

PROTESTANT CONTROVERSY.

From Luther's posting up of the Theses at Wittenberg, in 1517, till the Diet of Spire, in 1529, twelve years, Dean Hodges passes rapidly over the ground, and says lightly, that I as a Protestant, have occasion to criticize them.

The only thing which I might take exception to is the Dean's declaration that Luther wielded a pen as sharp as a sword point. That might well be said of Pascal, but hardly of Luther. His ponderous abstinence might rather be likened to the tremendously crushing club of the legendary giant Rubezahl, supposed to haunt the neighboring Bohemian mountains. One might almost take the miner's son for an embodiment of Rubezahl, colossal, capable of freakish benevolence, but more congenially inclined to smite and destroy.

The note of obsequiousness, remarks the Dictionary of National Biography, was always found in everything of Cranmer's. This note of brutality, it might be truly said, was found in every word of Luther's, almost from the beginning and quite to the end. Heinrich Heine speaks of "the sublime brutality of Brother Martin" as something without which the Reformation could not have been carried through.

What over its providential use — and good and evil alike have their providential use — brutality, mountainous brutality, above all in controversy, is more conspicuously the characteristic of Luther than anything else. Undoubtedly this was largely by the note of the age, but in Luther it was gathered up into a portentousness which appalled adversaries and companions, Catholics, Calvinists and the less ferocious of the Lutherans.

Dr. Hodges says that the edict of Charles V., passed at Worms, was revoked at the Diet of Nuremberg, and re-enacted at the Diet of Spire. I have no very distinct recollections of the action at Nuremberg, but judging from Dean Hodges' proneness to historical accident, we may be reasonably confident that he has got things wrong here. An edict of the Emperor, formally not to be revoked except by the Emperor. Now Charles, although compelled to postpone, and in the end virtually to give up the execution of his decree against Luther, never revoked it.

At the Diet of Spire, in 1529, I observe that it was not any action at Nuremberg, but the imperial edict of Spire, given in 1526, on which the Lutherans chiefly rested. Therefore, Kaiser allows the various princes and cities to deal with their religion as they would, "standing answerable to God and the Emperor," until final order should be taken. In 1529, Charles, complaining that this edict had been abused, revokes it. He does not proscribe Lutheranism, but, speaking as an orthodox Catholic, forbids all persons to use violence to propagate the new and erroneous opinions. This seems to leave it open for Catholics to use violence to restrain the new opinions.

Had the edict been left in this form the Lutherans might well have been deeply aggrieved. In fact, however, the Diet made a very different thing of it. In its final shape, as remodelled by the Catholic Estates, and by the tolerant King Ferdinand, the Emperor's brother and representative, it secured to the Lutherans the full liberty to use their own teaching and worship within their own territory. It simply stipulated that Catholics living in Lutheran territory should not be deprived of their church property and jurisdiction, and should not be molested in the accustomed exercise of their religion, in public and private.

It would be hard for Dean Hodges, or anybody else, to make out in this Recess of the Diet — so called, I suppose, because continuing in force after adjournment — an infringement on religious freedom. Melancthon sees no such thing in it. Says he (Corpus Reform. I, 1059 Jansen III, 138): "The articles proposed in the Diet of the Diet are no grievances to us. In fact, they give us better protection than the resolution of the former Diet," of Spire.

Against this Recess the Lutheran princes and cities entered a solemn Protest, from which, first all the Lutherans then the Calvinists and Zwinglians, finally even the Anabaptists and Socinians, have derived the name of Protestants. This was not a protest in championship of religious liberty, as Dean Hodges innocently gives out, but a protest against it. A protest against intolerance was wholly superfluous, for the Recess was embodied to molest the Lutherans and the Lutherans to molest the Catholics. What else should it have done? It forbade the Lutherans to secularize church property not already appropriated, to meddle with abbeys, canonries or bishoprics still subsisting, whether within or without Lutheran territory. Such confiscations had been going steadily on almost from the beginning of the new movement. At no time, from 1520 till 1635, the year of the final crash, did the Lutheran authorities allow themselves bound by the limits of their own jurisdiction, where religion was concerned. They sometimes, indeed, gave a passing assent to restriction, but never observed it in fact, or owned it in principle. Their steady form of speech to the Catholics was: "You are bound to tolerate our religion, because ours is the truth. We have no right to interfere with your religion, because yours is idolatry." The utmost stretch of courtesy to which they could bring themselves was to use the address: "The princes and cities of the true religion, to the princes and cities of the other religion." All restrictions they put aside, on the ground that it is the duty of all Christians to extend the true faith. That Christians have no right to extend the faith by force, above all in foreign territory, was a thought which they never allowed to enter their heads.

Hallam says, as I have seen him quoted, that his study of the Reformation had engendered in him a deep disgust, on account of its rooted intolerance. The history of Germany, for almost a century after the first natural and unostentatious attempts to apply the old means against the new heresy, is one steady plea, on the part of the Emperor and the Catholic princes, for toleration of the old religion, in exchange for their toleration of the new. This steady plea met with a steady refusal. The Lutherans, being Germans, were not so sanguinary as Spaniards, but they were quite as resolute in saying to the adherents of the opposite creed, *Non licet esse vos*, "You have no right to exist."

It is no wonder, therefore, that we have derived our name of Protestants from the solemn Protest offered by us, at Spire, in 1529, against religious liberty. If Dean Hodges exactly inverts the transaction, I suppose we must excuse it, because

"That's Stonewall Jackson's way."

The Lutheran princes declared that for cogent causes and complaints they could not assent "to all the terms and conditions of the Recess, which had been undertaken against God and His Holy Word." It is against their unrestrained power of covering the Catholics, "and against the former Imperial Recess of Spire. They meant to govern themselves by this." The edict of 1526 left them a freehand to persecute in their own dominions, which the edict of 1529 took away. This was unendurable. They were fully determined to suppress the ancestral religion in their own territories, and just as fast and far as possible in the other cities and principalities, above all in the ecclesiastical which were at once wealthy, unwarlike, and intensely odious to the Lutherans. Therefore, their solemn Protest against the Recess of Spire, which left freedom of worship to them, but took away their power to plunder and persecute. No wonder Melancthon calls this Protest, of which we, in our learned ignorance, are so proud, *eine schreckliche That*, "a terrible deed." It deposited the germ of that steady aggression, refusing to be bound by any convention or compact, which slowly drove the Catholic princes to desperation, and cost Germany more than half her population. Independently of religion, as Professor Gardner points out, there were powerful forces of disintegration working in the Empire, and the combination resulted in the final fearful explosion. Even had the Lutheran princes been far more reasonable than they were, the question of church property in the North would have been almost insoluble.

It seems curious how Dr. Hodges could talk about the Recess of 1529 as re-enactment of the young Emperor's edict of 1521 against Luther, when, as he says, Luther's name is not even mentioned, and when he is virtually, though indirectly, covered and protected by the recess, at least so long as he should remain on Lutheran ground, above all in Saxony.

There is something to be said for those who prefer *pietism* "Christian" to "Protestant." As we see, the origin of the latter term does not seem even to have changed its basis, it still remains loaded with a weight of negativity, which is not an advantage.

THOUGHTS ON THE SACRED HEART.

O Mother of fair love, Mary, thou who dost so ardently desire to see Jesus loved, attach me most intimately to His Divine Heart so that I may never more have the misfortune to find myself separated therefrom.—St. Alphonsus Liguori.

The foreknowledge of Mary's sorrows was not one of the least causes of desolation to the Heart of Jesus.—St. Alphonsus Liguori.

The Child in the crib said no word, and His Heart, full of love for ours, manifested itself only by tears.—St. Francis De Sales.

Faith gives us confidence, confidence leads to love, and love—ushers us into the Heart of Jesus. St. Alphonsus Liguori.

The Heart of Jesus is the Heart of the most faithful and devoted of Friends, the most tender of Fathers, the Heart of a God who possesses all perfections to attract, delight and ravish the soul.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost.

DEATH.

"Lord, my daughter is even now dead." (Matt. 9, 25.)

Again holy Church in the gospels unrolls before our eyes the picture of death: a terrifying picture, it is true, but a very salutary one. For here we learn true wisdom, here we not only see, but we feel that all is vanity, and nothing but vanity except to serve God and to save our souls. Let us carefully examine this frightful picture of death which the Church shows us, and it will certainly be conducive to our salvation.

For this purpose, let us enter the house of death. The room has been darkened, on two chairs we find an open coffin, at the head a crucifix, two burning candles and a vase of holy water. In the coffin we behold with folded hands enclaspings a rosy, departed neighbor or relative whose earthly remains we will look upon for the last time. What a picture of awe and reverence! We carefully recognize his features, for death has transformed them; we carefully recognize his features, for death has transformed them; we carefully recognize his features, for death has transformed them.

Behold, dear Christian, this is your neighbor now, and you will ere long be like to him. "To-day for me," says the dead, "to-morrow for you! As I am now, so will you be; a man of corruption, the food of worms. Where my soul has stood, there yours will stand—before the judgement seat of God. O man, O Christian, save your soul; for die you must, you know not when, you know not where, you know not how, but this you know, if you die in a state of mortal sin, you will be lost for all eternity. You also know if you die in the state of grace, you are saved for ever, for all eternity." Behold, this is the speech which the dead makes to you from his coffin. Terrible words! Oh, that we may understand, and realize them for the salvation of our souls!

When the time for burial has come, the corpse is brought to the church and the priest blesses it. The mourning relatives, friends and neighbors accompany it to its last resting-place. When the bell is tolled, the question is frequently asked: "Who is it?" "Ah," some one will cry, "it is N. N.," he was a good man, he suffered much; his departed soul, and his wife and children." These and similar exclamations of compassion are expressed by friends, but how long do they last? Generally, no longer than the tolling of the bell. Ah, here the words of the pious Job are again verified, "The region of death, is the region of oblivion." What foolishness therefore, to be anxious for the praise and applause of men of whom you may be said: "Out of sight, out of mind?"

Even the nearest relatives who now accompany the corpse with bitter sobs and loud lamentations, will soon forget the deceased; he will be in their memory, as if he never had lived. Sometimes even the tears that are shed at funerals, are false—they are indeed tears of sorrow before the world, but in reality they are tears of joy, because a dear uncle, a darling aunt has finally resolved to take his or her last journey and leave well behind the departed, and his or her labors for the gratitude for the sweet and laborious which the departed underwent to make others rich! The deceased, perhaps, heaped sin upon sin and shamefully neglected the salvation of his soul to accumulate wealth; and now, laughing he takes possession of all and scarcely say an Our Father for him, much less have Masses offered for the repose of his soul. Perhaps, they even curse him in his grave, because he was not more parsimonious to leave them more money. Alas, ingratitude is the reward of the world; how often is not this verified! Let us be wiser and not strive for mammon, but let us with us try to become rich in virtue and good works. May each one present give a portion of the goods with which God has blessed him to the poor, or for some laudable purpose; make provision that Masses may be said for his soul, so that his time of purgation may be shortened and that he may not be the sufferer if forgotten by ungrateful heirs.

When the funeral cortege has arrived at the grave, the pallbearers pause. Amid prayer, the coffin is lowered in the grave, the priest blesses a shovel of earth on the coffin while saying a short prayer for the dead—and then all is at an end. The mourners return home, the grave-diggers close the grave and the dead is left alone in the deep and silent grave. Whilst the deceased was living he required spacious apartments, now he must abide in the bowels of the earth in a cell two feet wide and six feet long. B-hold, dear Christians, this is the end. For us, too, a grave will be prepared, and far sooner than we imagine.

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agine our bodies will be placed deep in the ground, where they will become the food of worms as we are told in the eleventh verse of the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah: "Under thee shall the moth be strewn and worms shall be thy covering."

Oh, vanity of vanities! Why, therefore should we serve this miserable world and idolize its fleeting joys and pleasures! Let us rather lift our eyes above to our true, eternal home, where death will soon take us. Oh, may our whole life be but a pious preparation for eternity! May we die daily to the world, to ourselves and above all to sin, so that we may slumber in the blessed peace of God to awaken in a happy eternity! Amen.

WHISPERING IN CHURCH.

The worst of all kinds of sounds in church is that of human voices not engaged in the service; worst in indecency, worst in moral transgression. Secular conversation is profanity. Comments on the service itself, if favorable and friendly, are impertinent; if critical, are disgraceful; if comical or calculated to provoke laughter, are infamous. For all mutual communication, that appears to be necessary a sufficient forthright would in most instances obviate the necessity. If first they would commonly see that no serious harm would come of keeping still until after the service. The insult lies against his courts, against the authorities of the church, against the congregation. A whisper reaches farther than the whisperer imagines. And wherever it reaches it may rightly stir indignation. It is a form of ill manners, the more deplorable because it is scarcely capable of rebuke and suppression by any other means than a general sense of good behavior and a right education.

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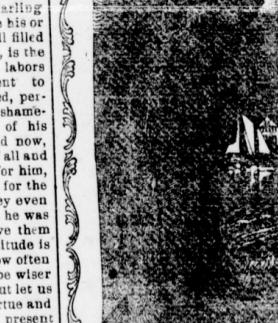
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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

THE STORY OF LITTLE BLANCHE

A Broton Tale.

H. Horn, S. J., in American Messenger of the Sacred Heart for November.

THE ATHEIST AND LITTLE BLANCHE.

I must, dear reader, if you are not afraid to come with me, use an author's privilege, and penetrate into the interior of the Chateau Noir hidden away in the woods between Pechots and Dek, near Quimper, in Brittany. We will enter the old library, and there we shall come upon a scene which, since we are acquainted with the local gossip, might surprise us. The room was large, and looked grave and antique in its appearance and fittings. The old bookcases were of mahogany and had quaint figures carved along their top. There was a large, very large table, filling the middle of the room covered with a red cloth. There were two doors, both protected by curtains, a pair of large folding doors at one end, and a smaller entrance in the side wall. There was a little of the smell of books in the room, but this, a fire of cedar log that burned in the grate, counteracted.

It was about 8 o'clock and the shades of evening had lengthened, and the labels on the old bookcases were growing dimmer and dimmer. At the fire sat a man, musing as he gazed intently at the crackling flames. Could this be M. de Chauncy? There was nothing wizardlike about him. He was a fine broad-shouldered man of about fifty. His face, which was ruddy from his fist, was by no means repulsive. His bright blue eyes, and long, brown beard, now whitening with age, gave his face a pleasant enough appearance. It was the face of a man who looked earnest, who looked as if he had heard that would love and could a tract love: it was the face, too, of a man, whom we might judge to have touch of enthusiasm in his nature. Such might have been our first impression. But as he sat and mused, he left his post behind against his chair, threw forward the lower part of his face, and by degrees gave the whole countenance an unpleasant and ugly look. But that might have been merely an accident of posture. Still his blue eyes did not look as bright and as gazing as we might at first have supposed it to be. The warm-hearted enthusiast seemed to disappear from and something colder took its place. This perhaps was more truly the man than the other. The less agreeable look probably spoke the character rather than the more agreeable, least, so one might have judged, if he ran his eye through the manuscript which was lying on the red cloth of the table close at hand. It was an excellent one to appear in a week or two of a well known French periodical. It was an article on religion, fully in the spirit of the age, full of doubt, full of anxious questions, full of theory, not so full of the latter as some of the writings we see on the same subject. Or, if it was, l'athée had managed to throw a semblance of practical reasoning over his theorizing, which nothing conspicuously wild in the every phrase, which, but for the lack of a great respect shown to the general French nation of the day might have raised the author in estimation as a man of grave and well intentioned views. At least, he was earnest in what he said, and if that was one impression more than another which would remain on the mind of the reader of the essay, it was, the doubts expressed in it could not be a big one in his opinion. The tone of inquiry was too earnest. But, yet a Christian reader who at the same time have felt that he here the work of a man who was truly a pagan than Cicero or P. The superior claims of Christianity were ignored, and the life of C. was treated merely as an interesting episode in the general history of the kind, and as leading to results were worthy of study for the historian and philosopher. There was no exaggeration or malice in any grand divine tradition.

The essay began with a history of religion. The chief features of antiquity were studied with care; their follies pointed out; their follies pointed; their cruelties brought to the morality of their priests criticized and in many places condemned. The seeming need of some religion dwelt upon; the good which each done in its time to the people whom it held sway. Then the author made a sudden and skillful transition. He went forward to an imaginary standpoint in the future, and the way as he had been looking back the religions of ancient times. similarity of his treatment, the man in which he picked out what he pleased to call, the follies and the of the religion of his fathers, the with which he traced the same leading characteristics here, which had found in the pagan creeds of was all well calculated to lead the reader forward to his own more natural phenomena. The finished by drawing some conclusion which he said that everything to confirm, viz., that all religion worship of a Deity came from the deity of man to deity and per he great and mysterious influence which he comes across, and the letian has for the Supreme glorification of his very

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