

CHAP. X.

FALSE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE CHURCH—SINCERITY AND INTELLECT SEEK ROME, HYPOCRISY AND IGNORANCE SEEK GENEVA—COMPARISON BETWEEN CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS ON THEIR DEATH-BEDS—BRILLIANT EULOGIES PASSED ON THE CHURCH BY DISTINGUISHED PROTESTANTS—THE CHANGING OF PROTESTANTS FROM ONE COMMUNION TO ANOTHER—PROTESTANT PRIDE.

IF the Church of Rome is such a mountain of ignorance as our intelligent Doctor makes her out to be, how comes it that so many learned men and women forsake Protestantism to enter the ranks of Roman Catholics? We could enumerate thousands of highly distinguished converts from Protestantism, yearly. No base or selfish motive prompts them to take such a step, because, in a worldly point of view, they have every thing to lose and nothing to gain. Not so the miserable few who forsake Catholicism for some uncertain creed. Take, for example, such apostates as Achilli, who was expelled for his libertinism; Hogan and Gavazi, suspended priests, whose crimes had been proven against them; degraded

in body and soul, and covered with the leprosy of their own abominations, they go away prodigals from their father's house, to be received with open arms by Protestants.

Where will you find such men as Newman, Manning, Faber, Wilberforce, Lord Spencer, the Duke of Saxe-Gotha, Prince Henry Edward of Schoenberg, Count Ingenheim, brother to the King of Prussia, Frederic, Duke of Meclenburg, Madame Swetchine of Russia, a most brilliant writer and thinker, the brother of the King of Wurtemberg, or the famous Count Stolberg and his whole family. Werner, who occupied many of the highest positions in the city of Berlin, on becoming convinced of the truth of the Catholic faith, cast away all his honors and joined the order of the poor Redemptorists. A great many others, not less distinguished in literature and science, belonging to Prussia (whose common school system, by the way, is far in advance of our own country), renounced Protestantism and became Catho-

lies, such as Schlegel, the Baron Eckstein, the famous Adam Muller, etc., etc.

Charles Louis de Haller, one of the most eminent Protestants of Switzerland, became a Catholic, for which he lost his social position, his titles and emoluments, and was driven into exile by his former friends, who, like Dr. Clark & Co., boast of their toleration and freedom of thought and action. But the glorious example of Haller was soon followed by others, among whom we may mention Esslinger, of Zurich, Pierre de Joux, of Geneva, as also Frederic Hurter, the learned President of the Consistory of Schaffhouse, Overbeck, the great painter, Laval, pastor of Condè-sur-Noiveau, Paul Latour, President of the Consistory of Maz-d'Asil, the famous Bermaz, of Lyons, and Listz, the great pianist and composer.

In the United States we have Dr. Ives, once Protestant Bishop of North Carolina, who made a journey to Rome, and throwing himself at the feet of the Pope, handed him the ring and seal which he wore as the in-

signia of his office, saying, "Holy Father, here are the marks of my rebellion." Who has not heard of the erudite, uncompromising Dr. Brownson, one of the greatest logicians that America has ever seen, and the terror of Protestant controversialists; for no man in the United States could be found so fool-hardy as to measure swords with him in the field of metaphysics or theology.

We can, also, point to Father Hecker, one of the most learned men in the country, and Superior of the Order of Paulists, all of whom were distinguished ministers of various sects, and belonging to some of the first families of the country; Dr. Rogers, of Louisville; Dr. Anderson, the distinguished essayist and writer; Bishop Bayley; Rev. Mr. Doane; Rev. Mr. Preston, of St. Ann's, New York; Father Wadhams, V. G., and Father Walworth, of our own city.

We have prominent converts from all the liberal professions, and not a day passes without fresh recruits from Protestant ranks.

Now, who do we lose? Unfrocked monks, suspended priests, and a few obstinate noodles, who, once in a great while, go to the next Protestant meeting house through spite; but who, on their death bed, conscience-smitten, send for a priest and renounce their apostacy. Protestants, again, take a mean advantage of some poor people in distress, and bribe them to forsake their religion, which they may do for a time, but, as a rule, they return again.

Who ever heard of a Catholic who, on his death bed, desired to become a Protestant? I could swear on the Holy Gospels there never was one. On the contrary, thousands of Protestants, when they come to die, renounce the errors of the Reformation, beg to be admitted to the True Church, and depart this life in peace, praising God for their conversion.

Who ever heard of an intelligent Catholic becoming a Protestant, unless for some selfish object? I challenge Dr. Clark to point out one! How many converts has he made

since his ordination, with all his ranting? Answer, ye Congregationalists of Brooklyn, and ye Dutch Reformed of Albany! There might be one or two stray sheep, without brains or influence, who have wandered from the fold for the sake of a husband or a wife, or to improve their worldly condition, and sold their birthright for a mess of pottage; but, if they were questioned as to why they changed their religion, could not give the first sensible or scriptural answer. On the contrary, I could show him hundreds in this city alone, who have renounced Protestantism, and who could hedge the learned Doctor round about with arguments and proofs as solid as the rocks of Gibraltar.

If you Protestants possess all the learning, all the sincerity, and all the holiness, of which you boast, and we only the peelings, scraps and refuse of what is good, intelligent and true, how come these things to pass?

Mgr. Segur relates the story of a Protest-

ant minister and French priest, who were traveling together in a stage coach, when the following conversation took place. The minister introduced the subject of conversions, and found great fault with the priest, for the large number of recruits the Church obtained out of the ranks of Protestantism; the priest answered with a smile, "but you have a good many on your side." "Ah," replied the minister; "yes, but you give us your garbage, while you take our cream."

A writer quoted by Mr. Foisset, in his work on Catholicity and Protestantism, said, "Had I the misfortune of not being a Catholic, two things would disturb me, I must confess. First, the number and superior mind of those who have believed in the Roman Church, after examination, ever since the times of Luther and Calvin; and secondly, the number and superior mind of those who, after examination, have abandoned Luther and Calvin, and gone over to Rome. I would, hence, come to the conclu-

sion that there is room for examination, and I would examine."

The high and flattering encomiums passed on the usefulness, strength and perpetuity of our holy Church, by men of science and philosophy outside her communion, would of themselves fill volumes. Let those who are continually predicting the overthrow of the Church of Rome, hearken to the declaration of Lord Macaulay concerning her: "The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday, compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs. The Republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the Republic of Venice was modern, when compared with the Papacy; and the Republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay — not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigor. The Catholic Church is still sending forth, to the farthest ends of the world, missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustine; and still confronting kings with the same spirit with which she con-

fronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any former age. . . . Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all governments, and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon set foot on Britain; before the French had crossed the Rhine; when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch; when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist, in undiminished vigor, when some traveler from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London bridge, to sketch the ruins of St. Paul. . . . When we reflect on the tremendous assaults which she has survived, we find it difficult to conceive in what way she is to perish."

The famous scholar Marheineke, admits the Church to be miraculously organized.

He says, "We, Protestants as we are, when we take in at one view this wondrous edifice, from its base to its summit, must acknowledge that we have never beheld a system which, the foundation once laid, is raised upon such certain and secure principles; whose structure displays, in its minutest details, so much art, penetration and consistency; and whose plan is so proof against the severest criticisms of the most profound science."

Another German philosopher, Gfröner, says, "The Catholic Faith, if we concede its first axiom, which neither the Lutherans, nor the Reformed, nor even the followers of Socinus denied, is as consistent and as consecutive as the books of Euclid. The entire of the Romish religion is founded upon the fact of a supernatural revelation, designed for the whole human race; which, as it embraces all generations, future as well as present, can never be interrupted."

Prof. Draper, of the University of New York, who has no superior in the ranks of

men of science and philosophy in America, speaks of the influence of the Christian Church on European civilization, as follows: "In the history of the European, from the time of the Emperor Constantine to the eighteenth century, the ecclesiastical element so greatly preponderates as to constitute its almost essential feature; and, after all, it is impossible to do justice to the effects which ensued on the establishment of Christianity, and its adoption by the white man as his religion. The civil law exerted an exterior power in human relations; this produced an interior and moral change. The idea of an ultimate accountability for personal deeds, of which the old Europeans had an indistinct perception, became intense and precise; the sentiment of universal charity was exemplified, not only in individual acts, the remembrance of which soon passed away, but in the more permanent institution of establishments for the relief of affliction, the spread of knowledge, the propagation

of truth. Of the great ecclesiastics, many had risen from the humblest ranks of society, and these great men, true to their democratic instincts, were often found to be the inflexible supporters of right against might. Eventually coming to be the depositaries of the knowledge that then existed, they opposed intellect to brute force, in many instances successfully, and, by the example of the organization of the Church, which was essentially republican, they showed how representative systems may be introduced into the State. Nor was it over communities and nations that the Church displayed her chief power. Never in the world before was there such a system. From her central seat at Rome, her all-seeing eye, like that of Providence itself, could equally take in a hemisphere at a glance, or examine the private life of any individual. Her boundless influence enveloped kings in their palaces, or relieved the beggar at the monastery gate. In all Europe there was not a man too

obscure, too insignificant, or too desolate for her. Surrounded by her solemnities, every one received his name at her altar; her bells chimed at his marriage, her knell tolled at his funeral. She extorted from him the secrets of his life at her confessionals, and punished his faults by her penances. In his hour of sickness and trouble her servants sought him out, teaching him by her exquisite litanies and prayers to place his reliance on God, or strengthening him for the trials of life, by the example of the holy and just. Her prayers had an efficacy to give repose to the soul of his dead. When even to his friends his lifeless body had become an offense, in the name of God, she received it into her consecrated ground, and under her shadow he rested till the great reckoning day. From little better than a slave, she raised his wife to be his equal, and, forbidding him to have more than one, met her recompense for those noble deeds in a firm friend at every fireside. Discounte-

nancing all impure love, she put round that fireside the children of one mother, and made that mother little less than sacred in their eyes. In ages of lawlessness and rapine, among people but a step above savages, she vindicated the inviolability of her precincts against the hand of power, and made her temple a refuge and sanctuary for the despairing and oppressed. Truly she was the shadow of a great rock in many a weary land!"

Great and expansive intellects have always been more disposed to deal fairly with the policy of the Church than those of smaller capacity. Take a poor, miserable sectarian devotee, with a mind as muddy as the Mississippi after a freshet, a cold, sluggish heart, and a soul no bigger than a mosquito's wing, and he is by far a greater bigot than your man of large brain and noble instincts.

In the days of my early boyhood, family matters brought me in contact with Protestants, and being of an inquiring turn of

mind, I came very near being led astray by the cunning sophistries of many of my friends. I had the presumption of going so far as to doubt many things concerning Catholic faith and Catholic principles, and if I am a judge of my own feelings, there never was a person of my age (for I was yet in my pupilage), that made a more honest investigation into the Protestant claim than I did. I sincerely regret having wasted so much valuable time in hunting up what, in my inmost soul, I designate as the *biggest religious swindle that has been known in the history of man*; for, as far as I could judge, I discovered more downright hypocrisy and covering up of sin, among Protestants, than among those who professed no religion at all. I could point my finger to professors of religion, of high standing, with a sleek, pious exterior, who make long prayers, hate Catholics, and talk much about virtue and holiness, who are regular Shylocks, unscrupulous, vindictive, and uncharitable.

A good, pious, and practical Catholic, who never, perhaps, committed a mortal sin in his life, who views himself a sinner in the sight of God, and would be scandalized if his virtues were paraded all over town, is decried by your evangelical perfectionists who are continually recounting their own good deeds; but call one of them a poor, miserable sinner, and he will take it as a very great insult.

In this connection I often think of a story told me by a person well acquainted with the facts. It happened that a maiden lady, on the shady side of forty, a seamstress by occupation, and a member of the Methodist Church, resided in a quiet western village. At the usual evening gatherings, sewing and quilting bees, "Aunt Betsy" appeared as a useful and clear-seeing person, who could turn her hand to any thing. Her knowledge of family affairs was pretty extensive, and rumor said that "she knew too much." To church, Sunday school, and prayer meetings, she was

very attentive, but one little besetting sin always accompanied her, and often made trouble among the neighbors. Aunt Betsy would carry little privacies back and forth, and generally with a small addition, to make them more interesting. Some of her Methodist sisters became disgusted, and requested the dominie to give her a "talking to." On a certain evening, during conference meeting, our heroine was sitting as if in great agony of spirit, and as the minister came around to her, he asked, "Well, Aunt Betsy, what has the Lord been doing for you, since I saw you last?" "Wall, Brother B——, I am a poor cretur (a sob); I feel my Saviour afar off, and there is no good in me" (another snuffle). "Well, sister, I don't wonder at it, for every one says you are a miserable creature." This was too much for the humility of Aunt Betsy; she jumped up with an air of perfect scorn and contempt, saying, "Wall, I am just as good as they are, or you either, consarn your impudence!" She left the

meeting to be seen at the Baptist Church the following Sunday.

The amount of vanity treasured up in Protestant congregations surpasses the court of the Grand Turk. Take, for example, the vagary of shifting or running from one Church to another on the slightest pretense, or supposed insult. They think no more of changing their religion than they do of changing their clothes. The rich cannot brook the idea of mixing up with a poor congregation; and, if a person belonging to the latter should, by hook or by crook, get rich, they are itching to go to the Church frequented by the "upper ten." The preacher does not suit one; the matter of the discourse offends another; the minister is too proud or too humble, too grave or too gay. Somebody, of influence in the congregation, had seen or heard of some one else, a hundred miles off, who is just the thing; a meeting is called, the trustees have a fight, the minister is either insulted or openly discharged, and another takes

his place, to meet, perhaps, with no better fate.

The fact is, where there is no sure faith, there is no stability of purpose in religion. The father and mother profess one set of principles, the brother and sister just the reverse; while in many cases, no two members of the family believe alike. Even the children of Protestant ministers will despise the tenets of their parents, and adopt some other system of ethics. Can this be the work of God? If so, the good Lord would contradict Himself, and to say that, would be blasphemy.

CHAP. XI.

DR. CLARK'S TRIP TO EUROPE—HIS VISIT TO THE CITY OF THE PONTIFFS—LYING STATISTICS OF MORALITY BY PROTESTANT MINISTERS—AN OLD DODGE—COMPARISON BETWEEN THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH AND THE LEADERS OF THE REFORMATION—VAGARIES OF PROTESTANTS—THE IMMORALITY OF THE REFORMERS—THE VILE PRACTICES OF THE ANTI-NOMIANS—THE PROFLIGATE LIVES OF PROTESTANT MONARCHS AND RULERS.

DR. CLARK goes to Europe, whether for the good of his health, or a respite from the terribly exhausting labor of preparing two sermons a week, it is none of our business; but the Doctor must be learned and interesting to feed his fashionable flock; he must present them with dainty scraps of spiritual food, served up with anti-Popery sauce, and seasoned with the pepper of infidelity and the salt of modern progress and Protestant civilization. But a journey to the Old World is not a journey at all without a visit to the Eternal City; and Dr. Clark, being a lover of ancient Roman civilization, must make a pilgrimage thither. Now, a D. D. of the Dutch Reformed stamp is a very small potato in