our duties vigorously in a whole-hearted way. A saint used to say: "It is easier than to accomplish them with better humor."

To give a little time to recollection each day. A few moments spent in prayerful meditation every morning, in order to arm ourselves for combat and labor during the day.

To be less anxious for news and useless information. Idle knowledge, a desire to know what some individual has done, what he thinks, or what he has said of us, a desire to be first to give news, an eager seeking for news, talking only to display our information—these and acts of like nature disturb the soul, fill it with idle vanities, and leave it far behind in the path of sanctity.

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To visit the Blessed Sacrament more frequently. Visit Our Lord every day for a few moments, go to Him as a counselor, to ask advice, as a king and faithful friend to whom we must say a word of thanks. We always feel the effects of a visit to the Blessed Sacrament; and sometimes in moments of discouragement it suffices to go to the door of the church to feel one's heart strengthened.

To work with energy, but avoiding over-eagerness. Act always with reflection. Spite never do anything by halves. They finish everything even to the last letter of the word.

To multiply acts of kindness. These are coin with which we purchase heaven. Let us not despise the most insignificant; it is just these we should multiply; they cost so little and are hardly noticeable. They are the pennies; they seem insignificant, but if we faithfully gather them we soon become rich. Our angel guardians are appointed to gather all our kind, considerate, obliging acts and bear them to heaven where they are rolling up interest for us.—The Sentinel of The Blessed Sacrament.

GRIEVOUS EVILS

AND DOWNRIGHT REMEDIES

On all sides one hears lamentation as loud as it is late over the endangered morality of the rising generation. Even the writers for the society columns of the secular press are confessing themselves appalled at the low moral standards to which young women are consenting and which young girls are employing in their relations with the men of their acquaintance.

To find the remedy is far more difficult than to point out the cause, which is obviously the failure of parental authority. The world has long sneered at the sheltered care which the Catholic Church claims as the sacred duty of fathers and mothers in the rearing of a Christian family. The contempt of that same world has long been extended to the office of chaplain, now practically obsolete, or at least considered as a quaint, medieval practice curiously surviving among gentle folk of the Latin race.

Unquestionably the attitude of the world has been strengthened by the entrance on so large a scale of our women into the industrial world. Finally, also a factor not to be ignored has been the sentiment falsely ascribed to a modern spirit of independence—that a girl is quite as capable as a man of "taking care of herself."

The substratum of truth in these last two reasons has disguised the evil of the world's promptings in this matter. There are few people now in a position to know the state of public morality, who are not willing to admit that grievous condition of the evil is made manifest in the dress and conduct of many girls and young women at the present time. The suggestive state of undress of women on the dance floor, the brazen love-making even on public highway, the unchaste intimacy between boys and girls with no thought of courtship or marriage, these are conditions to which no one charged with public welfare can be indifferent. They are conditions indeed which are the serious concern of every God-fearing citizen of this republic. Certainly, they are the obvious business of all preachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Catholic parents can plead no excuse of ignorance when the shadow of such reproach falls on their home and on the daughter of their house. The spirit of the world is indeed insidious, but in season and out of season, the Catholic Church has voiced the solemn warnings of her divine Founder against this grievous contagion. The great body of people outside the Catholic Church, whether by education or prejudice, has long disregarded her monitions of this danger which is today so readily acknowledged as a reality. The Catholic parent, however, who has allowed the lure of fashion, the call of passion, and the craving for the world's excitement to supplant the dictates of both religion and common sense and to subvert the divinely ordained control of their children's conduct, must indeed be conscious of a failure so terrible as to rob of peace their declining years of this life and make heavy with dread the hour of their summons to the judgment seat of God.

With what success this worldly spirit makes its way among our Catholic young people is most pitifully portrayed in the conduct of some who have had every advantage of Catholic education and splendid opportunities of Catholic culture,

and who, moreover, seek with becoming frequency the grace and help of Holy Communion, and yet are known to vie in the extravagance of their costuming and the shamelessness of their dancing, with the pagan worldlings who have never known the inspiration of Catholic friendship with our Lord and His Virgin Mother.

Grievous evils require downright remedies. These Catholic girls abasing Christian education, bringing reproach upon the Catholic name and its high standard of maiden modesty, must return to the consecrated rules of right living or be prepared to bear their condemnation, lest the taint of their bad example spread evil and be used by the enemies of religion to the great detriment of souls. Parents should take heed in time lest the sorrow come to their home of the censure of the Church of God. The Church is a tender and long-forebearing Mother, but must always take thought and means to protect from the infection of evil those still obedient to her voice. Those, therefore, who will not hear her cannot be spared once they become a menace to the innocent and a threat to the fair name and honor of Catholic virtue.—Catholic Standard and Times.

REBUKE BOLSHEVISM

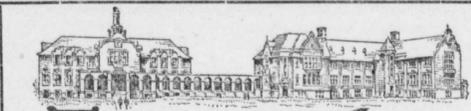
The outstanding feature of the Italian election was the severe rebuke administered to Bolshevism in Italy. The fear of further spread of revolutionary doctrines in Italy which was so alarming a year ago has now disappeared, and the hopes of the Soviets for control of another European country have been effectively shattered. Next in importance was the success of the Popular or Catholic party. The Catholic membership in the Italian Chamber of Deputies has been increased from ninety-nine to one hundred and nine.

Steady popular progress and democratic ideas have made great headway in Italy. In this happy consummation of Italian hopes and aspirations no one is deserving of so great credit as Our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XV. From the very beginning, His Holiness has steadfastly opposed the wave of revolutionary doctrine that threatened to sweep over Italy. In his encyclicals, addresses, and letters, he has pointed out the folly of violence, urged a closer union between employers and workers, and impressed the Catholic populace of Italy with true Christian social principles.

His letter to the Bishop of Bergamo, his address to the Catholic Women of Italy, his councils on frequent occasions to the Italian people in times of grave crisis, have had their effect, and the success of the Popular party and the triumph of democratic ideals in the Italian elections are a tribute to the vision and firm adherence to the fundamental principles that have characterized the illustrious Pontificate of Pope Benedict. Today in Italy there is evident a respect for religion, for the family and for property, and a resolute opposition to materialism, to divorce, and to Socialism in all its forms.

It should hearten the world long wearied by the apparently successful sweep of Sovietism in other European countries, to receive the news from the Italian elections, that anarchy has lost and the cause of order has won. Italy with her thirty five millions of people is now in a strong position. She has emerged triumphant from war, and

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