

In 1848, and the following years, Hungary was agitated by bloody insurrections. The details are sufficiently well known to your readers. You have heard in the United States the famous Kossuth, who has often related the circumstances of the terrible drama in which he acted so conspicuous a part. What was the conduct of the Protestants of Hungary amid these grave events?

The ecclesiastical documents which I have in my hand prove that neither the church of the Helvetic Confession, nor that of the Confession of Augsburg—in their official character—ever encouraged the insurrection. They carefully avoided interfering in political quarrels. Moreover, when the revolutionary government offered them pecuniary favours, the synods and consistories decidedly refused them, in order not to contract obligations to the chiefs of the democrat party. Their conduct was prudent, reserved, and not influenced by political feeling, as became the representatives of a spiritual society. It is true that members of both Protestant churches, as individuals and citizens, joined in the revolutionary movements, Kossuth himself belonging to the Helvetic communion. Why should this surprise us? Romanists in Protestant countries do the same thing. When a country raises the standard of independence, and tries to recover its nationality, there is no more distinction of creed. Every one declares himself for or against these political manifestations, according to his opinions or his talents. But the occasion appeared very opportune to the Jesuits, and they eagerly seized it. As they ruled the conscience of the Archduchess Sophia, who, in her turn, exercised a powerful influence over the mind of her son, the young Emperor Francis Joseph, they persuaded this princess that the Protestants of Hungary were incorrigible revolutionists; that they had provoked the rebellion; that they had maintained it with their money and swords; that their religious doctrines necessarily led to political anarchy; and that Hungary would not be at peace so long as these heretics preserved the rights which Joseph II. had granted them.

These odious calumnies produced the effect which the Jesuitical faction expected. The Archduchess Sophia, the Emperor Francis Joseph, and the cabinet of Vienna, believed it their duty to destroy, at any price, the liberty of Protestantism in Hungary; and General Haynau, who then commanded in this unhappy country, was commissioned to take measures for persecution. He acquitted himself of this task with his usual tyranny, and published decrees renewing the ancient severity of the civil power against the members of the two Reformed confessions. The inspector-general and the district inspectors were removed without the form of trial. It was ordered that the superintendents, instead of being elected by the free suffrages of the parishes, should thenceforth be appointed by the political authority.

The meetings of the consistories and district assemblies were also made subject to the military power; in other words, the pastors and elders were deprived of the right to deliberate about their own affairs without permission. It was even ordered that the assembling of the general synods should be submitted to an arbitrator, who can, if he will, indefinitely postpone. Officers of the army and civil administrators were made to fill the places of the former ecclesiastical directors. Protestantism was bound, imprisoned, and loaded with chains. Haynau, in his edicts, announced the intention of closely uniting the church and state—a union in which the state places its foot upon the head of the church, and crushes it to the earth.

This dictatorship over the Protestant confessions was the more distressing, because at the same time the Papist clergy of Hungary obtained new privileges. All the legal barriers which checked their usurpations were removed. They were permitted to correspond directly with the Romish see, to publish the bishops' letters

and the Popes' bulls without previous authority, to convoke councils freely, to establish convents and schools in every province of the country, &c. In one word, the Romish Church was declared sovereign and all-powerful, while the Protestant churches were enslaved.

The victims of these despotic edicts raised their voice, and neglected no means of recovering their rights. They humbly appealed to the Emperor Francis Joseph, saying that they were his Majesty's faithful subjects; that their property and blood were at the service of the government; that they would not shrink from any sacrifice for the State's advantage, but that in matters of faith they could not, without violating their consciences, accept the absolute supremacy of the political power. They sent deputations to Vienna, composed of their most honourable men, to lay their complaints before the imperial throne. But the Protestant deputies were not admitted to the emperor's presence, and were dismissed with merely vague promises. They were always there, inciting the spirit of intolerance, and repeating their perfidious accusations. What was their object? It was to reduce the Protestants to despair, in order to incite them to revolt; and if they did not revolt, to make it easy to gain from their ranks proselytes to Romanism. Thanks to God, the expectations of the Jesuits thus far have not been realised. The members of the two confessions have remained peaceful, praying the Lord to protect them, and waiting patiently for better days; and far from turning towards Popery, they reject more resolutely than before the appeals of a church which dishonours herself by such persecutions. The cabinet of Vienna seems recently to be less opposed to the Protestants of Hungary; and without restoring to them the rights which it has taken away, it is more moderate in the execution of the last decrees.

But what is especially deplorable in the present condition of those Protestants, is the almost entire ruin of their schools. In order to understand this matter, it must be known that the two Reformed confessions had established fifty-one high schools, which prepared young men for the universities and for admission to the liberal professions. These schools, supported by voluntary subscriptions, possessed the rights and privileges of legally recognised institutions. But an ordinance has been promulgated, by which those schools only are recognised as legal which have twelve professors, and teach all the branches of human science. This ordinance is favourable to the Papists, because they, receiving large sums of money from the public treasury, can support this number of professors, but it is fatal to the Protestants, who are incapable of defraying such enormous expenses. The result is that most of the schools have lost their legal rights, and that the young men must be sent to the Romish establishments, if they would get the diplomas which open the way to practice in the professions, and to the most honourable stations in society.

This is a vital question for the Protestants of Hungary. The last news is, that only four schools are recognised as legal, and that all the others are considered as private schools, so that their scholars are unable to enter the universities or obtain any office. The members of the Reformed communions do all that they can to remedy the evil; but how can they collect the immense sum of money which they require?—They pray, they act; they publish religious journals, and among others, the *Protestant Annals for Austria*, in which earnest appeals are made to their foreign co-religionists. Let us hope that the Father of mercies will come to their aid, and will not suffer the truth to fall beneath the blows of its implacable enemies.

I am resolved, by the grace of God, to speak of other men's sins only before their faces, and of their virtues behind their backs.—*Bishop Beveridge.*

## NOTES ON PSALM CXIX.

[FOR THE RECORD.]

## PART I.

*Verse 1.*—"Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord."

*Literal version.*—Oh, the blessednesses of the perfect of way: those walking in the law of Jehovah.

Like the Psalter, this most instructive Psalm opens with a benediction for our comfort, and directs us to that happiness, which all men are so eagerly seeking.

It is to be regretted that our translation employs the comparatively tame word, "blessed," instead of the more forcible and literal rendering of the original—"Oh the blessednesses." Our English term, "undefiled," scarcely conveys the exact idea of the original, which refers not so much to purity of life, as to uprightness, consistency, and blamelessness. The idea conveyed is that of individuals, who, in every relation of life, as Christians, parents, children, and citizens, exhibit a consistent conduct, and display completeness of character. Whence, we ask, can this complete character be derived, and by whom can it be formed? At one time, those described were dead in trespasses and sins, and following divers lusts and pleasures; but the Spirit of God has regenerated them by his grace; they have received the new heart and the right spirit.—"Though generally upright," Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile," and though marked by general consistency of conduct, yet they were not absolutely perfect, or free from sin. Like Paul, they still feel within them the remains of the old man, and are constrained to exclaim, "Ah! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

But why does the Psalmist speak so strongly of their blessednesses? Ah! dear reader, has he not the strongest grounds for doing so? Canst thou describe the thrill of pleasure which the sense of pardon of sin shows through the soul? Canst thou weigh the joy of him, to whom Christ's matchless righteousness has been imputed? Canst thou know the happiness that flows through Christ upon every accepted sinner, or adequately understand the value of the paternal pity and protection that overshadow every child of God, when once adopted into the heavenly family? Canst thou feel the ecstatic joy that pervades the heart of the saint, when he gets a Pisgah-like view of the land afar off—a land whose glories are now sealed and secured to him? Or go and meditate on the numberless streams of bliss that flow to thee before ever from God the Father—contemplate the peace and happiness that accompany and flow from intercourse with God the Son, and consider the exhaustless sources of consolation and pleasure, provided for him by God the Holy Spirit. Truly the paths of the righteous are "peace and pleasantness." "God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart."

But, in conclusion, let each of us ask, what is my way with God? Is it marked by uprightness and sincerity? Is my general conduct consistent, or do I by some gross inconsistencies bring dishonour upon Christ's holy name? Is my course of life blameless and undefiled? Do I never regard iniquity in my heart? "Search me, O God, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Further, let me inquire, what is my walk? Is it a living walk, derived from the Spirit of God? Is it a walk with God, as a reconciled Friend and Father? Is my course in harmony with the Divine word—a walk "in the law of Jehovah," as it dictates and teaches? Is my walk steady, progressive, earnest, and heavenward? But, alas! what fearful defilements, and what God-dishonouring inconsistencies exist in our best ways? How humble ought we to be—how earnestly we