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STARBUCK ON LUTHER'S MORALS

(Sacred Heart Review)

Protestants excuse themselves from paying attention to the damning facts adduced by Jannsen concerning Luther and the Lutheran Reformation, and to some extent concerning the Calvinistic Reformation, on the ground that he garbles. This is a very convenient plea, especially when no proof is given, as none is offered even by Professor Nippold. However, the assertion bars us from citing passages the sense of which might be changed by fuller quotation. Nevertheless, unluckily for Luther, and sometimes for his associates, there are a good many passages which speak too unpleasantly in themselves to be ruled out in this way. I will give some of these, and if anybody can prove by their context that they do not mean what they say, let him set about it.

"Faith justifies before love, and without love."

This passage is not sheltered under any plea of an altering context. We are only assured that it does not mean what the words say.

Why? Nobody disputes that Luther has an extraordinary command of language, and is perfectly capable of making his meaning clear.

But, it is pleaded, Luther is too good a man to have taught that he can be justified by an unloving faith.

John Wesley was too good a man to teach this, but the very point in question is this, Was Luther a good man?

He was undoubtedly a very religious man, but the Bible teaches us that religion without morality only deepens our condemnation. The ancient votaries of Bacchus and Venus were profoundly religious. Their orgies were regular revival services, but their religion only fitted them for a deeper hell.

In our own time Henry Ward Beecher was a very religious man, but his religion did not restrain him from adultery, as Mrs. Tilton herself at length confessed. He finally flung out angrily against the Ten Commandments from his very pulpit. "Can't we have something better than this everlasting not?" he exclaims. Unfortunate this, for a man who is sufficiently shown, according to the familiar phrase, to have taken the not out of the Commandments and put it into the Creed.

Luther was no adulterer, yet Melancthon represents his relations to the runaway nuns who harbored with him as being, in his own words, by no means those of a "decent man," although he seems to imply that the matrimonial hopes of the ladies made them careful not to betray themselves.

I have seen the following cited as from Luther, quite in Henry Ward Beecher's style. "Christ came to abolish, not the Ceremonies only, but the Commandments." However, as I have not verified this, and as Jannsen does not quote it, we will let it hang as apocryphal, although it is in full agreement with Luther's general doctrine of Justification.

Really, we should suppose, from some people's talk, that Luther was such an idiotic innocent, that his own followers did not know what he meant, but took up an immoral doctrine of justification quite against their Founder's intention. Certain it is, that, even in the next century, George Calixtus, conciliatory as he was, had to acknowledge that Lutheranism, while urging love and good works,—it was only a passing Lutheran school which warned the faithful against the Decalogue as prejudicial to salvation—nevertheless held that they are not absolutely necessary to justification, "either in life or death." It is Bossuet who has drawn attention to this, which is doubtless a main reason why Protestants dislike the "Variations" so much.

The passage in which Luther denounces unmarried chastity as an hypocritical pretence, a mere moral and physical impossibility, is too long and too emphatic and too variously expressed to be set aside on any pretext of garbling, while it is too fearfully indecent to be quoted. I once undertook to translate it for a male friend, but for very shame had to desist.

This gives Bossuet occasion again for one of those pungent thrusts which are

so very uncomfortable to us. This particular stroke is the more odious because so incontestably justified by the fact. The great Bishop remarks, that when a man proclaims to all the world that unmarried chastity is an hypocrisy and an impossibility, he does not in the least prove his contention, but that he is unquestionably a competent witness against himself. Now Luther was born in 1483, and married in 1525. He tells us (and we have no reason to discredit him) that his earlier monastic life was perfectly blameless. Then, when did he come to the discovery that unmarried chastity was impossible—for him? It must have been in the latter part of his monastic, or in the earlier part of his reformatory life.

Yet Luther elsewhere assures us that there were many monks in whom the love of God and Christ extinguished evil desire. To be sure, he tells us that they were in a state of damnation. Yet he does not allege that their perdition came from their having sunk out of their purity of life. He assures us that they were damned because they lived too early to have opportunity to be saved by his gospel of justification by faith without either love or good works.

Here, we see, we have two contradictory passages from Luther concerning unmarried chastity. Of course, then, one of them is what he would call an "edifying and salutary lie," for the benefit of the true religion. Of course, we can not find the lie in his eulogy on the chaste monks. That would not be working in his interest. We must find it on the other side. Yet, as Bossuet remarks, we cannot attribute falsehood to that part of this declaration which dishonors himself. Luther, indeed, cares little for holiness, or for the reputation of holiness, but it is not in human nature for a religious leader to profess himself worse than he is.

Pecuniary disinterestedness, freedom from ambition, and courage in helping the plague-stricken, are unquestionably virtues of Luther.

Truthfulness is no part of his moral creed, if he can be said to have a moral creed. He declares that an active Papist, being only one degree from an actual devil, can not possibly be slandered, and that a Protestant who will prefer truth to the advantage of the Reformation, is a contemptible creature. He applied this to Philip of Hesse, because the Landgrave, having with Luther's reluctant consent, contracted a bigamous marriage, would not solemnly deny that he was a bigamist, and would not declare that his secondary wife was a mere concubine.

Towards the common people, he and Melancthon also, have nothing but a merciless contempt. They would fain have them reduced to slavery, "bought and sold like other cattle," "kept on floggings and short rations like asses," or driven hither or thither like hogs. The princes are exhorted to be unremitting in "hanging, heading, breaking on the wheel." So only, the two Reformers declare, can the German peasantry—a people singularly mild and submissive,—be kept in some sort of order. The peasant's revolt undoubtedly somewhat palliates, but nothing can excuse this hideous language. The detailed and cold-blooded manner in which Melancthon proposed the enslavement of the peasants is even worse than the passionate outbreaks of Luther.

The character of Luther, therefore, certainly does not contradict the natural meaning of his formula of Justification

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The stomach gives out about a pint of gastric juice to digest each meal. If you take another pint of tea, wine or water, then the digestive juices are too diluted to properly digest the food.

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A STINGING REBUKE TO AN APOSTATE SLANDERER

By the Protestant Mayor of Memphis

A few years ago when the A. P. A. was rampant, the notorious "Father Slattery" was engaged by that un-American society to "lecture" in the Southern cities. It was arranged that the campaign of slander should begin in Memphis, Tenn.

The Catholic population of that beautiful, progressive city have always been remarkable for their intelligence and patriotism, and are foremost in politics, education and business. The Irish-American element have always been noted for a manly determination to protect themselves from slander, no matter from what quarter it proceeds. To them must be accorded the honor of being the first to compel the management of a theatre to take off the boards a play that was a travesty on Irish womanhood. In this they were led by a former Chicago man, William Fitzgerald, the publisher of a Catholic journal, which is edited by his talented wife.

The coming of Slattery was announced by insulting posters. His press agent was ingenious and industrious. The columns of the local press were filled with accounts of the terrible things threatened by members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and other Catholic organizations. It is needless to say that these reports were false, and yet the Associated Press, which is always willing to work overtime when there are falsehoods against the Catholic Church to be circulated, convinced the public that Memphis was in a state of war. Slattery was represented as a martyr, a victim of a modern Inquisition, and the right of "free speech" was to be utterly abolished. The game worked well. The citizens of Memphis believed that there would be trouble, and many a man who did not care a straw for Slattery or his falacious diatribes was anxious to save him from the "men of buckram," who were going to stone him.

The saddest thing about the affair was that Protestant ministers espoused the cause of the reprobate.

As the night of the lecture drew near, the excitement grew intense, and at last even many Catholics believed that there would be trouble. Then the deputations began to invade the Mayor's office. The Chief of Police was a Catholic. He knew that apprehensions of violence were groundless. The other side pretended to be suspicious of him.

The morning Slattery was billed to arrive, a deputation of ministers waited upon the Mayor. They were dreadfully in earnest. They insisted that a body of "trusted" special police should be appointed to guard the lecturer. The Mayor at least believed that the situation was alarming. He assured the ministerial deputation that he would give the matter his personal attention, and requested them to return in one hour. The Mayor was a man of superb culture and liberality, one of the leading citizens of Memphis, and deserving of the confidence which all classes reposed in him. He at once sought the Catholic pastors and some of the leading Catholic laymen. When the ministers returned, his plans were made. He told them the course he intended to follow. He intended to take charge of "Father" Slattery him-

(Continued on page 3)

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Not intending to get left, he made a jump, just cleared the rail, and landing heavily on his head, was rendered unconscious for a few minutes.

When he recovered, he stood up, looked back at the wharf, and exclaimed: "Jabez! what a lape."

A pretty story of Oyama of the Japanese army has been told of late. During his service as judge advocate at Tokio he attended a ball one night. He was standing near the doorway at this ball when a beautiful European woman swept by, and so greatly did her charm impress Judge Oyama that he exclaimed involuntarily: "What a lovely woman."

She overheard him. With a little smile, she looked back over her white shoulder, and recognizing him she said: "What an excellent judge!"—Casket.

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