

MARTIN LUTHER AND HIS AMERICAN
WORSHIPPERS.

ON the 21st of May last, a statue, erected in honor of Martin Luther, was unveiled in the city of Washington. And this was done amidst the ringing of bells, the pealing of trumpets, and the gay plaudits of a vast multitude—in a word, with all the pomp and pride and circumstance of a public festival. Not only the brazen effigy of the apostate monk, but the very place where it stands—to be known henceforth as the “Luther Place”—is doomed to perpetuate his name and memory to all coming generations. The Lutheran clergy are very much elated at what they consider a great triumph for their cause; and their newspaper organs are not yet tired of boasting how signally their religion has been honored, in the person of its founder, by the statue thus solemnly dedicated in the so-called “national” capital.

To all this we have nothing to say. It has very little significance, and contains no ground for just quarrel. The members of any religious sect, that can afford it, have a legal right to set up a statue of its founder on ground which they have purchased, or come by in other honest way, as we are willing to suppose was the case with the Lutheran corporation in Washington. And besides, when it is question of such a city, *quo cuncta undique atrocia ac pudenda confluunt celebranturque*—as was well said of another great capital no less wonderful for outward splendor and inward rottenness—and where within a few decades of years we are likely to see statues of Voltaire, Tom Paine and other reforming worthies unveiled by their admirers for public veneration—no citizen need feel either morally shocked or legally hurt at beholding amongst the rest a likeness of the Saxon Reformer.

Modern taste unfortunately—and we may thank Luther's teaching for it—is no longer Christian, but pagan. Our heroes, too often nowadays, are made and held up for worship, not on the score of religion, virtue, or love of country, but because they are of the world, worldly, mouthpieces in word, or patterns in deed, of the bad passions and corrupt inclinations that belong to unregenerate man. They have their use, too; for they are put up by a few bad men, and stand on their pedestals mute but eloquent witnesses of the cowardly servility that is an unailing mark of all degenerate communities and peoples. Thus Greece of old, in her halls, groves, and highways, for one bust of Plato or Leonidas, had full twenty of Aphro-

dite, Eros, Priapus and adulterous¹ Jove. Rome publicly paraded her Flora and Venus, her Antinous and Sejanus by the side of her deified Neros, Domitians and Adrians. And in our day France and Italy, paganized by their rulers, have exchanged their old heroes for Voltaire, Gambetta, Cavour and Garibaldi. Germany erects altars to refined lust, self-love, nihilism, atheism, brute force and other monstrous developments of modern *Kultur*; and in her Goethes, Virchows, Schopenhauers² and Bismarcks finds worthy hierophants of the new worship. Even those Catholic lands that have been infiltrated by the subtle, deadly poison of Free-Masonry and *Kultur*, fare little better. While the Tyrol, true to her Catholic traditions, shows through her mountains and valleys only pictures or statues of Him who redeemed us, or of the Saints who followed in His footsteps, or of her Christian heroes and patriots, Hofer, Haspinger, etc., the Catholic King of Bavaria, a country in great part Catholic, gives a place in the Ruhmeshalle³ of his capital to Franz von Sickingen and Schelling, thereby teaching his people that high-born cutthroats and windy pantheists are worshipful heroes when born on Bavarian soil.

The mistake made by the Lutheran clergy of Washington was that, instead of contenting themselves with using the occasion simply to glorify the father and founder of their name and sect, they attempted to turn it into a half-civil, half-religious American festival, "a national event," as the Washington papers have it, "for the Protestants of the whole country." The Protestant clergy of other denominations do not seem to have looked upon it in this light. For it appears that the reverend gentlemen who figured at the ceremony were all, or nearly all, Lutheran ministers; and of the few laymen in attendance, all, with one noble exception, may be set down as either mere politicians or adherents of the Lutheran creed. The ministers, however, and their lay associates who addressed the crowd before the unveiling took place, did their best to make their hearers believe that there was some mysterious connection between the honor given to Luther's statue and homage done

¹ This was the fitting epithet given him by the early Christian writers when they would ridicule the gods of paganism. Thus Prudentius (Hymn to St. Laurence):

Discede, adulter Jupiter,
Stupro sororis oblite, etc.

² The infidel Max Müller, who once talked so sweetly that we almost took him for a Christian, is out with a proposal to erect a statue to this gloomy Atheist. If Max and his fellow philosophers could only root Christianity out of the world as they wish to do, they would make Schopenhauer's dream become practical truth.

³ There are many non-Catholics in this Hall, but to them we can have no objection. Whatever their religion may have been, they have deserved well of letters and the arts. Such are Hans Sachs, Franz Holbein and others. But we do object to honoring men whose only title to honor is their immorality or their irreligion.

to the cause of American civil and religious liberty. They had no easy task before them; but, succeed or fail, they had to attempt it. Otherwise the ceremony, for all its pomp and show, would have been idle and unmeaning. The key-note had been sounded in the preliminary meeting of the same day by Rev. Mr. Henninghauser, of Baltimore, when he said:¹ "We would hardly as a people rejoice on the 4th of July as the birthday of our civil liberty, if the 31st of October, 1517, had not preceded it as the birthday of our spiritual liberty. It is no exaggeration to refer our political and civil liberty to that source. The existence of this great republic, with its freedom of religion and conscience, its liberty of speech and of the press, would have been impossible without the Reformation, of which Luther was at once the leader and, with the help of God, the inspiring centre and source of its power and success." Before the ceremony, Senator Conger proclaimed that "Christians of a common faith, all who desire the regeneration and exaltation of the human race, who demand complete toleration of religious belief, who trust in the limitless expansion of intellectual vigor, who hope for perpetual growth of freedom and faith in the soul, are assembled here to render their tribute of respect to the memory of the great Reformer, and to dedicate his enduring monument in the court of this Lutheran Memorial Church." And again: "Conspicuous in the capital of a nation whose possibility of existence hinged upon his (Luther's) labors in life, and the adoption of the principles he taught till his death, we this day place this memorial of our veneration." Judge Miller comforted his audience with the assurance that they were soon to behold the likeness "of a man who presented to the world the right of free thought—a lover of the human race, whose name shall stand as the emancipation of humanity—Martin Luther."

The laymen, to their credit, confined themselves to their subject, and avoided giving unnecessary offence. But Rev. Dr. Morris, of Baltimore, who was another of the speakers, seems to have been blinded to all sense of propriety by the conviction that he would be false to his cloth, false to the pattern of his spiritual progenitor, if he did not improve the occasion to pour out his intolerant bile, and stir up the religious feeling of his audience by abuse and misrepresentation of the Catholic Church. Had he done nothing more than gratify himself and his hearers by this pitiful effusion of Lutheran zeal, we should have nothing to say, as these things have become too common for notice. *Usu viluerunt.* But what necessity did Dr. Morris find in the occasion for coining facts that never had an existence outside of his imagination, and further for coining

¹ For this and the following extracts our authority is the Philadelphia *Lutheran Observer* of May 30, 1884.

sinister motives to color still more luridly these unworthy actions? Had he not all history to draw from, history old and new, the romantic D'Aubigné, the veracious chronicler Mathesius, or the edifying records of the Tisch-Reden? No. He was determined to be original, forgetting that originality is not a commendable quality in the history that is taught outside of the sectarian Sunday-school or pulpit. After extolling the "loyalty and obedience" of Lutherans towards the government under whose protection they live, he publishes the following dreadful discovery of Catholic disloyalty: "He claimed that the Church of Rome recognized no authority but that of its temporal head, and refused to obey the proclamations issued by the chief magistrate of this nation because they emanated from a republican government. He claimed that he had himself made an investigation, and had found that on Thanksgiving Day, or on any national holiday, there were no special services in any of the Catholic churches, while in all others such were held in accordance with the proclamations of the President of the United States and the Governor of the State."

There is only one proper word in the language by which to designate the whole of this vile stuff, invented facts, imputed motives and all the rest. He "claimed"—a very suitable word to impose on the public—his right to the discovery of his chimerical religious facts—something like the British commander's discovery of Graham's Island in the Mediterranean, or the finding of imaginary Antarctic continents by American and French commodores in the southern Polar Seas—"he claimed that the Church of Rome recognized no authority but that of its temporal head." Now, Dr. Morris knows as well as we do, and it would be slandering him to suppose otherwise, that the Church of Rome may mean two things. In the first place, it designates only the small body of Catholics, a million or two, confined within the petty area of the Papal States, and who have Rome for the centre of their political government. As their "temporal head" is the Pope, by divine and human law they owe him allegiance, and if they cling to him, though dispossessed by temporary violence, it does them credit in the eyes of all honorable men. Brute force does not annul principles, nor extinguish legitimate rights. This was once a part of the American creed, and if belief in it has been sadly impaired, we have only to thank our politicians, lay and clerical, whose teachings have been for a long time corrupting gradually the American mind.

The "Church of Rome," in the second place, is often used for the great body of Christians, two hundred millions and more, who profess the Catholic faith and live in communion with the successor of St. Peter, the Bishop of Rome. They style him the Head of their Church, but have always believed and declared that the bond

that unites them with him is spiritual, not temporal, and that their allegiance of the latter order belongs exclusively to the land in which they live, whether it be in Europe, Asia, Africa, North or South America. Does Dr. Morris know better than these immense multitudes where their allegiance is owing? Or, is it in his power to steal it away without their consent or knowledge, and assign it where he will? It would be great presumption were he sincere in his statement; but no amount of Christian charity, unless it will risk the imputation of being counted blind and unreasoning, can admit this plea of sincerity. Dr. Morris is a faithful disciple of his master, the great Reformer; and the latter taught (in a private letter which he never expected would come to light) that in the school of Wittenberg all weapons were held good and lawful against Popery, provided souls could be saved thereby from the wicked deceits of Antichrist. (Letter to John Lange, Aug. 18th, 1520.)

He assumes that Catholics will only obey "the temporal head" of their Church, and in proof alleges that "they refuse to obey the proclamations issued by the chief magistrate of this nation, because they emanated from a republican government." Any one who has ever read a Catholic catechism must know that Catholics are taught to obey their temporal rulers, and not only to obey for fear but for conscience's sake, as the Apostle tells us. If Catholics, therefore, do not obey the laws, they do it, not because of their religion, but in spite of its teachings. The silly remark that they disobey the chief magistrate, because he is the executive of a commonwealth, "a republican government," is too contemptible to need an answer. Our religion makes no distinction between the obedience due to him who rules by hereditary right, and that to another who holds his place by the choice of his fellow-citizens. But Dr. Morris claims that he has made an investigation, and has found, as the result of it, that no special services are held in any Catholic church on thanksgiving days or national holidays, whilst Protestant churches hold them in conformity with the proclamations of the President or Governor of the State. His investigation and its results will be news to most of our Catholic readers. We can only speak of our own knowledge, when we affirm that our hard-worked clergy at the South used to fast up to mid-day in order to sing High Mass and preach, not on one Thanksgiving day, but on two and sometimes on three occasions; for very often the Mayor issued his proclamation for thanksgiving in addition to those of the President and Governor—the two latter having been, in the good old times, always separate days. If they now coincide, we are entitled to the opinion, which we entertain in common with others yet living, that change and improvement are not always one and the same thing. And this was done not only in large cities like

Charleston and Savannah, but in the humblest hamlet of the two Carolinas and Georgia that could boast of a church or enjoyed the presence of a priest. And passing to the theatre of the Lutheran pastor's investigation, we remember distinctly the beautiful document by which Archbishop Eccleston, of Baltimore, called the attention of his clergy and people to the Thanksgiving day (December 14th, 1842) recommended by the Governor of Maryland, and enjoining solemn service with mass and chant of the *Te Deum*. We have also under our eye, while writing, a similar circular of the same Prelate in reference to Thanksgiving day, 12th of December, 1844; and if we had copies of the Catholic papers and magazines of the years previous or following, we could, no doubt, quote a great many more of the same kind. Though we have not the documents to allege, it is very unlikely that the good Archbishop's successors, the Kenricks, Spauldings, Bayleys and Gibbonses, yielded to him in patriotic feeling or in discharging their duty of encouraging their people to fulfil St. Paul's desire (I. Tim. ii., 1, 2), and make "supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings for all men; for kings and for all who are in high station, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life." (I. Tim. ii., 1, 2.) In Charleston, and generally at the South, we are convinced that the old practice remains substantially unchanged. For though we may not have all to be thankful for that we may desire, all the good may yet say from their heart of hearts, with deep thankfulness, in the words of Jeremy: "*misericordiae Domini, quia non sumus consumpti.*"

In Pennsylvania, as far as we can learn, the rule is this: Pastors in country churches are left to their own discretion. They sometimes serve more than one church, and cannot always be at home during the week. Consequently, it will depend on their zeal and prudence when, how and where they are to have Thanksgiving devotions. In the city of Philadelphia, the late Archbishop Wood always gave public notice to his clergy and people that such a day had been recommended by the civil authorities as a day of thanksgiving and prayer. In the principal churches, or some of them at least, special services are held at a later hour than the ordinary service of each day. In the others, where no special service is appointed, it is always understood that the great Eucharistic sacrifice, the very name of which implies *thanksgiving*, is offered up in acknowledgement of God's great mercies during the year that has gone by, and in supplication for a continuance of those mercies for the coming year.

In all this what ground is there for blaming us, or what evidence for the charge that we perversely disjoin ourselves from our fellow-citizens and refuse to thank God, because we are recommended to do so by a republican government? The reverend gentleman

talks of loyalty and obedience to these proclamations, as if they were so many spiritual ukases or disciplinary decisions formulated by a theocratical government, that has a right to bind the soul and body of its subjects. Now, in this Dr. Morris betrays himself a thorough Lutheran, but at the same time he betrays himself utterly unacquainted with what are generally supposed to be the first elements of an American freeman's education. It is a standing maxim of the Lutheran creed, formally enunciated by the princes and theologians of that church assembled at Passau some three hundred and thirty years ago (very soon after Luther's death), that the ruler of a country owns the souls as well as the bodies of his subjects, and has a right to impose his religion on them by force, or as they tersely put it, *cujus est regio, illius est et religio*—in plain English, "Whoever owns a country owns its religion too." If, indeed, a Lutheran monarch owned our country, Dr. Morris might see his Wittenberg ideal realized, might be superintendent of the Lutheran Consistory, and write his prince's religious decrees and proclamations, and we should have to be loyal and *obey* them under penalty of life and limb. But (what Dr. M. has forgotten or studiously ignores), none of us, thank God! whether Catholic or Protestant, are the spiritual subjects of any president or governor. And none know it better than themselves. They never use the formula of dictation or command. They *recommend* these days to public observance, for they can do no more, and all good citizens, Catholic and Protestant, seeing that the recommendation is highly proper, cheerfully comply with it.

To return from this rather long digression into which we have been led, not from choice, but by Dr. Morris's Lutheran rhetoric, let us examine the grounds of this so-called American glorification of Luther. The last-named gentleman epitomized the substance of what his fellow-speakers had said by praising Luther as "the Father of religious liberty," and stating boldly his opinion that "it was becoming that the American admirers of the mighty Reformer should follow the bright example" of other lands, where "numerous statues have been erected to his memory." May we venture to ask, in no captious spirit, but merely as an American citizen who reads the newspapers, and takes an interest in all the events of the day, and prefers as a rule to get to the bottom to what floats upon the surface—is all this mere rhapsody, religious or political clap-trap, designed to tickle the ears of an ignorant crowd, who neither know nor care to know what runs counter to their prejudices? Or is it meant for veritable history? Charity would incline to the former supposition; for at first sight it looks very unkind, and almost cruelly unjust, to imagine the speakers so utterly ignorant of Luther's life and teachings, and of European history for the last

three hundred years and more, as they must appear did they really mean what they said. There is no doubt, however, that they would indignantly reject our charitable view, and maintain, *unguibus et pugnis*, that all their statements are true to history. Very well! We accept their decision, and if they have, in the end, cause to complain, we can only remind them that the alternative was of their own choosing.

Hence, it becomes worth while to examine their statements by the light of that history to which they appeal, and if her torch can so far dispel the gloom of the last three centuries as to reveal even one particle of solid truth in what was said by the Henningshausers, Morrises, Congers, Millers and other orators of that festive day, we shall readily give in and cheerfully join in the plaudits elicited by their eloquence, even "wave our umbrella and throw up our hat," as was done (so say the enthusiastic reporters) by the electrified crowds who did homage to the Washington statue of the great Martin of Wittenberg.

Since Luther is invoked by Dr. Morris as "the father of religious liberty," and Senator Conger tells us that his Washington statue was honored by all "who demand complete toleration of religious belief," and Rev. Mr. Henninghauser bids us hail the 31st of October, 1517, as the forerunner of July 4th, 1776—the question we have to discuss is naturally two-fold: First, did Martin Luther know of such a thing as liberty of conscience? And if he knew of it did he believe in it himself, or proclaim it to the world as his doctrine, or that of the new church which owes to him its name and its teaching? Secondly, did this doctrine or principle, supposing it to be his, ever influence the belief of European or American Protestants? Or did his teaching help in any way to bring about the American Revolution, the Declaration of Independence, or the religious liberty that came of these two events?

It may be answered, without a moment's hesitation, that Luther knew nothing of religious liberty, much less believed in it, as we understand the phrase. He certainly believed that he had a right to understand and explain the scriptures as he pleased, and to publish as certain truth his own opinions in defiance of what the Christian world had believed for fifteen centuries. But, whatever merit there may be in this, he shares it in common with every heretic, innovator, or "reformer," who has troubled the church of Christ, from Alexander the Coppersmith or Simon Magus, down to George Rapp and Joe Smith, the only American we can boast of as founder of a "new religion."¹ No doubt, he used his private

¹ We ought, perhaps, to make an exception in favor of the "Christians" or Christians (first vowel with sound of long *i*, as the common American pronunciation will have it, though this horrid cacophony is indignantly rejected by the sect); but, though

judgment freely enough; indeed, with Rationalistic boldness, in deciding not only on the sense of Scripture, but on the authors of the Books and their respective merits, retaining or rejecting what pleased or offended him. And this it is that endears his memory to the Bretschneiders, De Wettes, Stanleys and other enlightened Protestant theologians,¹ who cunningly hold to the name of Christianity the more effectually to bring about its ruin. No doubt, he pushed freedom of thought or assertion, and pride of understanding, to an extreme limit by his revolutionary break with the Christian traditions and established faith of fifteen centuries; and this has made him a hero forever with all infidels, materialists, and unbelievers of every class. Of course, they sneer and laugh at his Solidifian whims and Impanation theories, as heartily as they do at the Catholic mass, the decalogue of Moses, or the morality of the Gospel. But they feel, nevertheless—and they are logically right—that he was their precursor, the first to make possible the overthrow of the Christian superstition and open the way for the triumph of reason and the new era of light that is to succeed Gospel darkness. Hence, it is readily understood why the Virchows,² Michelets and other enemies of God and His Christ, are amongst Luther's most ardent devotees and admirers.

appearing simultaneously in New England and Ohio about the year 1803, they seem to have had no distinct paternity. They boast of having no founder, no Luther or Calvin, no Whitfield or Wesley, as the Presbyterian author, Rev. Dr. Baird, mournfully remarks in his book, "Religion in America" (New York, Harpers, 1856, p. 562). This is the sect, we believe, to which the assassin, Guiteau, belonged both as member and preacher. The Sunday after his crime all the Methodist pulpits at the North resounded with denunciations of the misdeed and its author, whom they designated as one "M. Dohertie, a French or Irish Papist." And the pious conclusion drawn was that all foreign Papists, especially French and Irish, ought to be exterminated. But in a few days it leaked out that the imaginary French or Irish miscreant, "M. Dohertie," was no other than "Mr. Guiteau," an American by birth and ancestry, and not only no Papist, but professor and preacher of a thoroughly native American religion. His victim, Mr. Garfield, may be called almost his co-religionist and fellow-preacher, for he too was a professor and minister of the Campbellite body, the principles of which, if we are to believe Dr. Baird ("Religion in America," p. 501), were originally identical with those of the so-called Christians. Dr. Baird, to his credit be it said, hesitates whether he should count either of those sects amongst "Evangelical Christian" denominations. (*Ibid.*)

¹ De Wette in his "Worte Luther's" has a very instructive chapter headed "Luther als Rationalist." Or (as we have lost our copy of the work), it may perhaps read "als Naturalist," since the correlative chapter is headed "Luther als Supranaturalist." The book was printed in 1817 to commemorate the third century of the Reformation.

Dean Stanley said in his New York sermon (1878), "Martin Luther first loosed the shackles of the old restraint and taught us *what the Bible really was.*" The author's meaning is well known; but the veil of ambiguous words was required by the decencies of an evangelical pulpit.

² The first name on the subscription list, to erect a statue to Luther in front of the great church at Berlin, is that of Prof. Virchow. And this homage from an atheist is accepted with thanks and newspaper puffs by all Lutherans, lay and clerical.

But, granting that Luther loudly proclaimed and even exercised to the full extent what he may have counted or called *his* right of private judgment in matters of religion, did he ever dream that it was a right belonging to all Christians? We will be content with less. Did he ever in any way acknowledge that the Protestant crowds, whom he drew out with him from "the bondage of the Roman Antichrist," possessed that right? We will narrow the question still further. Did he ever allow that his followers and fellow-religionists—we will not say in far-off regions like Switzerland, France, Denmark or the Hanse-towns, nor even in Hesse, Suabia, Pomerania, Wurtemberg, Ducal Saxony, etc.,—but his own personal devotees and disciples in Electoral Saxony, in the very precincts of Wittenberg, those whom he had under his immediate spiritual charge and supervision, had the privilege of following their own private judgment in any religious matter whatsoever? History answers *no*. He never did. We defy any of his admirers to produce from his works one passage, one single line, or even an obscure hint, that they had freedom of conscience or that "religious liberty" of which Dr. Morris calls him "the Father." And even if he had so declared a thousand times in printed books, or by word of mouth from the pulpit or the professor's chair, it would signify nothing, for his practical teaching was everlastingly the reverse. But he never so declared. All men were free to differ with the Pope, to reject his teaching, to curse him to the lowest depths, were even invited and encouraged to slay him like a wolf or robber, and wash their hands in his blood and that of his cardinals and other adherents—but they must not dare differ from Martin Luther. The great Reformer (says Sir William Hamilton) had "an assurance of his *personal inspiration* of which he was, indeed, no less confident than of his ability to perform miracles. He disclaimed the pope, he spurned the Church, but varying in almost all else, he never doubted of *his own infallibility*. He thus piously regarded himself as the authoritative judge, both of the meaning and of the authenticity of scripture" (*Discussions on Philosophy and Literature, Education and University Reform*, second London ed., p. 505). He compelled, with unrelenting rigor, all his friends and disciples to subscribe to his doctrinal views, and even to his capricious changes of opinion. Some, like Melancthon, submitted outwardly, but repined in secret and groaned in confidential intercourse

Michelet wrote a life (or panegyric) of Luther, and an edition of his Table-Talk, with a translation of which, judiciously toned down, Mr. Hazlitt has regaled the refined ears and nostrils of the English and American Protestant public. Michelet passes for a Catholic, or rather is paraded as such for effect by Luther's admirers. He has his baptism, wretched man! which he cannot efface; but his opinion of Christian baptism is plain from the polite words by which he designates it. He calls it "the mark of eighteen centuries of slavery."

over the shameful slavery (Melanchthon's own words) in which their master held them. Some had the courage to rebel, and they became the objects of his relentless hate. Karlstadt, Lemnius, Wickel, Agricola, Schwenkfeld (or Grickel and Stenkfeld, as this evangelical Thersites loved to call them), incurred his enmity by presuming to dissent from his opinions. His persecution of them never ceased until he had them deprived of their charge, imprisoned, or banished from German territory. He stirred up to mutiny and sedition, by his furious revolutionary pamphlets, the peasants of his native land. But when they took up arms to put an end to their grievances, learned from his teaching and formulated almost in his very words, he bade them lay aside their weapons. And because they would not obey him, he urged princes and peoples to exterminate them. There is nothing in history more shocking than the atrocious and revengeful spirit with which he preached the crusade for the destruction of those unhappy victims whom his own teachings had led into their evil courses. He would have them choked like mad dogs. "Let them have their due, scourging and shooting. Let artillery rattle amongst them. Let no mercy be shown them, no pity. To pity them is to deny and blaspheme God. And not only princes and soldiers, but every one else must take a hand against these robbers and murderers. Let all strike, stab and slay to the best of their power, and whoever dies in this good cause can have no happier death."¹

If there was any class of men whom Luther hated, because of their religious belief, it was the "ungrateful rabble" of theologians who had received the new gospel from him as their master, and then rebelled against his authority by denying what he considered a fundamental point, his doctrine of the Real Presence. The Henninghausers, Morrises and Butlers, who glorified him in Washington at the ceremony of unveiling, were they living in his day, would soon feel, by sad experience, to what extent he deserves the title of "Father of religious freedom." They contemptuously reject his doctrine; and therefore for him would be only Zwinglians,

¹ Sie hören nicht das Wort und sind unsinnig; so müssen sie die Virgam, die Büchsen, hören und geschieht ihnen recht. Bitten sollen wir für sie dass sie gehorchen: wo nicht so gilt hie nicht viel Erbarmens: lasse nur die Büchsen unter sie sausen, sie machens sonst tausendmal ärger. . . . O Herr Gott wo solcher Geist in den Bauen auch ist, wie hohe zeit ists, dass sic erwürgt werden, wie tolln hunde (Letter to John Rühel, May 30, 1525. Apud de Wette, Luther's Briefe, Berlin, 1826, vol. ii., pp. 669, 670). And in a letter to Amsdorf of same date "Hos (rusticos) justificare, horum misereri, illis favere est Deum negare, blasphemare et de coelo velle dejicere." Ibid., pp. 671, 672. And in his book against the peasants: "Drumb, lieben Herren, loset hie, rettet hie, helft hie: erbarmet euch der armen Leut, steche, schlahe, würge hie, wer da kann. Bleibst du drüber todt, wohl dir! seliglichern tod kannst du nimmermehr überkommen." Wider die Mörderischen und Ruberischen Rotten der Bauern. Erlangen ed., vol. xxiv., p. 294.

Sacramentarians, Zurichers, or, as he loved to call them, fanatics and factious sectarians (Schwärmer und Rottengeister). Whoever held this doctrine was his sworn enemy, a soul-murderer, a damned blasphemer, a lying-mouth with a heart thoroughly possessed by the devil.¹ Either he or they must be damned on the last day. Hence, with such men he could hold no commission, have no speech, nor even interchange of letters.

If Luther was thus intolerant towards his fellow-Protestants, damning to hell's lowest depths even those who now call themselves Lutherans, what must have been his frame of mind towards Catholics. It is little to say he was in favor of persecuting them. They were such outlaws in his sight that judicial murder or private assassination were lawful and commendable in their case. We have his own printed word for it. See his letter to Melanchthon (Dec., 1535 in De Wette, vol. iv., p. 655), where he brutally triumphs

¹ Literally "an *insatanized*, *persatanized*, and *supersatanized*, wicked heart and lying mouth." But this Latinized phraseology is too weak to express the vigor of the original. Ein eingeteufelt, durchteufelt, überteuft, lästerlich Herz und Lügenmaul. "Kurzes Bekenntnis," Erlangen ed., vol., xxxii., pp. 404, cf. pp. 397, 403. A fishwoman might envy Luther's vocabulary. This foul-mouthed evangelist has forever on his tongue the words "hell, devil, damn, rascal, thief, fool, ass, villain" with many others that cannot be repeated to ears polite. It is often said by his admirers that this was the fault of his time. It is false. Nothing but sheer ignorance, or the will to defend him at all hazards, even by deliberate trampling on the truth, could invent such an excuse. It was the fulness of his heart that was perpetually bursting through all bonds of conventional decency. The cesspool seems to have been the garden that furnished his choicest flowers of rhetoric. The devil, too, seems to have ever been uppermost in his thoughts, for there is no word that occurs as frequently in his books as hell and the devil. In his dirty little tirade "Against Hans Wurst" (Jack Pudding, so he called Henry, Duke of Brunswick), the Devil's name is mentioned no less than one hundred and forty-six times, though the book be of small compass. In his book "On Councils" in merely four lines the Devil's name is repeated full fifteen times. Perhaps, the same thing may be true of the words "lie, liar," etc. He acknowledges himself that he used the words "Hans Worst" (Wurst) in writing, and *above all in preaching* (sonderlich und allermeist in der Predigt). "Wider Hans Wurst," Erlangen ed. of Luther's Works, vol. xxvi., p. 4). Here is a specimen of his style from the same book (page 6). "You lie, you devil! O Jack Pudding, how you lie! O Harry of Brunswick, what a shameless liar you are! You spew a great deal and say nothing; you revile and prove nothing." Zwingly, in one of his tracts against Luther, has the following happy hit at Luther's coarse style, his filthy, doggish eloquence (*obscoenam et caninam facundiam*, as another famous Swiss Reformer called it. See Hess, "Lebensgeschichte Bullingers," Zurich, 1826, vol. i., p. 404). We give it in the unchanged original, that the reader may have a sample of the rough Swiss dialect of Luther's great rival. The idea is, Luther will not reason from God's word; he can only use bad words and call names. "Es wird hie Gottes Wort oberhand gwünnen, nit Schwärmer, Tüfel, Schalk, Ketzer, Mörder, Uprürer, Glychsner (Gleissner) oder Hühler, Trotz, Potz, Plotz, Blitz, Donner, Po, Pu, Pa, plumb und dergleichen Schelt, Schmutz-und Schenzelwort." We quote from a Lutheran source: Luther's "Leben aus den Quellen erzählt von Moritz Meurer." Leipzig, 1870, p. 420.

Hallam remarks that Luther, "in all his attacks on popes and cardinals, disgraces himself by a stupid and nasty brutality." *Intro. to the Literature of Europe.* New York (Armstrong & Sons), 1880, vol. i., p. 306.

over the execution of Bishop Fisher of Rochester, and expresses the pious wish that there were more Henrys in the world to kill more of his cloth. See again his letter to Spalatin (Nov., 13, 1520, De Wette, vol. i., p. 522), in which he expresses his regret that Ulrich Hutten, his lay friend and fellow apostle (one of those reformers whom Sir William Hamilton calls "syphilitic saints"), had failed to lay hands on the Papal legates for whom he lay in wait with murderous intent. We have already seen how he encouraged the princes and all good Christians to wash their hands in the blood of the Pope and his cardinals (Lutheri Opera Latina, ed. Henrico Schmidt. Francofurti, 1865, vol. ii., p. 107). But it is useless to quote any more. Perhaps the Lutheran speakers at the Washington festival do not believe that Catholics have any rights of conscience, and that being idolators they are not entitled to the "religious freedom" which Luther brought into the world.

As was the father and teacher, so were the children and disciples. Luther had, in 1528, with the aid of the Elector John and his visiting commission, banished from all Saxony Calvinism and the Sacramentarian heresy, which, strange as it may sound, is the Lutheran doctrine of to-day. And the theologians who succeeded engaged the princes of their day to hold it under the strong hand of repression. They taught the people to look upon Calvinists as "Turks and Mamelukes," and to call cats and dogs by their names. Their gospel was the gospel of hate; and as Menzel says, this intolerant hatred was as truly a part of their religion as belief in the infallibility of their Church was for Catholics. Their pet maxim (to which we alluded before), *cujus regio illiusest et religio*, was no genuine creed of their heart, but good only inasmuch as it afforded a plausible shield and cover to their bitter intolerance. For, if any Lutheran prince adopted Calvinism, his divines forgot their allegiance and stirred up the people against him. This happened to John Sigismund, Elector of Brandenburg. Though he renounced his *Lutheran* right of forcing his own religion on his people, and wished merely that Calvinism should be tolerated, the angry Lutheran preachers denounced him with ferocious invectives from their pulpits, moving their blind dupes to rioting and violence so as to endanger the life of the princely family. No doubt these preachers talked as glibly as their Washington descendents of the "religious freedom" conferred upon mankind by the great Luther. But what did they mean? The poet has told us:

The factious band agree
To call it freedom, when themselves are free.

Let Catholics and Calvinists wear chains or go live elsewhere;
but we Lutherans must be not only free, but reign and triumph in
the State.

The idle boast that our political liberty has any connection with Martin Luther or his Reformation is sufficiently disproved by the fact that the liberties of Germany were effectually lost after Lutheranism had brought Germany under its influence, and nowhere more thoroughly than in Scandinavian Europe, where it became supreme without a rival. This was noticed nearly two hundred years ago (1692), by an acute observer, Lord Molesworth, British ambassador to the court of Copenhagen, who not only observed the fact, but discovered its reason. "In the Roman Catholic religion," he says, "there is a resisting principle to absolute civil power from the division of authority with the head of the Church at Rome. But in the North, the Lutheran church is entirely subservient to the civil power, and *the whole of the northern people of Protestant countries have lost their liberties* ever since they have changed their religion for a better."¹ Mr. Hallam says: "It is one of the fallacious views of the Reformation, to which we have adverted in a former page, to fancy that it sprang from any notions of political liberty, in such a sense as we attach to the term."²

Luther, then, deserves no statue at the hands of the American people, nor in their chief city, for his teachings or any influence they may have exercised on civil and religious liberty. And all the rhetoric expended by the Washington orators at the unveiling of the statue was worse than wasted. It was intended, or at all events its effect must be, to lead the ignorant into error or confirm the delusions of existing prejudice.

But are there no teachings of Luther that might be commemorated by a statue, no parts of our soil where its erection would be appropriate? Luther taught that polygamy was no sin, that it might be permitted to Christians; and he actually gave a dispensation to a profligate prince to have two wives at the same time. This shameful fact, which Luther publicly denied, and in his private letters (while admitting its truth) declared his intention

¹ Quoted by Rev. Dr. Baird in his "Visit to the North of Europe." New York (Taylor & Co.), 1843, vol. i., p. 329. It is quoted also by another Preysbyterian tourist, Mr. Laing, in his "Notes of a Traveller."

² As to his ideas on toleration of the Jews, if any one wishes to know whence Stocker, the present court-preacher of Berlin, and chief promoter of the "Judenhetze" or anti-Semitic crusade, that finds such favor just now in Prussia, let him read Luther's two wicked, as well as coarse and filthy, books; one entitled "Against the Jews and their Lies," the other, "Von Schem-Hamporas." They may be found in the thirty-second volume of the Erlangen edition. In them from beginning to end he storms and rages with pitiless invective and scurrilous abuse against God's former people. The kindest terms he has for them are "ass-heads, devil's brood, devil's damned to hell." He encourages Christians to burn down their houses with pitch and brimstone, and help the flames with hell-fire, if possible. The Jews either do not read Luther, or they have more charity than Christians; for in Germany they are foremost in contributing, with praise and purse, to Luther's honor. Or does the feeling lurk in their minds that he has done his share of the good work—the attempt to overthrow Christ's religion?

ever publicly to deny, was carefully hidden from the light of day for many years. But it has come out at last from the darkness in which it was so cautiously and so long shrouded, to cover the Reformers with everlasting infamy. Let Luther have his due. Let his statue be raised in those northern and western halls, legislative and judicial, where divorce and virtual polygamy are hallowed by the sanction of law and authority. Let his statues grace the temples, courts and dwellings of Salt Lake City, and adorn the highways of Utah, where his theories are carried out to their full extent. Let his bust be carved on the prow of every vessel that daily bears to our shores from their Lutheran homes the proselytes of Mormondom. Like Castor and Pollux of old, let him be the tutelary deity invoked to prosper their course and guide them safely to their polygamic elysium in the west.

Rev. Dr. Butler, a Lutheran minister who joined in the glorious Washington unveiling, tells us in the Philadelphia *Lutheran Observer*, of June 20, 1884, that forty per cent. of these Mormon pilgrims are directly from northern Lutheran Europe. It is not likely that he has understated the percentage. He has not told us how many more have come from Lutheran Germany. Enough, perhaps, to fill up half the number or more. The Mormon seed finds no congenial soil in dark, benighted Italy, France, Spain or Ireland. It is only where Luther prepared his way that the Mormon evangelist finds willing ears to hear his message, willing feet to follow him to the happy Western land, where he will set them down safe from the galling restraints of Gospel morals.

Dr. Butler thinks that the "gospel" ought to be preached to these Lutheran new-comers; that they need it. What! after four centuries of Luther's gospel enjoyed in its fullness, with no "damned" Jew, no Calvinist Gentile, no Catholic idolator, no wicked Jesuit,¹ to darken the splendor of its light, they yet need the gospel! What an admission! Dr. Butler will *not* admit that Luther is not the father of "freedom of conscience," "religious liberty," "American Independence," etc., but *does* and must virtually admit that the gospel of Luther is not the Gospel of Christ.

Is there no other place in our land which might justly claim Luther's bust or name, or some other token of his moral presence? We could scarcely bring ourselves to add these few lines were it not for the disgust we feel in seeing the profound ignorance—disgraceful alike to Catholics and Protestants—which prevails everywhere, as to Luther's moral teaching as regards the sexual relation of man to woman. We touch on a delicate subject, and re-

¹ This, be it remembered, is Luther's favorite epithet.

² The Second Article of the Norwegian Constitution reads: "No Jew nor Jesuit shall ever set foot upon the soil of Norway."

gret that we cannot speak of it as professional men generally do, in one of the learned or dead languages. The virtuous sages of paganism, even the professional votaries of false gods believed that continence was not only possible, but acceptable to the Deity. Martin Luther, however, who had studied more of Plautus, Ovid, Petronius, Martial (we doubt if he knew anything of Aristophanes or his lewd Greek predecessors or successors), and the Priapeia, than of Plato, Plutarch or Epictetus, was a thorough pagan of the vilest school. With the gospel in his hand, he taught his German disciples, male and female, in the world, and in monasteries, and female convents, that no man or woman could be chaste in primitive, much less in fallen nature. Chastity or continence, said he, was physically impossible. The gratification of sexual desire was nature's work (God's work as he cynically calls it), as necessary, aye, much more so than eating, drinking, digesting, sweating, sleeping, etc. (we dare not go through with his filthy catalogue). Hence, said he, to vow or promise to restrain this natural propensity, is the same as to vow or promise that one will have wings and fly and be an angel, and morally worth about as much as if one was to promise God (we are giving the vile man's own words), that he would commit adultery. The way in which he explains all this in his coarse Latin, and still coarser German, is such that it cannot be reproduced before American readers.¹ As a Catholic, we dare not sin against St. Paul's warning by mentioning, even for a good purpose, what no Christian ear should listen to. As a man and a citizen of a southern commonwealth, what else could be our first irresistible impulse than to lift cudgel or other weapon upon the theological Rabelais who teaches, in virtue of his new gospel, that all our women, Catholic or Protestant, outside the few that are married, are necessarily unclean and impure. If Protestants hearing Luther's language can keep cool and restrain their indignation, it only shows how far religious bigotry can control all natural impulses of decency and honor.

Any one who has travelled in the old world must have come upon the disinterred cities of paganism. They reveal treasures of art on which we gaze with interest and admiration ; pictures of moral and social life on which we look with horror. By the side of the temple, the patrician's ambitious dwelling, the shop of the trader or

¹ Nothing could induce us to give the original passages, Latin or German, in which the Saxon evangelist propounds his beastly theories—so full are they, to adopt Hallam's mild language, not only of indelicacy, but of gross filthiness. We refer the intelligent reader to Döllinger's summary in his work "Die Reformation, ihre innere Entwicklung und ihre Wirkungen," Regensburg, 1848, vol. ii., pp. 426-442. But if any one will cast doubt on our assertion, we hold ourselves ready to give the original documents even more fully than they have been given or quoted by Döllinger.

the artist's studio, revealing every variety of domestic and commercial life, we come across dens of infamy where moral turpitude revelled without a blush or any attempt at concealment. Jove and Danae adorn the inner walls; the entrance bears the hideous emblem of a false god, in order that iniquity might be consecrated by a shadow of false religion. Have we any such abodes of vice or temples of sin amongst us? If we have, what more appropriate ornament could they have for their portico than the bust of a man who taught, on theological grounds, that unchastity was a necessity of nature?

BOOK NOTICES.

PHILOSOPHY IN OUTLINE. By *W. T. Harris*. New York: D. Appleton & Co. (Reprint from "Journal of Speculative Philosophy.")

No little wonder has of late been excited by the revelation that, in our days, philosophers have succeeded not only in explaining, but even in strictly demonstrating, what the Church has thus far considered as absolutely unattainable by unaided human reason. Some ardent pursuers of wisdom regarded such a victory as an irrefragable proof of the truth of modern philosophical systems; others are transported with delight, imagining themselves to be lifted up to an intuition into things which heretofore were hidden from the eyes of even the wisest.

We allude to the *Philosophy in Outline*, of Mr. Harris, reprinted from the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*. We are indebted to the author for his effort to oppose agnosticism, and to support religion by reason; and we fully acknowledge the sincerity of his intentions. Yet we cannot avail ourselves of his services in behalf of Christianity, as the Church has never accepted the help offered by systems similar to his. For the attempt made by Mr. Harris to demonstrate from philosophical principles the mysteries of revealed religion is by no means new. In the beginning of this century Schelling and Hegel clothed their idealistic tenets in the terms of Christian theology to such an extent that there is scarcely any religious dogma which did not find its place in their systems. Malicious tongues, however, soon spoke evil of the philosophical piety of the two great modern thinkers, and suggested that the use of this Christian phraseology was due to an insidious design to introduce their doctrine into the schools, having been adopted by them when, after the publication of their first writings, they saw the world at large partly shocked by their pantheistic views, partly disgusted with their utter abstruseness. Of course, malicious tongues should not be heeded, nor would they have gained any hearing had not the very nature of the two philosophical systems confirmed this suspicion. The mysteries of the Blessed Trinity, of the Incarnation and Redemption, of the destiny of man, as explained by idealists, were something alto-