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ART. I.—“*Du Prêtre, De La Femme, De La Famille.*” *Spiritual Direction, and Auricular Confession; their History, Theory, and Consequences.* By M. MICHELET, Assistant Prof. in Faculty of Letters, &c. Phila.: James M. Campbell & Co. 1845.

THE present condition of Popery presents a singular combination of weakness and strength. Weak in the power of inherent and prolonged vitality, it is yet strong, partly in the remaining forms of a once vigorous life, and partly in that sudden and feverish strength which is, perhaps, the last convulsive start of expiring nature. So weak that it requires the aid of Austrian bayonets and English frigates to retain possession of the very seat of its power: it is yet so strong, that this very protection is given as the price of its interposition to restrain Irish turbulence and German independence. Like a huge and creeping parasite, it grew and twined itself around the nations during the long night of the middle ages; and though strong arms have torn away many of its folds, and let in the light of heaven; and though a slow and sure decay is working at its root, yet the gnarled trunk and twisted branches still retain their hold on the various ramifications that have sprung from the yet living roots of the old Roman Empire, with at once the tenacity of life and the rigidity of death. Its political element, the Papacy, as a civil power claiming certain exclusive civil and political rights, has become weak, imbecile, effete; an image of gold with feet of clay: while its spiritual element, Popery, the mystery of iniquity, the huge and fallen archangel of Christianity, still retains its power over the minds and hearts of men. The scarlet-robed queen, though degenerated into a wrinkled and shriveled hag, has still retained the privilege of her order, the terrific power of the curse.

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This spiritual element within a few years past has been quickened into an amazing activity and semblance of life. This reviving is seen in the solemn aping of its senseless mummeries in the Puseyism of England and America; in the pertinacious and arrogant assertion of its claims to the control of the French system of education; in the growing exhibitions of its ancient intolerance in France, Switzerland, Austria, and Sardinia; in the infamous outrages upon the feeble Society Islanders; in the vast and increasing revenue of the Propaganda Society; in the steady and persevering effort, not so much to convert the heathen as to undermine and supplant every Protestant mission on the face of the earth; in the secret but powerful agencies at work to cast the first seed into the virgin soil of that great hot-bed of futurity, the Mississippi Valley; and in the demands that are so boldly and insolently made for peculiar privileges in the common-school education of some of the states. These and many other facts indicate a return of unwonted energy into the decaying system of Giant Pope; which wiser heads than that of the dreaming tinker once supposed would ere this have been wrapped in its scarlet winding-sheet and laid in the great mausoleum of the past.

A natural result of this quickened energy of Popery, is a quickened resistance to its imperious and exclusive claims. Accordingly we find that in France the demand of the priests and Jesuits to have the control of the university, or great national system of education, has been met with firm and indignant opposition. The priest has attacked the philosopher, and it is therefore not a matter of wonder that the philosopher should retaliate upon the priest. When the former has left his appropriate sphere and intruded upon the domain of the latter, we cannot be surprised if the man of letters should be provoked even "to carry the war into Africa," and show that these high-swelling words were at the least, *vox et præterea nihil*.

These remarks are necessary to explain one peculiarity of the work before us. Since the French Revolution, such has been the separation between secular and sacred things, that the men devoted to the one, have been almost necessarily presumed to be aloof from the other. Even in those countries where the ministers of religion are officers of the government, and the rulers of the state are in some sense rulers of the church, there has been until recently almost a tacit conventional understanding, that the spheres of temporal and spiritual jurisdiction were totally distinct, and that mutual intrusion was inadmissible. This state of things, however, whether right or wrong, is evidently passing away. Religion is

becoming daily a more active element in the civil and political movements of the world, and of consequence, civilians and politicians are rapidly becoming theologians.

The work of M. Michelet before us is one of the indications of this new era. We have here a treatise on polemics by a layman, a philosopher, a professor in the university, and a distinguished historian of France. Nor is this a flippant, shallow satire of the Voltaire school, but the profound historical and logical analysis, and earnest, thrilling appeal of a man who, whatever be his private opinions on the subject of Christianity, has deeply pondered and keenly felt a horrible evil. It forms a part of that controversy which has been waged for some time with no little bitterness between the university and the priesthood of France. Its immediate occasion was some remarks which the author felt impelled to make in the course of his historical lectures in the college of France. These remarks excited the ire of the Jesuits and priests, and led them to attack the distinguished lecturer with great acrimony and virulence, both in public and private. He was assailed from the pulpit and from the press, in the social circle and in the street. Even his own house was not sacred from their insolent intrusion, but was invaded by the pupils of the exasperated ecclesiastics, to drown by vociferation and insulting noise the utterance of the truth they were unwilling to hear and unable to answer. In sheer self-defense, M. Michelet was forced to justify his allegations by an appeal to the public through the press; and the volume before us constitutes a part of this vindication. And well has he performed his task. The folly that could goad and drive a man of his intellectual force and historical attainments to the position of an assailant, in the very face of positive, unrepealed laws on the statute book of France, banishing from her soil the crafty, grasping, and turbulent followers of Loyola, is shown, by the recent resuscitation and virtual enforcement of these laws, and the sudden outburst of indignant feeling against these ecclesiastical Machiavellians, to have been but one of the symptoms of the *prius dementat*.

The object of the work is to develop something of the history, theory, and consequences of spiritual direction and auricular confession in the Romish Church of France. It consists of three parts. The first contains the history of spiritual direction during the seventeenth century. In this the author brings forward, as far as delicacy on the one hand and justice on the other will warrant, the theory of direction then first promulged. He gives a graphic and lively sketch of the Quietists and Mystics of that period, with proofs of the nature and tendency of their doctrines, even on such

hearts as those of a de Chantal and a Guyon, a Fenelon and a Bossuet. Some of the developments of this period are startling, and even horrible. The second part contains an elaborate and ingenious discussion of direction in general, and particularly the form that exists in the nineteenth century. It delineates the resemblances and differences between the church, the confessional, and the confessor of the middle ages, and those of the present day; the tremendous power of the system for evil on the heart of the confessor, on the penitent, and through her on society; the absolute power of the director; the internal condition of convents, and some of the horrible scenes that have been there enacted. He establishes results by the most unanswerable reasoning on the admitted rules that guide the confessor and director, and on undoubted facts that are enough to cause every husband, father, and brother in France to tremble. The description of the web that the priest slowly and gradually weaves first round his victim and then round himself, possesses a dramatic power of analysis and portraiture that thrills the heart alternately with burning indignation, painful compassion, and shuddering horror. The third part embodies a brief sketch of the family, what it is, and what it ought to be: defining the present, and the proper position of the wife and mother; and contains an earnest appeal for maternal education.

Our object, however, is not to give any extended sketch of this book, so much as to pursue a train of reflection to which it will naturally give rise. We cannot but remember that the same system essentially is existing and operating in our midst; a system which by its own profession is incapable of change, and which, therefore, indorses with its own hand the fair and legitimate developments of its principles elsewhere. And we cannot fail to consider that the same tremendous engine thus applied to social ends, may also be directed to civil and political ends with equal power. It therefore becomes a problem of most absorbing interest, what would be the result of such an application in a political system like our own? The solution of this problem involves a very wide range of discussion, historical, theological, and political, on which we cannot venture to enter within the limits of the present article.

We propose simply to select from among the topics included in this important inquiry, one, owing to its negative form among the least invidious, though not least important in its bearing on the general question, viz., the historical relation of Protestantism to our free institutions. This we will discuss by maintaining the proposition, that the Reformation of the sixteenth century is the source of American liberty. In order that we may have clearly before us

the point of discussion, it may be necessary to explain somewhat the terms of this proposition. It will undoubtedly be admitted by every one, that there is a connection of cause and effect existing between historical events as real as that which is found in any other case. The movements of communities are related to each other as actually as the movements of individuals, for the very reason that they are but the aggregates of individual action. History when written and read as it ought to be is not a confused heap of links, but a chain: not a pile of building materials in which there is contact without connection, but an edifice, vast and glorious, though yet unfinished; with much of the rubbish of the work yet scattered about it, and much of the scaffolding not yet removed: but an edifice which, when it shall be viewed from the elevation of another world, will be found to have its foundations in the depths of chaos and its culminating dome in the heights of eternity: and like the tower of Pharos, whatever name be inscribed on its external coating now, when all that is adventitious is removed, it will be found to have engraved on its very structure the name of the builder and maker, God. The philosophy of history and the use of history consist in discovering and explaining this connection of its events, and learning from them the laws of human action. This connection in some cases is nearer, and in others more remote, but in every case really and actually existing.

Now we alledge that such a connection exists between the Reformation of the sixteenth century, and the American Revolution with its happy results, in such a sense that had the former never occurred, the latter would either never have been undertaken, or if undertaken would have been unsuccessful.

We do not assert that the Reformation was the sole or direct cause of this revolution; but simply that it was though a remote yet an important cause, or rather a necessary prerequisite or preliminary movement, without which, or something analogous to it, this revolution could not have been effected. By this, we of course do not mean that nothing but this precise movement could have produced such a result; but only that in point of fact it did so; and that without some such great regeneration in human society no such result ever could have been attained.

It may be further remarked that we do not regard the Reformation as an isolated fact in history. We sometimes hear facts referred to the Reformation as their cause, simply because they are *post hoc*, without inquiring whether they are also *propter hoc*: facts which in truth are the effects of causes entirely distinct, or of causes blended with it only to a limited extent. The Reformation was

itself a vast effect, produced by the combined action of many causes : causes, some of which traced their source to the fountain that was unsealed on Calvary, or higher still, to that which gushes in its living purity from beneath the eternal throne ; and some of which came up from the dark depths of the dark ages, or deeper still, from the lurid caverns of the pit : but causes, all of which tended to this one great result, and mingled their forces in producing it to an extent of which we are now, perhaps, incapable of judging. In turn, this effect became a cause. Soon some of the combined elements became disentangled, and each produced distinct results by its independent operation, but still the great resultant of these forces rolls on : as the ocean continues to heave and swell in its billowy might long after the winds that first aroused its deep tossings have spent their force and been lulled to rest, or have swept onward to rave and rage over mountain, and forest, and field.

The American Revolution, although occurring on this side the Atlantic, was strictly a European event. It was the result of the advance of society and the evolution of free principles in northern Europe. It was occasioned by European acts of oppression. It was achieved by men, many of whom were born on the soil of Europe, and most of whom owed much of their energy to that stern, unquailing Saxon spirit that was bequeathed them by their fathers. It was rendered so speedily successful by European sympathy and assistance. In one word, had not Europe been what it was, America never would have been what it is. Europe of the fifteenth century, instead of Europe of the eighteenth, would have made the American Revolution another war of the peasants, and its fate a counterpart to that of Poland. Hence, whatever tended materially to modify or shape the state of society in Europe before 1776, exerted at least some influence on that memorable period. Had this infant Hercules come earlier to the birth, he would either have been still-born, or have been destroyed by the serpents sent by Jealousy and Hate to strangle the young giant in his cradle.

In further endeavoring to establish the proposition thus explained, we propose to show that the Reformation, in its character as a mere religious movement, prepared the way and secured the success of this great civil and political revolution : that, as a great movement of the human mind, freeing itself from the trammels of ancient authority, it found one of its earliest and most signal developments in the American struggle for independence : and also, that in its direct influence on the men to whom the success of this work under God is to be referred, it produced those characteristics of mind

and soul, to which that success is instrumentally to be ascribed. If these points are fairly made out, the main proposition may be considered as sufficiently established.

Our first position is, that the Reformation was a revival of the religion of the Bible : that this religion is favorable to liberty ; and therefore that its establishment in America, by the legitimate action of the Reformation, tended to secure the liberties that were demanded in the war of the revolution, as well as inspire the feelings by which this demand was prompted.

On the first member of this proposition we need not enlarge ; for if any one denies that the Reformation was what the name implies it to have been, an improvement in religion, and a revival of the religion of the Bible in contradistinction to that of tradition and the church, this is not the place to argue the point, even if argument were all that such a mind needed. It is not pretended that the religion of the Reformation was spotless and perfect, but simply that it was a closer approximation to the religion of the Bible. Nor is it even necessary to our purpose, to maintain that this religion of the Bible is the most perfect possible type of religion ; but merely that this is the religion of the Reformation. Even a candid Roman Catholic will admit, as F. Schlegel has virtually done, that the Reformation was a nearer resemblance to the religion of the Bible than that which preceded it ; he will only alledge that it is defective because the Bible is not the only rule of faith. Nor do we assert that the motives of all the reformers were either pure or purely religious ; that no personal or political feelings mingled in their motives : but simply that the great result, after subtracting all attendant evils, has been in favor of the uncorrupted religion of the word of God. This is a position that will be disputed by few, and disproved by none ; for "the Bible, the Bible, is the religion of Protestants."

Can there be any serious doubt about the truth of the second branch of this argument, that the religion of the Bible tends to promote genuine and wholesome liberty ? Who can read the sermon on the Mount, or some of the Epistles, and not feel that the spirit there breathed is a spirit of freedom and equality ? The paltry distinctions of wealth and rank, the haughtiness of power, and the willfulness of tyranny, are alike adverse to its principles and hostile to its success. Its high and commanding declaration is, "Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you." This rule is addressed to all, and therefore asserts what is common to all. But it most plainly implies that the rights every man claims from another, are the rights every other may claim from him :

which is only true on the manifest assumption that the rights of all (in the relative sense in which the rule alone is applicable) are equal. Thus the golden rule is the very seed from which grew the Declaration of Independence. There is not a ground on which tyranny rests its claims that is not destroyed by the Bible. Trampling upon the silly boast of hereditary nobility and royal blood, it declares that "God has made of one blood all nations of men that dwell on the earth." Sweeping away the tinsel and pasteboard partitions of society, it asserts that, in the presence of the King of kings, "the rich and the poor meet together, and God is the author of them all." The essence of tyranny is the claim of the one or the few over the many: the essence of religion is the equal rights of all. The demand of tyranny is, Submit and believe; the exhortation of religion is, "Examine all things and hold fast that which is good."

But why attempt a proof of this point from general considerations, when we have facts the most clear and undoubted that bring us to the same result? Where do we find free principles now prevalent in the world? Is it in Turkey, once the terror of Europe? in China, with her polished arts and thronging millions? or in the continent that once boasted a Memphis and a Carthage? Is it where Paganism and Islamism have sway, that we find the rights of the many admitted and respected; the wholesome administration of law and justice sustained; and the protection of person, property, and reputation secured? Did not the crescent of the prophet rise in a storm of rapine and blood, culminate in pride and tyranny, and thenceforward gleam coldly down on the prostrate and trampled rights of man? Do not the millions of Paganism prostrate themselves before the crushing car of despotism? Are not liberty and Christianity marked by the same geographical boundaries? Why this clearly-marked outline, if there be no positive and actual influence exerted by the one upon the other? The causes are not solely referable to the different religions, but in the investigation of these causes we will be able to trace so many of them either directly or indirectly to this source, as to warrant us to regard it as the decisive agency. There is a more profound influence at work here than the tricks of statesmanship and the blustering of war: an influence heaven-born and heaven-directed, which, moving in the deep pulsations of the mighty heart of society, gave strength to the strong arm, and light to the clear head, whose results we see thus palpably set forth to our view.

But we have not yet reached the limits of our proposition, which is, that the particular form of religion revived by the Reformation



was favorable to liberty of thought, speech, and action. If we judge of the nature of a religion from the writings of its advocates, we shall be at no loss to decide this point. Where do we find the writers in favor of freedom? From what source have issued treatises on the liberty of prophesying; the freedom of unlicensed printing; the duty of toleration, and kindred topics? Have the Taylors, the Miltons, the Williamses, and the Lockes, been the offspring of Popery? Has a Roman Catholic ever dared to advocate freedom of thought, speech, or action within the territory of Popery, without being consigned to the Index Expurgatorius and the Inquisition? Can there be liberty where the church claims the right to think for you, and dictate what you shall say on the most sacred and momentous of all subjects? Has not the pope, in a formal encyclical letter, uttered against one of the dearest forms of this freedom his solemn anathema? Where do we find a solitary defender of freedom of thought, freedom of speech, or freedom of action, among the defenders of Popery, *where Popery is in the ascendant*? Where do we find a solitary treatise asserting these doctrines among the books permitted to be read by the licensing authorities of the Church of Rome? Not one. This one class of facts is decisive, but they are not all that we have bearing on the point at issue.

If we look at those nations nominally Christian, do we not find almost as marked a difference among them, as we do between those that are nominally Christian and Mohammedan, or Heathen? Why has the Russian bear grasped his absolute power with such unyielding tenacity? Why have the strong-armed millions of the hardy north submitted to this despotic control? Whatever be the reason, we at least know that the autocrat is no Protestant, and that the Reformation has been studiously excluded from his dominions. Why has Italy been ground down under the combined influence of ignorance and tyranny? Has it not a climate the most delicious, a soil the most fertile in the world? Did it not in other days produce men who were at once the model and the wonder of their race? Is it not the grave of the mighty? Was not Rome in other days the champion of liberty, as well as the mistress of the world? And why this change? Why was the ancient Roman the man of iron, inflexible in virtue, unbending in patriotism, the born monarch of his race: while the modern Roman is associated in our minds with smooth-faced perfidy and deadly hate; with the tongue of the spy and the stiletto of the assassin; or lower still, with the barrel-organ and dancing dogs? The same green plains still stretch along the dark Appenines; the same sentinel moun-

tains keep watch over the beauty below ; and the same old Tiber continues to pour the tide from his mighty urn, as when the tramp of the Roman legions echoed round the world : but the spirit of Rome has departed. Can any one fail to discover the reason of this departure ? Look also at Spain. Was she not once a great and powerful nation ? Did she not wield the destinies of Europe and infant America ? Did not her fleets and argosies cover every sea ? At the very period of the Reformation was not her Charles V. at once the Napoleon and the Mohammed of Europe ? Yet rejecting the Reformation and striving to crush it, has not the curse of Almighty God seemed to rest upon her ? Do we not think of Spain now as we do of one of her strutting hidalgos, with a longer pedigree than purse ; with a sense of dignity and importance in exact proportion to the utter absence of all that could justify and support it ; stalking in state abroad and starving in rags at home ? Has she not been the victim of alternate anarchy and misrule ? Is not Protestant Britain to a great extent free and powerful, while Papal Spain and Portugal are crushed with tyranny, or rent with faction ? Is not Protestant Prussia really free, though nominally under an absolute sovereign ; while Papal Austria is as despotic in fact as in form ? Is not Protestant Saxony free in fact, while Papal Sicily is enslaved ? Will not Holland make the same comparison with Belgium, and Switzerland with southern Germany ? Is not Edinburgh, with not one half the natural advantages of Florence, immeasurably the superior of the Tuscan metropolis, though once the home of the Medici, and the literary emporium of the world ? Can all this be either accidental, or the result of causes distinct from religion ?

But can we not see the same facts at our doors ? Why has Protestant North America become free and powerful, while Papal South and Central America have become but a scene of anarchy and confusion in a similar attempt ? Is it because of a different state of society ? But what produced this difference ? Is there any point of difference affecting this question, not distinctly traceable to the direct or indirect religious influence to which they were respectively subjected ? We know that Popery, when in the ascendant, has always refused to educate or elevate the masses, and breathe into them that noble spirit of self-reliance, or rather God-reliance and truth-reliance, without which free institutions are impossible. It is true De Tocqueville argues the democratic tendency of Popery, from its placing all men on a level before it, and demanding their submission. But he might on the same grounds prove the democratic tendency of death ; or show that the Eastern despot, who tramples on all necks but his own, is an apostle of freedom. It is

precisely this demand of a blind subjection to an earthly sovereignty, temporal or spiritual, that makes Popery the unchangeable foe to genuine liberty.

In view of these facts, can any one suppose that there was a single nation, before the time of the Reformation, in which such a revolution as the American could have been effected? And since the Reformation, has there been any government not influenced by its principles, in which such a step could successfully have been taken? If not, we are led inevitably to the conclusion that unless the American colonies had possessed the very religion they did, to give form to their characters and habits; and unless the great powers of Europe had been under the same influences, we might infer a very different issue to the struggle. Either combination would have prevented victory, or victory ended in anarchy. We are therefore from these considerations at liberty to conclude, that the Reformation, regarded simply as a religious movement, was a necessary prerequisite to the American Revolution, and was so closely connected with it as, in a modified but still accurate and important sense, to be called the source of American liberty.

Our next position is, that the Reformation, as a great movement of the human mind to throw off the trammels of ancient prescriptive authority, found its earliest and fullest political development in the American Revolution.

No one, who is at all acquainted with the history of the Reformation, can consider it as simply a religious movement. It was so, perhaps, to a great extent in the minds of Luther, Melancthon, and Calvin, when it first arose: but it did not and could not long remain unmixed with other elements. It was not merely a revolution in the church, but also in the state; and indeed in the very mind and feelings of society. It was a great uprising of the human mind against authority, and a struggle for liberty of thought, speech, and action. Indeed, it was impossible that it could be otherwise, from the very nature of the system it was designed to throw off. Popery was not merely a form of religion, but a vast politico-religious system, which claimed supremacy over all human governments; asserting its right to create and depose kings; to divide and allot kingdoms, and even to dispose of the undiscovered regions of the earth, according to the sovereign will of the successor of St. Peter, and the secret decrees of the Vatican. This political power had for centuries been great and absolute, and claiming as it did to come from God, and to be exercised according to his infallible guidance, its influence for weal or for woe was tremendous. Nor were its claims merely civil or political. It claimed an authority

and assumed a jurisdiction more deep and wide than that asserted by any government on earth. Asserting as it did a constant and infallible guidance by the Spirit of God, and professing to be his vicegerent on the earth, it extended its authority to the very soul, and under the awful penalty of eternal retributions demanded the submission of thought itself to the decrees of popes and councils. Hence science was regarded as inimical to this absolute fettering of thought, and Galileo was permitted to review his astronomy in the prison of the Inquisition, for presuming to know what the church had not taught. The Romish theologians of Paris solemnly decreed "that religion was undone if the study of Greek and Hebrew was permitted." A fair specimen, perhaps, of the spirit of the Papacy at this time, in reference to these pursuits, may be conveyed in an extract from a book published by Conrad de Heresbach, a grave and respectable writer of this period. Speaking of this point, he says, "A new language has been invented which is called Greek : guard carefully against it ; it is the mother of every species of heresy. I observe in the hands of a great many people a book written in this language, which they call the New Testament : it is a book full of thorns and vipers. With respect to Hebrew, it is certain, my dear brethren, that all who learn it, are instantly converted to Judaism." This was the prevailing spirit of the Papacy before, and even at the time of, the Reformation. It is true Leo X. and some of the cardinals were patrons of literature and the arts ; but they by no means represented the spirit of the church, and even they began soon to suspect that they had committed an error in giving any countenance to this partial development of a form of science, which, cherishing as it did an enthusiasm for antiquity, was one of the forms least dangerous to the church. Popery thus ranked herself against the rising spirit of inquiry and thirst for knowledge that had begun to move throughout Europe. This was to her a most fatal error. There was a current setting strongly toward the emancipation of thought that could not be successfully resisted. The dispersion of so many Hellenists as were scattered through Europe by the fall of Constantinople ; the consequent revival of classical studies ; the discovery of printing ; the improvements in painting and engraving ; the changes in the relations of nations produced by the discovery of America and the southern passage to India ; the introduction of gunpowder into war, and the compass into navigation, produced a swelling of the tide of thought to wider expansion, that would have shivered and swept away in its onward flow broader and mightier barriers than the decayed and enfeebled embankments of the Papacy. As it, however,

attempted to restrain and curb the proud waves of this swelling torrent, the Reformation became *ipso facto* the channel in which flowed this enlargement of mind, and thus assumed its mixed character. It became thus, by this position of Popery, a revolt of the awakened mind of Europe against absolute authority in matters of thought, civil and religious, and an assertion of the liberty in both secured by the Bible.

That this movement tended toward liberty, cannot for an instant be doubted. How could it be otherwise? The instinctive logic of the mind was, if the tyranny of priests be wrong, why not that of kings? If it be intolerable in religion, why not in politics? Was it wrong in the greater, and right in the less? Indeed, the mere withdrawal of the coercive jurisdiction of ecclesiastics was itself a great advance toward liberty. It was the removal of one species of authority, and the substitution of nothing in its stead.

There was another and more important advance made in popular emancipation. In the attempt to overthrow the external symbols of the Romish worship, the people began to feel their might and appreciate its value. The *tiers etat*, in time to become so terrible to tyrants, began to feel the pillars of their prison house and test their strength. Before, like a giant charmed and fettered by a spell or a talisman, they had meekly bowed to the will of their masters: but now, like that giant, when it became manifest that he had been mocked and chained by words, they turned in fury on their oppressors. Hence, in the war of the peasants in Germany, their demand was first, freedom from the tyranny of priests; and next, freedom from the oppression of their feudal lords.

Indeed, the Reformation was forced in self-defense to assert the right of free inquiry, liberty of speech, and popular freedom. It had no sooner arisen than it met with persecution. In order to show the injustice of this persecution and defend their opinions, liberty of thought, speech, and action, were indispensable to the reformers; and hence, strongly asserted and maintained. The first books written against the absolute power of governments were written by Protestants. The Puritans of England, the Huguenots of France, and the Dutch and German reformers, were the bold advocates of the rights of the people. To this ground they were forced in sheer self-defense by their persecutors. Whatever be the reason of the fact, it still remains true, that the reformers promulgated the great truths of freedom and popular rights, and to them are to be traced the results of these truths as we find them speedily beginning to be developed. It is true, like a powerful medicine, the first effects on the body politic were violent and exhausting, as we

see in the thirty years' war, the war of the Swabian peasants, the excesses of the Anabaptists of Germany, and of the Fifth Monarchy men of England. But these eruptions and spasms are to be charged rather on the morbid humors of the diseased and corrupted system, than on the remedies applied for its cure.

But although the immediate effects of this resurrection of the mind of the world may have been apparently evil, its ultimate effects were not only good, but they tended by a necessary progression to prepare the way and secure the success of the American Revolution. The treaty of Westphalia, which is the charter of the liberties of modern Europe, was the direct result of the Reformation. Then followed the check on the grasping ambition of Austria; the rise of liberal views and extension of rights in France, under Henry of Navarre; the firm establishment of the Helvetic republics; and the two revolutions in England by which the rights of the people were so much extended: all of which were not only the results of the Reformation, but the establishment of principles which were essential to the success of the American struggle. If to this we add the great awakening of mind effected by it, in which every department of thought produced its giants, national jurisprudence became a science, and popular rights an acknowledged entity, the point in question will be still more firmly established. The latter part of the sixteenth and the seventeenth century produced more men of gigantic girth and stature in every province of intellect, more discoveries of importance to the human race, and established in northern Europe more great ideas and principles concerning popular rights, than any period of time since the creation of the world. The spirit of enterprise thus created in England produced the establishment of British power in India; and this exerted, perhaps, a more direct influence on the success of our revolutionary struggle, than men commonly suppose. Laying aside all national prejudice, it might perhaps be difficult for an intelligent mind to show, that if British relations in India had been different in the latter part of the eighteenth century; if her hold there had been less precarious, and the hopes of France to obtain this glittering prize less sanguine, the revolutionary struggle might not have been more serious, at least, if not less successful.

It may, perhaps, be difficult for us to estimate the precise obligation of the American Revolution to this general awakening of mind produced by the Reformation: but can any one doubt the fact? Would such a revolution have been dreamed of before the Reformation? Would it have been projected since in any country that had not shared in this resurrection of mind? Would it have been

attempted, even by Englishmen, before the two great revolutions of the middle and end of the seventeenth century, in which so many popular rights were established? and were not these revolutions the direct result of the Reformation? Or if attempted, is not its fate illustrated in that of France, which, maddened by the cruel abuses of Popery, confounded it with Christianity, and in rejecting the impiety of men, renounced all piety to God; and not content with retaliating the cruelties of the revocation of the edict of Nantes and St. Bartholomew's eve, having once tasted blood, like an infuriated tiger continued to gorge its horrid appetite until, wearied with its bloody banquet, it sought refuge and quiet in the very cage and fetters from which it had escaped? Or would it not have been a parallel to the fate of the South American revolutions, which, attempting to apply the principles of the age to those who were behind its spirit, have shown that there is a deeper spring of political prosperity than the strife of war or the shifts of statesmanship are able to reach?

In the nature of things it was necessary that this general outbursting of thought and feeling, caused by the Reformation, should have ultimately a channel in which to discharge its waters. Such a channel was the American Revolution. There was none previously that can be fairly regarded as the receptacle of these fountains. The only events that can at all claim to be so regarded, are the revolution which beheaded the first Charles, and that which dethroned the second James. These movements, although memorable and important, were yet not full developments of this free spirit of the Reformation; for many lingering remnants of ancient tyranny, civil and ecclesiastical, remained, some of which are not yet extinct. As there was no other event in the world earlier than the American Revolution that can lay any claim to be considered a development of these new and important principles; and as in the nature of things some such development was as necessary as a channel to a fountain, and as the American Revolution did rest on precisely the principles asserted by the Reformation, we are necessarily led to regard it as that development. This great event gathering in its mighty tide the mingled waters unsealed by the hands of Luther, Calvin, and Knox, swept onward like our own father of waters; at first struggling with opposing difficulties, but soon swelling and widening in the majesty of its resistless might until it became the outlet for half a world. Hence, in the same sense in which we assert Christianity to be the source of many of the elements of modern civilization, or any one great historical event the cause of another in which it found its natural development,

may we assert that the Reformation is the source of American liberty.

The last point to be discussed, which must be treated with more brevity than it deserves, considering its intrinsic importance and its value in the argument, is, that the American Revolution is under great obligation to the Reformation, owing to the direct influence exerted by that event, or its legitimate consequences, on the minds and souls, the habits and feelings, the principles and maxims, of those who were the chief actors in that vast and glorious achievement.

It is an interesting fact in our early history, that the first colony ever planted in North America was planted by the direct influence of the Reformation. Half a century before the landing of the Pilgrims, and a quarter of a century before Raleigh attempted to colonize Virginia, a colony was planted through the energy of the brave and devoted but unfortunate Coligny, who afterward perished in the massacre of St. Bartholomew's eve. In May, 1562, a colony was founded at Port Royal Inlet, now embraced by the county of Beaufort, S. C., and a fort built which was called Carolina, in honor of Charles IX., the subsequent murderer of so many thousand brave and unsuspecting Protestants. The object of this colony was to give a place of refuge to the persecuted Huguenots, who, from the time that Francis I. opposed the Reformation because he thought it destructive to monarchy, had been the objects of dislike and ill-disguised persecution. The object of its noble founder was to establish a vast French Protestant empire in the new world, which should fully embody the great ideas of the Reformation. Had not this plan been frustrated by the frenzy and cruelty of Popery in the assassination of Henry IV., the revocation of the edict of Nantes, the bloody massacre of St. Bartholomew's eve, and their subsequent results, the project would probably have been successful; and America, instead of being an offspring of England, would have been a child of ancient and chivalrous France, to whose warm and generous impulses it has always had more affinity of feeling, than to the cold reserve and stately pride of the haughty and self-styled mistress of the ocean. And we may remark in passing, that it can be shown with undoubted clearness, that but for these same causes, by which the Reformation was so nearly crushed in France, the French Revolution in its bloody form would most likely never have occurred; the structure and character of the French government would have been entirely different, and the destinies of the world would not have been written in blood and hell-fire as we now see them recorded. These speculations, however, we forbear.



But although this effort was frustrated by the blind and bloody zeal of the Jesuits of France and Spain, we know that afterward, when France, by the revocation of the edict of Nantes, not only murdered thousands of her Protestant children, but drove more than five hundred thousand of her best and bravest subjects to seek beyond her limits an asylum of freedom to worship God, the new world became a place of refuge for the persecuted of the old. The children of the Huguenots in the struggle of the revolution retained their ancestral love of freedom; and in the halls of congress, and on some of the hotly-contested fields of the south, left the same testimony of the Protestant spirit of antagonism to tyranny, that yet speaks in the blood of their martyred fathers from the vine-clad hills of sunny and beautiful France. Thus the Huguenot spirit, which was in part the embodied spirit of the Reformation, a spirit of high and ardent longing after freedom of thought, of speech, and of action, untrammelled by priestcraft or kingcraft, engrafted on a national and hereditary jealousy of England, produced in its influence on many of the colonists that indomitable love of liberty, and that steady resistance to the encroachments of British oppression, that were the animating spirit of the revolution.

But when we think of the men who gave character to the revolutionary struggle, we instinctively turn to the land of the Pilgrims, and on Plymouth Rock we see the fire kindled that proved the beacon of the world. Had New-England not been what she was, old England would not have been what she is;—the rival instead of the mistress of America. The spirit of the revolution first appeared there, because it had been there planted by the men who forsook home and fatherland for “freedom to worship God.” Its first embodied organizations were there formed, for there had England first sown the dragon’s teeth that were to spring up armed men. The first victims that bled on its green altar were the children of the Pilgrims. The first giant blow that sundered the bonds uniting the old world and the new, was struck on the soil that enshrined the hallowed dust of the Pilgrim fathers.

It is a curious fact, perhaps sufficiently authenticated, that in consequence of the civil and ecclesiastical oppression of Charles I., that monarch “who never said a foolish thing and never did a wise one,” while the same persecuting spirit was still rife that drove the Pilgrim fathers in 1620 to seek a grave in the wilderness, rather than a home in oppression, Oliver Cromwell and the immortal Hampden, in 1637, were actually on board a vessel in the Thames bound to New-England. The vessel was prohibited from sailing by an order of council, and Cromwell and Hampden ordered back,

soon to put the heel on that government that had thus placed an interdict on them.

Whether this be true or not, there was yet many a "village Hampden," and many a Cromwell, "guiltless of his country's blood," in that noble band of emigrants, and they left their own high and free spirit as their most priceless legacy to their children.

There is no one, who knows anything of the history of this period, that knows not, that the Puritan was at once the child of the Reformation and the child of liberty. From the persecutions of the infamous house of the Stuarts, whose maxim was, "No bishop, no king;" and from the free air of Genevan liberty and republicanism, they imbibed on the one hand a hatred of tyranny, and on the other a love of freedom. It is true there are those who make themselves merry at the expense of the Roundhead: and the whine, the cant, and the oddities of these men are all that they can see worthy of their notice. But they who do not look at men with the eyes of a dancing-master or a fop, can see in the Puritan some of the noblest lines of the human character. Wherever we see him, we find the same great traits of lofty purpose, unshaken faith, patient reliance on the truth, and undying love of liberty. John Hampden, that pure and lofty spirit who combined the tongue of a Henry with the heart of a Washington, was a Puritan. John Milton, that man of fire, whose love of liberty was a consuming passion, and who would have been the greatest patriot and the greatest statesman of his age, if he had not been the greatest poet, was a Puritan. The men who enacted the most important parts in the two great revolutions of England, and by whose treasure and blood their most valuable results were secured, were Puritans. The Puritan embodied the soul of the Reformation, and bequeathed it to his descendants, who in the Hancocks, the Adamses, the Otises, the Warrens, and the Franklins of the revolution were worthy of the lofty and unflinching spirit of their fathers.

Nor were these the only elements mingling in this mighty production of the advancing history of the world. "God sifted three nations for seed to sow this virgin soil." There mingled with the conscript fathers of the republic, who traced their ancestry to the Huguenot and the Puritan, the children of the men who on the level plains of Holland wrested from the bigoted Philip the heritage of the Reformation. The descendants of these men inherited this glorious patrimony, and asserted it at Saratoga, White Plains, Monmouth, and Princeton.

Thus, in the Huguenots of the south, the Puritans of New-England, and the republican emigrants of the United Provinces in the

middle states and New-York, all of them men cradled in the principles of the Reformation, and men who gave the tone to American liberty, we have the direct influence of the Reformation in producing, shaping, and consummating the struggle for the freedom of our fathers.

Nor was the coincidence of such training and such a part in the drama of the world's history merely accidental. These were men whom it is not hazarding too much to assert, that Popery, in her unmingled influence on a people, never could have produced. If she could, where are they? Has not a thousand years been long enough to bring them forth? Why then have they not appeared? Why have they been only the children of the Reformation? Is it not because the Reformation alone was capable of generating such men? What were the traits of character required by the revolution? Were they not precisely that boldness, firmness, and independence of spirit produced by the Reformation? From the very nature of the movements, were not the attributes of mind required for each, identical? Are not the men who achieved both, remarkably similar in character? And do we find such men coming forth as the legitimate offspring of Popery? Why is it thus on any other ground than the hypothesis defended in this discussion? But whether Popery could produce such men or not is an immaterial point in this argument: is it not true that in point of fact, the Reformation in its legitimate results did produce and mold the very men who achieved the revolutionary struggle? If so, this is all that we need for the establishment of this branch of our proposition.

We have thus shown, if we mistake not, that the Reformation, being a revival of the free religious spirit of the New Testament, tended at least to pave the way for the assertion and maintenance of the doctrines of the revolution, and being securely planted on the soil of America, inspired the love of liberty and prompted its demands; that, as a great movement of the human mind in Europe, endeavoring to free itself from the trammels of prescriptive authority, it found its first and fullest legitimate development in the birth of the American nation; and also, that in its direct influence on the mere individuality and personal character of those engaged in this struggle, it produced the men qualified for the crisis.

Combining these considerations, we are at liberty to conclude that the Reformation was in the sense before explained the source of American liberty.

This discussion is not one of barren, useless speculation. There are causes now at work in our midst that go to show that we are

not done with the struggle of 1520. Let this land become deeply imbued with the pure and plastic spirit, with the piety, the morality, and the free soul of the Reformation, and the hallowed structure of our liberties, erected in such troublous times, may bless the eyes and gladden the hearts of future generations. But let the contrary be the case, and the star that rose like that of Bethlehem, to lead the weary wanderer westward to a glorious destiny, shall set in darkness and blood, the last hope of a wretched and down-trodden world.

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ART. II.—*Essay on our Lord's Discourse at Capernaum, recorded in the Sixth Chapter of St. John.* By SAMUEL H. TURNER, D. D., Professor of Biblical Learning and Interpretation of Scripture in the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church; and of the Hebrew Language and Literature in Columbia College, New-York. Harper & Brothers, 82 Cliff-street, N. Y. 1845.

THE popular mind of this country, though commonly considered enlightened, is certainly not a very reflective mind. We read much; but do we think much? Newsprints, pamphlets, books, and publications of every imaginable sort, are continually passing through our hands. But do we stop to deliberate over their contents? Does not the incessancy with which we have to keep swallowing down this endless variety of intellectual food, necessarily forbid any wholesome digestion of it? Then, again, our pursuits and our habits as a people rather indispose us to silent, accurate reflection. The very activity of which we boast is fatal to critical inquiries of a speculative nature; for it is chiefly a mechanical, out-door activity. We rise from our beds in the morning—perhaps catch up our Bibles, and read a chapter as we dress; but the rattling of rail-cars, the giddiness of motion, the anxieties of business, the din and bustle which everywhere surround us, quickly dissipate the impression of what we read, and by noon it is well if we can recollect the place at which we opened.

Or, if ever we do study and search, it is generally for some result sensibly affecting ourselves, either immediately or more remotely. Knowledge is rarely acquired for its own sake. "This machine at which I am laboring, I wish to get a patent for, and make my fortune by it." "This address which I am preparing, I expect to deliver to-night before an applauding assembly." "This