

PROTESTANT CONTROVERSY.

BY A PROTESTANT MINISTER.

LXXVII.

Sacred Heart Review.

He will now return to Dan Hodges.

The Dean tells us that Luther's character exhibits conscience without courtesy.

The absolute lack of courtesy no one will dispute. It is not with him as with Erasmus, and even with Sir Thomas More, an occasional outbreak of violent contumeliousness, but from at least 1520 on it seems to have been almost unrelenting, absolutely unbounded, laboring in the invention of coarse and violent turns of speech, and unhappily growing worse to the very end.

The quotations which Jansem gives from both Protestants and Catholics of eminence, living in Luther's time, seem to show that these were not merely displeased but deeply depressed by Luther's language, that they recognized it as going fatally beyond all that was to be held permissible, even in that time, to the vehemence of controversy.

Moreover, it was about equally violent towards all parties, towards Catholics, Calvinists, Anabaptists and Jews.

As we know, he died at Eisenberg, where he was born, having gone there to settle a dispute between the lords and the miners.

While there he delivered a sermon against the Jews, which for ferocity could scarcely be matched by the most ferocious anti-Semites of today.

Guerin or the Duke of Orleans would be mere milk and water to it.

Luther, indeed, was as violent towards the Jews as towards the Catholics.

He called on the people to burn down their synagogues "with pitch and hell fire," to take away all their books, even their Hebrew Bibles; to reduce their women, of every degree, to the one business of weaving and spinning; and finally, if they would not be baptized, to drive them one and all over the borders.

How different this was from his earlier contemporary, Savonarola, who did, indeed, set up again those beneficent institutions of St. Antonio, the *monti di pietà*, to deliver the people from Jewish exactions, but who left the Jews in peace, and who imposed conditions on his savings banks that were meant to drive all spendthrifts and gamblers over to Hebrew tender mercies.

As concerns conscience, we have seen that while, being neither covetous nor greedy of rank, he would in all private transactions have doubtless been found perfectly upright, his teachings, and some extent his example, concerning the centre of human life, the family, are such as can not be disclosed at full length.

His words that we have cited, and still more that we have not dared to cite, are veritable "depths of Satan."

We have examined his public life, and have found that there he deliberately, with frank shamelessness, declares himself emancipated from all obligations of conscience towards the Papacy, while he shows himself divorced from all sense of mercy towards the peasants.

How was it in his early life? Doctor Hodges describes it as exhibiting two main features, a yearning to do right, and a fear of God, the latter passing into an immense fear of hell.

The latter no one will dispute that he had. It seems to have been quite as abject as it was in that most unspiritual and tyrannical man, Lewis the Fourteenth, which astonished even the foreign ambassadors, men probably not of eminent godliness.

It is true, however, that the young Luther had a longing desire to do right. Perhaps so. I know little of Luther's youth, except what Moris d'Aubigné and Sir James Stephen have said, besides, of course, any number of Protestant pieces, and also Jansem's searching examination. Doctor Hodges may have sources unknown to me, at least, considering how little he seems to have studied Luther's later life, I doubt whether he knows any more than I about his earlier.

We may very fairly argue back so far as this, that if maturity shows an utter lack of the love of excellence, it is not likely to have shown many budding in youth.

Now from all that I have been able to make out from what Luther says of his youth, especially in the cloister, it was much less a sense of coming short of the divine perfection that tormented him, of which he seems to show so little later on, than a simple fear of being damned.

He says, indeed, no doubt with perfect truth, in the cloister he "lived a chaste and well ordered life, of perfect obedience to his superiors." However, had his dejection proceeded from a sense of his shortcomings in holiness, what would have given him peace? Naturally a sense of the infinite provision found in Christ, first for forgiveness, then for over-abounding grace towards growth in holiness.

Now he stops short with the first, and takes little or no account of the last. His theory of justification was thoroughly formed while yet an accepted friar, and it never varied.

It was simply this. Every Christian, he argues, of course believes that in Jesus Christ full provision is made for the forgiveness of every baptized man. Yet how shall you or I know that we personally are justified? The first inquiry, one would think, would be this, How shall I be justified in fact? Surely it is of much more account to be right than to know that I am right. If I am really right, the consciousness of rightness will naturally grow stronger and stronger within me. If I am in the true road, I shall be sure to find it out in time, so I really living in growing conformity with the mind of God, then, as my being is made for this, the fact will disclose

itself more and more to my consciousness in an increasing peace, so far as human mutability and imperfection does not trouble it.

This growing peace would realize itself more and more within me even if I never once asked myself reflexively the question, Do I know that am justified?

The radiation of the Holy Spirit within the heart is its own witness, not the turning back upon ourselves. The early Methodists, although theoretically they professed to believe with Luther, yet really, as Mr. W. S. Lilly signifies, seem to have stood much nearer to the true doctrine of the Catholic mystics. Pietism and early Methodism might perhaps be defined as a movement which bowed reverentially before Luther's doctrine of justification, and swore that it would always be faithful to it, and then turned its back upon it, greatly to the advantage of Christendom.

Dr. Doellinger has declared, even since his breach with Rome, that if Luther's doctrine of justification is to be retained, all thoughts of reunion between Protestants and Old Catholics, Roman Catholics or Greeks, are at an end.

However, I know of none that now retain it in fact, except certain hyper-Lutherans, certain ultra-orthodox Anglicans, and the Plymouth Brethren, at least a school of them.

The original Baptists, one and all, seem to have rejected it with scorn, as I fancy their successors, the Mennonites, do to this day.

The Oberlin theology has secured the virtual rejection of it within the American Congregational body, and Presbyterianism, even while professing to accept it, hated Antinomianism too much to accept it in Luther's real sense.

Luther doubtless had a strong sense of God's fatherly love and our corresponding right to a certain carelessness of filial confidence.

What a pity then that he should have devised such a fantastic and unscriptural Gospel as this. "I am justified because I believe that I am justified by faith."

This is as absolutely irrational as it is unscriptural. No wonder that he declared, according to Doctor Doellinger, that Reason was the devil's concubine.

Here we see that all the testimony of Scripture, reason and morality, must be overturned to provide a burly Saxon friar with a short cut to the assurance that God would keep him out of fire and brimstone.

He could not wait to let Christ's grace in him work out the fruits of holiness, to be justified, as Paul was, by a "faith working through love."

No; this bold confidence must justify "before love and without love, *ante et sine caritate*." And when he complains of the deep moral degeneration which the preaching of this Gospel had caused in Germany, he does not say that the people had misunderstood it, or that the thieves, robbers, unchaste men and women, misers and evil speakers, who boasted of this justification, were not really justified.

He only scolds them because they brought so much discredit on his Gospel, which they evidently understood only too well. He does not rebuke their behavior, but he can not easily impugn their orthodoxy. Charles C. Starbuck.

12 Meacham Street, North Cambridge, Mass.

IMITATION OF CHRIST.

Disidence in Ourselves.

The presumptuous man is persuaded he has acquired a diligence of himself and a confidence in God; but this mis- take is never more plainly discovered than when some fault is committed; for, if he gives way to vexation and despair of advancing in way of virtue, it is evident he placed his confidence in himself, not in God; and the greater the anxiety and despondency, the greater certainty of his guilt.

For he who much diffides in himself, and places great confidence in God, should he commit a fault, he is not at all surprised; he does not abandon himself to perplexing vexation; he justly attributes what has happened to his own weakness and a want of due confidence in God. Hence he learns to diffide still more in himself, and places all his hope in the assistance of the Almighty. He detests beyond all things the sin he has fallen into; he condemns that passion or criminal habit which occasioned his fall; he conceals a lively sorrow for having offended God; but his sorrow, ever attended by peace of mind, does not interrupt the method he has laid down, or prevent his pursuing his enemies to their final destruction.

I sincerely wish, that what has been here advanced were attentively considered by many who think themselves very devout; yet from the moment they commit a fault will not be pacified, but hurry away to their director, more to rid themselves of the vexation arising from self-love than out of any other motive; though their principal care should be to wash away the guilt of sin in the sacrament of penance, and for- tify themselves with that of the Eucharist against a relapse.

There is another illusion too common in devotion which gives the name of virtue to that fear and anxiety arising from sin. For, though this vexation be accompanied with some sorrow, yet it is founded on pride, and a secret presumption a person entertains of his own strength. Thus he who, fancying himself far advanced in virtue, looks with too much indifference on temptations, yet finds by woful experience that, like other men, he is subject to weakness; he is astonished at his fall, and finding himself deceived in his expectation, gives a loose to anguish and despair.

This never befalls the humble soul who presumes not on her own strength, but places her trust in God alone. For if she commits a fault it occasions no

surprise or vexation, because she discovers by that light of truth which is her guide, that her fall is owing to her natural unsteadiness and frailty.

IMITATION OF CHRIST.

Having rectified the faults of the understanding, we must proceed to those of the will, that being divested of its inclinations, it may become entirely devoted to the will of God.

It must be observed, that it is not sufficient to desire, or even to execute what is most pleasing to God, but it is also requisite to desire and to perform it from a motion of His grace and out of a willingness to please Him. Here will arise the greatest struggle with our nature, ever so greedy of being pleased, that even in spiritual things above others, it seeks its own satisfaction, resting there with the less scruple, as no evil appears. Hence it comes, that when we enter upon works of piety, our eyes are opened not from a view of doing the will of God, but from a sensible pleasure which often accompanies such exercises.

When an opportunity offers of performing some pious works, let us be watchful lest our hearts fix upon it before we raise our minds to God, that we may know whether it be according to His will, and whether we desire it purely because it is pleasing to Him. Our will being thus prevented and directed by the will of God, tends to no other motive than that of conforming entirely to Him and advancing His glory. The same method ought to be observed in rejecting what is contrary to His will; the first motion ought to be to raise our minds to God; to know that it is displeasing to Him, and to be satisfied, that in rejecting it, we shall act in conformity to His holy will.

But we must remember it is with great difficulty that we discover the artifices of our corrupt nature, which, ever fond of centering under specious pretences all things in itself, flatters us with a persuasion, that in all our actions we have no other view than to please God. Hence it comes, that in what we embrace or reject only in reality to humor ourselves, we erroneously imagine that we act on a principle of pleasing, or a dread of displeasing our Sovereign Lord. The most efficacious remedy against evil is a purity of heart, which every one who engages in the spiritual combat must propose to obtain, by putting off the old man and clothing themselves with the new.

PAINTED BY AN ANGEL.

Bishop Brendel Describes the Wonder- ful Picture in the Church of the Annunziata.

Bishop Brendel of Helena, who is travelling abroad, has written a very interesting letter to Father Aiken of his episcopal city. It was the Bishop's pleasure to see the face of the Virgin Mary in oil, painted by an angel. After detailing his journey from Rome, the Bishop describes in his brilliantly graphic manner his visit to the church in which is hung the picture. His letter follows:

"I left Rome, Thursday, Jan. 18, and went to Assisi and said Mass before the remains of the poor of Christ—St. Francis Assisi is one of the most ancient cities of Italy. It is situated on a mountain. On the top of the mountain is an ancient fort, now unoccupied. The principal building is the convent and Church of St. Francis, all built of stone and brick, and most extensive. Most of the convent now is occupied by a government school, where lay teachers teach the orphans of the school teachers of the kingdom of Italy. The upper church has just been restored in its stalls, which are many—about 120—beautifully carved, with figures of saints of the Order of St. Francis. These figures are worked in different words. The frescoes are well preserved and give the life and miracles of the saint.

"I interrupted this letter to go and see a most wonderful thing. Father Edward O'Reilly of Dublin, Ire., who was leaving the Duomo when I entered this evening, told me that at the Church of the Annunziata was to be seen the picture of the Virgin Mary painted by an angel, but that it was only shown when a Bishop wishes to see the orphans of the school. I went to see the picture. It was at 6 o'clock that evening. He came for me while I was writing to you, and now that I saw it I must tell you all about it.

"We walked from my hotel, the Helvetia, about ten minutes and reached the place. It was dark, but there was quite a number of people still lingering in the church—part of them before an altar, where I saw more lights than before the other fifteen altars. Father O'Reilly said the people here seem to have a special devotion for the Blessed Virgin at this altar. This one was near the door of the church. So we went all around, and the Father said: 'I wonder where the English Sisters of whom he is the temporary chaplain at Assisi, had come to see the picture. It would be shown to me. Finally he found them in the sacristy. He called me in and there were a number of Servites, half a dozen of the Daughters of Mary, an Italian priest, an officer with his wife and some other ladies and gentlemen, who had been told they had a chance to see the picture. We had to wait a quarter of an hour until the people had left the church, which was then closed. Then one curtain was drawn up, then another heavy one, and the priest said, 'Ave Maria Stella' with the prayers. Then he showed us with a light the miraculous figure of the

Virgin made by supernatural power.

"History says that at a time when seven noblemen of Florence had begun a new religious order to honor the mother of Christ on Mount Serrano, they established themselves at this place in 1250. Two years later they asked a painter to make a picture of the Annunciation. He made one, but the last thing and what he dreaded most to paint was the face of Jesus' mother when the angel saluted her.

After having received the sacraments of confession and Communion, he went to work, and behold, he found the face painted, but with such a beauty of heavenly love that he cried out, 'Miracolo, and burst into tears. Those near him ran up to see what was the matter and they saw, as we see to-day, a painting of the Virgin's face of which Michael Angelo said that no human pencil could make it. I know I will never forget it. After seeing it, I looked at the face of the angel painted by the artist and it seemed to me like a shadow. After a while I could see that the face of the angel was well executed though immensely inferior to that of the Virgin. I felt alone on the altar looking at that picture, though twenty others were near me looking at that wonderful production."

FIVE MINUTES' SERMON.

Passion Sunday.

SACRILEGIOUS COMMUNION.

"They took up stones therefore to cast at Him." (John 8, 52.)

Horrible, indeed, is the malice of the ungrateful Jews narrated in this day's Gospel! They take up stones to cast at Jesus, their greatest benefactor, the anointed of the Lord. They attempt to lay hands on the Infinite Sanctity! Jesus, however, frustrates their designs, by withdrawing from their view and going out of the temple. This attempt of the Jews was certainly as great a sin as diabolical malice could suggest, but there is a greater crime, which cries louder to Heaven for vengeance, and which is sometimes committed by Christians. And this crime is not merely attempted, but it is put into execution. It consists in its sacrilegious Communion, receiving our Lord Jesus Christ really and truly present under the form of bread in the consecrated host, into a heart of Judas, which is defiled with mortal sin, and in which the prince of darkness is enthroned.

Oh! most heinous sin, Oh! most wicked of all sacrileges! How solemnly does St. Paul warn us against so terrible a crime! "Therefore whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily: shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself: not discerning the Body of the Lord." (1. Cor. 11, 27, 28.)

Who are those who commit this sacrilege? They are, according to the teachings of faith, all those, who, knowing that they are in the state of mortal sin, in enmity with God, receive the Lord, without being cleansed in the sacrament of penance. They are, moreover, those who go to the tribunal of penance, but who make a bad confession. These latter are still more culpable, for the former commit but one sacrilege, the latter two, a sacrilegious confession and a sacrilegious Communion.

The great question is, my dear Christians, do all those who approach the tribunal of penance before going to the table of the Lord, make a good confession, a confession worthy of reconciliation with God? Do all examining their conscience with that carefulness which so important an action requires? Do they accuse themselves to God's representative with that sincerity required by the omniscient God? What can be thought of their contrition? Do they merely grieve in word for their sins, or do they sincerely detest them with all their heart? Are they sorry for, at least, all their mortal sins, without excusing or remaining attached to them? Is their contrition prompted by proper motives? If they are sorry only on account of having incurred temporal loss, this will avail them nothing. Are they truly sorry because they have offended God, lost His grace and deserved hell? Have they made a firm purpose of amendment, to avoid, not only every mortal sin, but all proximate occasions of sin? Are they determined to make use of the means necessary for leading a better life, and earnestly resolved to make the required restitution and reparation?

Ah! my dear Christians, I greatly fear that all confessions have not these necessary qualities. It is rather my conviction that indifference and carelessness in examining their conscience, or the concealment of sins through false shame or fear, make their confessions worthless and their holy Communion sacrilegious. I am convinced that the sacrament of penance, and hence also the Holy Eucharist, are, for many, sacraments of malediction and condemnation for want of contrition and firm purpose of amendment. Or, can we call that a good confession, if to day one confesses having frequently missed Mass during the year, and the following Sunday, he again neglects Mass without sufficient reason? Is it an indication of having received God's graces, if, in the morning, the King of angels rests on his tongue, and in the evening, that same tongue utters impure, scandalous language, which seduces and destroys innocent souls? Can it be an occasion of joy for the angels in Heaven, if the dishonest man, having confessed his injustice of

twenty years, still retains the ill-otten goods? Or, if the drunkard, who from youth, has been promising to reform, and is the same in ebriety to day? Ah, no! Let us not deceive ourselves. Such confessions, without contrition or purpose of amendment, are mockery and self-deception. They cannot bring joy to God and His holy angels, they please the devil only, they can bring no grace, no blessing, naught but judgment and eternal damnation.

Hence, my dear brethren, prior to our approaching the tribunal of penance, let us, by sincere contrition, rend asunder the old garment of sin. Let us approach, not as liars and hypocrites, but as true penitents, so that our defiled souls may be purified. He only can partake worthily of the Bread of angels, who is clad in the wedding garment of sanctifying grace and holy purity, who is a child of God and an heir of Heaven. Amen

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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

A HEART MADE GLAD.

"Old iron! Old iron!"

A derisive shout echoed the words as the boys gathered on the street corner and caught the angry gleam from the eyes of the boy after whom the words had been flung.

"Might say rags, too; look at his clothes," laughed one, and the cry taken up by the others followed the unhappy lad down the street.

The cause of all this merit had been a newcomer to the Maywood school. Shy, lame and poorly clad he had aroused the amusement of the schoolmates by the wheel he rode, of the kind known as a "solid tire." Far away the rickety old wheel could be heard, and the crooked path it made from one side of the road to the other had caused many shouts of laughter from the thoughtless boys.

"I'd rather do without a bicycle than ride that old thing," one boy said, sneeringly. Johnny's face flashed painfully as he glanced down at his crippled foot, but he made no reply.

"Will, come up to Kwoonlwin's with 'em. Can't you? Father's given me a dollar to buy one of those puppets and I'm going after it."

The old wheel with its rider had disappeared, and the boys were separating for the night. The lad addressed shook his head regretfully.

"I'd like to, but I've promised to go on an errand for mother."

The first speaker made a wry face at the thought of the long walk alone, but hastening along the road the boy on the old wheel had taken he found amusement enough in watching the funny curves and turns made in the dusty road.

"I would never ride if I had a wheel like that," he began to himself—had stopped suddenly. Lying face down beside the grassy pathway which branched off from the dusty highway lay the object of his thoughts—boy and wheel.

Fred paused, silently watching the prostrate form, feeling from the boy's attitude that he was suffering not from bodily, but mental ailments.

Softly retracing his steps over the grassy hill, he had gone almost from within hearing distance, when the lame boy raised his flushed face from his folded arms, exclaiming:

"Oh, they don't know how their words hurt! I can't go another day. Mother says I must not mind, but bear it like a man! She don't know how hard it is. If I wasn't lame I would walk; but it's too far. Now they make fun of my clothes, too—the best I have. Oh, why can't I walk and play like other boys? If I can't ride my wheel, I can't go to school. If I lose another year, as I have these last two, I can never be a teacher. Why can't they let me alone? why can't they?"

A wave of compassion, a flash of shame swept over the listener's face. He had teased Johnny but little; now that little rose to a monstrous size. Oh, the shame of it! The poor boy had not ridden the old wheel for pleasure, but necessity. Quietly he walked away homewards. The long-winded dog was forgotten. Nearing his own home he sat down on an old tree trunk to think over a plan suddenly formed.

"I'll do it," he exclaimed, after five minutes' thought. "It won't be any too much, after the way we've treated the poor little chap. Hoary! It's a fine idea!" and he tossed his cap high in the air to relieve his excited feelings worked up to fever heat.

The plan taken root in Fred's brain was soon talked over with the other boys. With his usual energy he told them of the night before, of his own shame and then his plan, ending with:

"I just tell you what, we ought to buy Johnny a new wheel, since we don't like his old one."

The boys, ashamed of their part in the cruel sport, had entered at once into the spirit of it, and when Fred brought forward his list, with one dollar offered his name, the boys had hastened to add their own with various sums. It soon became known that Fred had concluded to wait until late to purchase the dog, and had promised to add another dollar to the one already given when he should have earned it. Certainly it was remarkable with what zeal those boys worked to earn some sums of money before and after school.

The teacher, too, hearing of their plan, begged to add her share, and the plan grew with a quarter here and a dime there until the desired sum had been reached.

Johnny, all unconscious, went his way, noting with joy that the boys no longer found amusement in teasing him. Indeed, some of the older boys had been so kindly attentive to Johnny's heart was almost bursting with gratitude.

But the joy of that lovely June morning when the wheel was to be given Johnny! It was voted that Fred, who had first suggested the plan and whose enthusiasm had never faltered, should present the wheel. Every face glowed with eagerness as Fred trembled with eagerness as Fred in the room, returning a moment later wheeling the new safety. Johnny looked up with astonished eyes at the breach of school discipline. Passed down the aisle, Fred paused before Johnny's desk.

"Johnny—we—the pupils and Mr. Bright, too, want to give you a wheel. It will be much easier to than your old one. We hope you like it, and—and—Johnny, I, for am ashamed of the way I treated when you came here first. Please give me."

Fred sank into the seat before Johnny quite overcome by the ex-

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