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BAILEY'S FESTUS.

FESTUS: *A Poem*, by PHILIP JAMES BAILEY. Barrister at Law. Ninth American Edition. Boston: Benjamin B. Mussey & Co. 1850. 12 mo. pp. 412.

THE last great poem of the age! We have little fear that the time will ever come when Smelfungus Redivivus need throw down his pen in despair, declaring that critics must cease to criticise because authors had ceased to write. The present century properly claims the maternity of Reviews, and statistics of the present time would show that it has been increasingly prolific; and yet, if Reviews have any mission to discharge at all, they are scarcely sufficient for the labor ready prepared to their hands. Notwithstanding the practical business character of the present age, it is emphatically an age of authorship; and, while the great facilities and inducements which it affords may elicit much that is worthless and trashy, we cannot help thinking that it gives birth to more golden thought than any preceding one, and that in its womb there are mighty travailings of spirit, the offspring of which a future age will recognise and cherish. There are, doubtless, great eras in the world's history and in national history, when, in correspondence with the outward phase of the age,

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all historical documents fail to make clear, the existence namely of a strictly evangelical church, founded on Protestant principles, (the Bible the only rule of doctrine, justification by faith, the clergy of one order, the people the fountain of all church power,) breathing a Protestant spirit, and carrying men to heaven without sacramental mummery or mysticism in the common sense Puritan way of the present time. So we have seen Dr. Bacon pleasing himself with the imagination, that the Christianity of Lyons in the second century, in the days of Pothinus and Irenæus, and of course also the faith and piety of the church generally in a still earlier part of the same century, in the days of Ignatius and Polycarp, corresponded in all material respects with the modern ecclesiastical life of Connecticut and Massachusetts. Is there any more ground for this fancy, than can be urged in favor of the one we have just now dismissed? We believe not. It rests throughout on a mere hypothesis, which involves in the end a purely arbitrary construction of history, just as wild and bold, to our view, as any that has been offered to us, from a different standpoint, by Strauss or Baur. Into this part of the subject however, the limits necessarily imposed on us at present will not permit us to enter. We hope to be able to return to it, in a second article, some time hereafter.

J. W. N.

ZACHARIAS URSINUS.¹

AMONG the reformers of the second generation, the race of distinguished men, who, though themselves the children of the reformation, were yet in a certain sense joined with the proper original apostles of that great work, in carrying it out to its final settlement and conclusion, no one can be named who is more worthy of honorable recollection, than the learned and amiable author of the far-famed Heidelberg Catechism. In some re-

¹ In the preparation of this article, use has been made of the following works: ALTINO'S *Historia de Ecclesiis Palatinis*; VAN ALPEN'S *Geschichte und Literatur des Heidelberg'schen Katechismus*; PLANCK'S *Geschichte der protestantischen Theologie*; BAYLE'S *Dict. hist. et crit. art. Ursin*; SEISER'S *Geschichte der Reformation zu Heidelberg*; K. F. VIERORDT'S *Geschichte der Reformation im Grossherzogthum Baden*; EDWARD'S *Das Dogma vom heil. Abendmahl und seine Geschichte*. Reference may be made also to the writer's own work on the *History and Genius of the Heidelberg Catechism*.

spects, indeed, the authorship of this symbol must be referred, we know, to different hands. But in its main plan, and reigning spirit, it is the genial product, plainly, of a single mind, and to the end of time, accordingly, it will be known and revered as a monument, sacred to the memory of *Zacharias Ursinus*.

In one view we may say of the Catechism, that it forms the best history, and clearest picture of the man himself; for the materials of his biography, outwardly considered, are comparatively scanty, and of no very striking interest. He had neither taste nor talent for the field of outward adventure and exploit. His whole nature shrank rather from the arena of public life. In its noise and tumult, he took, comparatively speaking, but little part. The world in which he moved and acted mainly, was that of the spirit; and here, his proper home, was the sphere of religion. To understand his history and character, we need not so much to be familiar with the events of his life outwardly taken, as to know the principles and facts which go to make up its constitution in an inward view; and of this, we can have no more true or honorable representation, perhaps, than the likeness that is still preserved of him in his own Catechism. Here, most emphatically may it be said, that "he being dead, yet speaketh."

Ursinus was a native of Bresslau, the capital of Silesia. He was born on the 18th of July, in the year 1534, of respectable parents, whose circumstances, however, in a worldly view, appear to have been of the most common and moderate order. The proper family name was *Beer*, (Bear) which, according to the fashion of the learned world in that period, was exchanged subsequently, in his case, for the more sonorous corresponding Latin title, *Ursinus*. He discovered at a very early period, a more than usual talent and disposition for acquiring knowledge, and was sent in his sixteenth year accordingly, to Wittemberg, for the prosecution of his studies in the celebrated University of that place, then under the auspices mainly of the amiable and excellent Melancthon. Here he was supported, in part it seems, for a time at least, by foreign assistance, and particularly by an allowance from the Senate of his native city; while he was enabled soon to help himself also, in part, by a certain amount of service in teaching.

He remained in connection with this University, altogether, seven years, though not without some interruption. The breaking out of the plague in Wittemberg, was the occasion of his spending a winter, in company with Melancthon, at Torgaw; and for some other reason, the threatening aspect, perhaps, of the political heavens, he left the institution again in 1552, and

returned with honorable testimonials to the place of his birth. The year after, however, we find him back once more in his beloved Wittenberg, where his studies were continued now with great diligence and success, on to the year 1557.

During this period, his proficiency in the arts and sciences, was such as to win for him general approbation and favor. He is represented as excelling particularly in classical literature, philosophy and theology. He was considered besides, quite a master of poetry; and composed himself various productions in Latin and Greek verse, which were much admired. Along with all this intellectual culture too, went hand in hand a corresponding culture of the inner spiritual man, which formed the crowning grace of his education, and added new value to every gift besides. Naturally gentle, modest, amiable and sincere, these qualities were refined and improved still farther, by the power of religion, which was with him a matter of living sense and inward heart-felt experience, the deepest and most comprehensive habit of the soul. It speaks with special significance to his praise, that Melancthon, the ornament of the University, conceived a very high regard for his abilities and moral qualities, and continued on terms of intimate personal friendship with him to the end of his own life. The high opinion in which he held his pupil, is shown strikingly by the encyclical letter of recommendation which he placed in his hands, when he proposed, at the close of his course in Wittenberg, to go abroad for a time, on a tour of observation and acquaintance in other parts of the learned world as it then stood.

This sort of travel, which served to bring the young apprentice of letters into personal contact with foreign scholars, was considered in that age necessary in some sense to a finished theological training; and it shows the importance attached to it, as well as the honorable relation in which he stood to his native place, that the Senate of Bresslau saw proper, in the case of Ursinus, to provide for the expenses of his journey out of the public funds. It was on the ground of this municipal generosity mainly, that he felt himself bound subsequently, to devote his first professional labors to the service of this city.

Melancthon describes him, in his circular, as a young man of respectable extraction, endowed of God with a gift for poetry, of upright and gentle manners, deserving the love and praise of all good men. "He has lived in our Academy," he goes on to say, "about seven years, and has endeared himself to everybody of right feeling among us, by his sound erudition, and his earnest piety towards God." Then follows a notice of his pil-

grimage, undertaken to make himself acquainted with the wise and good in other lands; who are affectionately asked, accordingly, to receive him in a spirit answerable to his learning and modesty.

Provided with this high recommendation, he accompanied Melancthon first to the memorable conference, held in 1557, at Worms, from which place he proceeded afterwards to Heidelberg, Strasburg, Basel, Lausanne and Geneva. This brought him into acquaintance with the leaders generally of the Reformed Church; who seem to have been gained, in a short time, to as favorable a judgment of his character, as that just quoted from Melancthon himself. From Switzerland he passed, by Lyons and Orleans, to the city of Paris, where he spent some time perfecting himself in French and Hebrew. After this, we find him again in Switzerland, making himself at home, especially in Zurich, where he enjoyed the intimate confidence and friendship of Bullinger, Peter Martyr, Gessner and other distinguished men, then belonging to that place.

On his return to Wittenberg, he received a call (Sept., 1558) from the authorities of Bresslau, to take charge of its principal school, the Elizabethan Gymnasium.

Here his services gave great satisfaction. But it was not long before a difficulty rose, which brought this first settlement to an abrupt termination. This was nothing less than a charge against him of unsound faith in regard to the sacraments. It was a time when Lutheran Germany was passing into a general hurricane of excitement, under the progress of the second great sacramental war, which resulted in its rupture, finally, into two confessions. Ursinus was found to hold the Calvinistic view of Christ's presence in the Lord's supper, as distinguished from the high Lutheran doctrine of such men as Westphal and Tilemann Hesshuss. An alarm was raised accordingly, by the clergy of the place, on the subject of his orthodoxy. As in the case of the celebrated minister Hardenberg, of Bremen, so here one great ground of suspicion, was Melancthon's friendship and favor. It seemed to be taken for granted, by the zealots for high Lutheranism, that no one could be in close intimacy with Melancthon, who was not at bottom a Crypto-Calvinist. Ursinus published a small tract in his own justification, setting forth in clear and compact summary, his views of the sacramental presence. This was his first theological production. It exhibited what might be regarded as the Melancthonian doctrine of the eucharist, and was in fact approved and commended by Melancthon himself in terms of the highest praise. It did not serve,

however, to silence the spirit of persecution in Bresslau. The author was still held up to reproach as a *sacramentarian*. In these circumstances, he made up his mind in a short time to withdraw. The magistracy would gladly have retained him, in spite of the industrious clamor of his enemies. But he had a strong constitutional aversion to all strife and commotion; and he retired accordingly, with an honorable dismissal, a voluntary martyr to the holy cause of peace, to seek a more quiet sphere of action in some different quarter.

When asked by a friend at this time, whither he would now go, his reply was in keeping with the union of gentleness and firmness, that entered so largely into his character. "I am well content to quit my country," he said, "when it will not tolerate the confession of truth which I cannot with a good conscience renounce. Were my excellent preceptor, Philip, still alive, I would betake myself to no one else than him. As he is dead, however, my mind is made up to turn to the Zurichers, who are in no great credit here, indeed, but whose fame stands so high with other churches, that it cannot be obscured by our preachers. They are pious, learned, great men, in whose society I am disposed, henceforth, to spend my life. As regards the rest, God will provide."

He reached Zurich on the 3d of October, 1560, and devoted the following winter here, to the active prosecution of his studies; under the guidance, more particularly, as it would seem, of the distinguished theologian, Peter Martyr. His relations to this learned and excellent man were in some respects of the same kind, with those in which he had stood previously with Melancthon. Among all the Swiss reformers, there was no one to whom he attached himself so closely, or who exerted over him the same influence, as this may be traced still in his subsequent writings. So far as the Reformed complexion is found to prevail directly in Ursinus, the pupil of Melancthon, the modification is to be referred mainly to Peter Martyr.

In the mean time God was preparing a proper theatre for his activity in the Church of the Palatinate, for which, also, his whole previous history and training might seem to have been designed and ordered, in the way of special Providence.

This interesting country, had hardly become well settled on the side of the Reformation, before it was thrown into violent commotion, in common with other parts of Germany, by the breaking out of the second sacramental war, to which we have already referred, as leading to the rupture of the two confessions. Out of this rupture, and in the midst of these storms of fierce

theological debate, grew the *German Reformed Church*, over against the cause of high Lutheranism, as this came to its natural completion finally, in the Form of Concord.

The great point at issue in the controversy, as it now stood, was the *mode* simply of Christ's mystical presence in the holy eucharist. The fact of a real communication with his true mediatorial life, the substance of his body and blood, was acknowledged in general terms on both sides. The rigid Lutheran party, however, were not satisfied with this. They insisted on a nearer definition of the manner in which the mystery must be regarded as having place; and contended in particular for the formula, "*In, with and under,*" as indispensable to a complete expression of the Saviour's sacramental presence. He must be so comprehended in the elements, as to be received along with them by the *mouth*, on the part of all communicants, whether believers or unbelievers. It was for refusing to admit these extreme requisitions only, that the other party was branded with the epithet, "sacramentarian," and held up to malediction in every direction as the pest of society. The heresy of which it was judged to be guilty, stood simply in this, that the presence of Christ was held to be, after the theory of Calvin, not "in, with and under" the bread, but only *with* it; not for the mouth, but only for *faith*; not in the flesh, but only by the *spirit*, as the medium of a higher mode of existence; not for unbelievers, therefore, but only for *believers*. This was the nature of the question, that now kindled all Germany into conflagration. It respected altogether the mode or manner of Christ's substantial presence in the Lord's supper, not the awful fact of the mystery itself as always owned by the Christian Church.

The controversy soon reached the Palatinate. The city of Heidelberg especially, and its University, were thrown by it into complete confusion. It was in the midst of this tempestuous agitation, that the wise and excellent Prince Frederick the Third, surnamed the Pious, succeeded to the electorate. Under his auspices, as is generally known, the Reformed or Calvinistic tendency became established in the Palatinate. In the first place, the public quiet was restored by the dismissal of the two factious spirits, Heshuss and Klebiz, who, as leaders on different sides, made the pulpit ring with intemperate strife, and were not to be silenced in any more gentle way. It was then felt necessary, in the next place, to have the subject of this controversy brought to some such settlement, if possible, as might preserve the peace of the country in time to come. The Elector conceived the design, accordingly, of establishing a rule of faith for

his dominions, which might serve as a common measure to compose and regulate the existing distraction. The Augsburg Confession, plainly, was not enough for this object; for the point to be settled was mainly, in what sense that Confession was to be taken on the question here in debate. Melancthon was consulted in the case, and one of the last acts he performed, is found in the celebrated *Response*, by which he gave his sanction to the general course proposed by the Elector Frederick; although, of course, he could not be supposed to have in view the end to which the movement came finally, as a formal transition to the Reformed Church. Such, however, was in a little time the result. There was no violent revolution in this change. The reigning spirit of the University, and of the land, was already more Reformed than Lutheran. Some alterations were made in the forms of worship. In all new appointments, preference was given to Calvinistic divines, and several were called from abroad to occupy places of trust and power. Finally, the whole work may be said to have become complete by the formation of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Among the new appointments of which we have just spoken, no name deserves to be regarded as more important or conspicuous, than that of Zacharias Ursinus. The direct occasion of his call, appears to have been an invitation of the same kind addressed in the first place to his friend, Peter Martyr, which this last saw proper to decline on account of his advanced age, while he used his influence afterwards, to secure the situation for Ursinus. In this way he was brought to Heidelberg, A. D. 1561, where he became honorably settled as principal of the institution known as the "Collegium Sapientiæ," in the twenty-eighth year of his age.

The year following, he was promoted to the degree of Doctor of Divinity, which imposed on him the duty of delivering theological lectures in the University.

It soon became plain, that he was formed to be the ruling spirit of the new movement, which had commenced in the Church of the Palatinate. He gained completely the confidence of the Elector; his learning and piety, and excellent judgment, secured for him the general respect of his colleagues; and from all sides, the eyes of men were turned to him more and more, as the best representative and expounder of the cause in whose service he stood, and to whose defence he had cheerfully consecrated his life. In this way, with all the natural quietness of his character, we find him gradually placed in the very heart and centre of the great ecclesiastical struggle, in which he was

called to take part. His settlement at Heidelberg, continued till the death of his patron, Frederick, in 1576, a period of fifteen years. During this time, his labors were kept up with the most untiring constancy and diligence; the occasion and demand for them, being still in proportion to their generally acknowledged faithfulness and worth. His regular official services were extensive and heavy; the more especially so, as he could never consent to be loose or superficial in his preparations, but felt himself bound always to bestow on his lectures the most thorough and conscientious care. But in addition to all this, he was called upon continually, to conduct a large amount of other business, growing out of the public history of the times, and often of the most arduous and responsible kind. On every emergency, in which it became necessary to vindicate or support the Reformed faith, as it stood in the Palatinate, whether this was to be done in the name of the theological faculty of Heidelberg, or by the authority of the Elector, Ursinus was still looked to as the leading counsellor and spokesman of the transaction. With the high position, moreover, which the Church of the Palatinate very soon won, among the Churches generally of the same confession, associated as its distinctive genius and spirit were from the beginning with his name, the representative character now noticed took from year to year a still wider range, extending in time, we might almost say, like that of Calvin himself, to the entire Reformed communion. As the earlier chiefs of this faith were removed by death, there was no one who, by his personal connections, his extensive knowledge, his clear insight into the interior nature of the points in debate, and the admirable qualities of his spirit, could be said to be better fitted to represent the communion in any such general way; and there was no one probably, to whom in truth the confidence of all was so much disposed to turn, as the main prop and pillar, theologically, of the whole Reformed cause.

Among the public ecclesiastical services to which we have just referred, the first place belongs, of course, to the formation of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, which is to be regarded as in some sense, the foundation of his subsequent labors.

To this task he was appointed in 1562, by the Elector Frederick, in association with the distinguished theological professor and court-preacher, Caspar Olevianus. Each of them drew up separately, in the first place, his own scheme or sketch of what was supposed to be required, Olevianus in a popular tract on the Covenant of Grace, and Ursinus in a two-fold Catechism, the

larger for older persons, and the smaller one for children.¹ Out of these preliminary works was formed, in the first place, the Catechism as it now stands. It has been generally assumed from the first, that the principal agency in its production, is to be ascribed to Ursinus; and to be fully convinced of the correctness of this view, it is only necessary to compare the work itself with his larger and smaller Catechisms, previously composed, as well as with his writings upon it in the way of commentary and defence afterwards. Whatever use may have been made of foreign suggestion or help, it is sufficiently plain from the interior structure of the formulary itself, that it is no mechanical compilation, but the living product of a single mind;

¹ Olevianus was a decided and strenuous disciple of Calvin. He had less learning than Ursinus, but was more practical and popular. He excelled as a preacher rather than as a professor. He had great influence with the Elector; and to him mainly the Reformed Church of the Palatinate was indebted for its organization and discipline, borrowed from the Calvinistic model. It was well that his activity went prevailingly in this direction, and that the Catechism was cast mainly in the mould of a different mind. At the same time it owes something no doubt to his theology. He laid great stress on the idea of the *Covenant of Grace*, as a key to the right understanding of religion, and in this respect may be regarded as the forerunner of Cocceius and Lampe, who afterwards brought the "covenant theology" so widely into fashion in the Reformed Church. His dying hours were full of lively confidence and joy. The last word he spoke, when asked whether he was sure of his own salvation, is said to have been, as he raised his feeble hand and brought it to his breast, "*Certissimus*."—This point of assurance, as an element of faith, was held to be an important distinction of Protestantism, over against the Catholic view of justification. Ursinus also insisted upon it with great emphasis; going so far as to say, in one case, that it is blasphemous and devilish to question the fact, and that if a man have not assurance of his salvation before leaving this world, he can never have it in the next. "Faith itself is this assurance, which is the beginning of eternal life. . . It makes my hair stand on end to hear it denied. . . Not for a hundred thousand worlds would I be so far from my Christ, as not to know certainly whether I were his or not. That is true heathenism and the very sill of hell." Hence the peculiar form which the definition of faith takes in the 21st Question of the Catechism. With Olevianus all terminated, as with Calvin, on God's absolute predestination, as the fountain of the covenant and so the principle of redemption. Ursinus was a believer too in predestination; he read over the whole Bible at one time, from beginning to end, just to satisfy himself on this point, and it remained a settled article for him ever after. But it was controuled practically by the Melancthonian or proper German habit previously established in his soul. He could not make the decree of election, which is by its very conception partial and abstract, to be the *principium* or root of the new creation. No such election accordingly appears in the Catechism. It moves in harmony with the old Apostles' Creed. It teaches (Quest. 37), not a limited, but a universal atonement, an incarnation for the race, not a Gnostic or Baptist-ic phantasmagoria for only a part of it.

there is an inward unity, harmony, freshness and vitality, pervading it throughout, which show it to be, in this respect, a genuine work of art, the inspiration, in a certain sense, of one representing the life of many. And it is no less plain, we may say, that the one mind in which it has thus been moulded and cast, is that emphatically of Ursinus and of no one besides. The Catechism breathes his spirit, reflects his image, and speaks to us in the very tones of his voice, from the first page to the last.

It is well known, what widely extended favor this little work soon found in all parts of the Reformed Church. In every direction, it was welcomed as the best popular summary of religious doctrine, that had yet appeared on the side of this confession. Distinguished divines in other lands, united in bearing testimony to its merits. It was considered the glory of the Palatinate, to have presented it to the world. Some went so far, as to make it the fruit of a special and extraordinary influence of God's spirit, approaching even to inspiration. It rose rapidly into the character of a general symbol, answerable in such view to what Luther's Catechism had already become as a popular standard for the other confession. Far and wide, it became the basis on which systems of religious instruction were formed, by the most excellent and learned divines. In the course of time, commentaries, paraphrases, and courses of sermons, were written upon it almost without number. Few works have passed into as many different versions. It was translated into Hebrew, ancient and modern Greek, Latin, Low Dutch, Spanish, French, English, Italian, Bohemian, Polish, Hungarian, Arabic and Malay. In all this, we have at once an argument of its great worth. It must have been admirably adapted, to meet the wants of the Church at large, as well as admirably true to the inmost sense of its general life, to come in this way so easily and so soon to such wide reputation and credit. Originally a provincial interest merely, it yet grew rapidly into the character of a general or universal symbol; while other older Catechisms and Confessions of Faith, had force, at best, only for the particular countries that gave them birth. It was owned with applause, in Switzerland, France, England, Scotland and Holland, as well as by all who were favorably disposed towards the Reformed faith, in Germany itself. Nor was this praise transient, an ephemeral burst of applause, succeeded again by general indifference and neglect. On the contrary, the authority of the symbol grew with its age. It became for the Reformed body, as we have just seen, the counterpart in full of the similar text book held by the Lutheran body from the hand of Luther himself. In this character, we

find it quoted and appealed to on all sides, by both friends and foes. Such vast popularity, we say, of itself, implies vast merit. We may allow, indeed, that the terms in which some of the old divines have spoken of its excellence, are carried beyond due measure. But this general testimony of the whole Reformed Church in its favor, must ever be of force, to show that they had good reason to speak here with a certain amount of enthusiasm.

The fact of its wide spread and long continued popularity, is important, also, in another view; it goes to show that the formulary was the product, truly and fully, of the religious life of the Reformed Church, in the full bloom of its historical development, as this was reached at the time when the work made its appearance. No creed or confession can be of genuine force, that has not this inwardly organic connection with the life it represents. This must go before the symbol, creating it for its own use. The creed so produced, may come to its utterance, indeed, in the first place, through the medium of a single mind; but the single mind, in such case, must ever be the organ and bearer of the general life in whose name it speaks; otherwise it will not be heard nor felt. Here is the proper criterion of any true Church confession, whether it be in the character of a liturgy, catechism or hymn-book. It must be the life of the Church itself, embodied through some proper organ, in such form of speech, as is at once recognized and responded to by the Church at large, as its own word. This relation between word and life, is happily exhibited in the case now under consideration. Though in one sense a private work, the formulary before us, was by no means the product of simply individual reflection; on the part either of one or of several. Ursinus, in the preparation of it, was the organ of a religious life, far more general and comprehensive than his own. It is the utterance of the Reformed faith, as this stood at the time, and found expression for itself through his person. The evidence of this, we have in the free, full response with which it was met, on the part of the Church, not only in the Palatinate, but also in other lands. It was, as though the entire Reformed Church heard, and joyfully recognized, her own voice in the Heidelberg Catechism. No product of mere private judgment or private will, *could* have come thus into such universal favor.

The great merit which may be fairly inferred from this great reputation, is amply verified, when we come to consider the actual character of the work itself. The more it is carefully studied and examined, the more is it likely to be admired. Among all

Protestant symbols, whether of earlier or later date, we hold it to be decidedly the best. It is pervaded throughout, by a thoroughly scientific spirit, far beyond what is common in formularies of this sort. But its science is always earnestly and solemnly practical. It is doctrine apprehended and represented continually in the form of life. The construction of the whole, is uncommonly simple, beautiful and clear, while the freshness of a sacred religious feeling, breathes through its entire execution. It is for the heart, full as much as for the head. The pathos of a deep toned piety, flows like an under current, through all its teaching, from beginning to end. This serves to impart a peculiar character of dignity and force to its very style, which at times, with all its simplicity, becomes truly eloquent, and moves with a sort of priestly solemnity, which all are constrained to reverence and respect. Among its characteristic perfections, deserves to be noted particularly, its *catholic* spirit, and the rich *mystical* element, that is found to enter so largely into its composition. No other Reformed symbolical book can compare with it in these respects.

Its catholicity appears in its sympathy with the religious life of the old Catholic Church, in its care to avoid the thorny dialectic subtleties of Calvinism, in the preference it shows for the positive in religion as opposed to the merely negative and controversial, and in the broad and free character generally, which marks the tone of its instructions. Considering the temper of the times, and the relations out of which it grew, it is remarkably free from polemical and party prejudices. A fine illustration of the catholic, historical feeling now noticed, is found in the fact, that so large a part of the work is based directly upon the Apostles' Creed. It not only makes use of this as a text, but enters with evidently hearty interest and affection also, into its general spirit; with the sound, and most certainly right feeling, that no Protestant doctrine can ever be held in a safe form, which is not so held as to be in truth a living branch from the trunk of this primitive symbol in the consciousness of faith. We have to regret indeed always, the turn given (Q. 44) to the clause in the fourth article, *He descended into hell*; where the authority of Calvin is followed, in giving to the words a signification which is good in its own nature, but at the same time notoriously at war with the historical sense of the clause itself. A great deal of offence too, as is generally known, has been taken with the unfortunate declaration, by which the Roman mass is denounced, at the close of the 80th Question, as being "nothing else than a denial of the one sacrifice and sufferings of Jesus

Christ, and an accursed idolatry." But it should never be forgotten, that this harsh anathema, so foreign from the spirit of Melancthon and Ursinus, and from the reigning tone also of the Heidelberg Catechism, forms no part of the original work as published under the hand of Ursinus himself. It is wanting in the first edition; and was afterwards foisted in, only by the authority of the Elector Frederick, in the way of angry retort and counterblast, we are told, for certain severe declarations the other way, which had been passed a short time before by the Council of Trent.¹

The mystical element of the Catechism, is closely connected with the catholic spirit, of which we have just spoken. It is that quality in religion, by which it goes beyond all simply logical or intellectual apprehension, and addresses itself directly to the soul, as something to be felt and believed even where it is too deep to be explained. The Bible abounds with such mysticism. It prevails, especially, in every page of the Apostle John. We find it largely in Luther. It has been often said, that the

¹“ Frederick by no means followed passively and blindly the counsel of his theologians; but the Reformed doctrine, and along with it the most determined dislike towards the Roman worship, and towards all that was still retained from it in the Lutheran church, were for him a matter of strong inward and personal religious conviction, which he well knew himself how to uphold and defend from his own diligent and careful study of the Scriptures. From these, particularly from the *Old Testament*, he deduced his duty, to tolerate no idolatry in his land, though it should be in never so mild and plausible a form. Hence in the *second* and *third* editions of the Heidelberg Catechism, the 80th Question, by his positive order alone, and *against* the counsel and will of its authors, was made to receive the addition, then highly offensive and dangerous: “So that the mass, at bottom, is nothing else than a denial of the one sacrifice and sufferings of Jesus Christ, and an accursed idolatry”; and he obstinately refused afterwards to give up the clause, in spite of all intimidations from the emperor and the empire set before him for the purpose.”—*Goebel, Churches of the Rhine*, p. 365. The same writer, p. 391, attributes the few polemical bristles generally of the Catechism to the same zealous interference of the Elector, who had no hesitation about thrusting his hand in this way, where it seemed necessary, into what he considered emphatically his *own* work. He had, it seems, a truly theocratic sense of his vocation, to act as a nursing father to the church. When certain preachers afterwards fell into the Arian apostacy of Adam Neuser, (who subsequently turned Mohammedan and died at last an atheist in Constantinople,) and were convicted by the theological faculty of blasphemy, the jurists still hesitated about condemning them to capital punishment; but Frederick promptly took the matter into his own hands, with the remark, “that he had the Holy Ghost also in the business as a master and teacher of truth,” deposing and banishing two of the offenders, and in the course of a few months actually depriving the Hollander Sylvanus of his head, by public execution in Heidelberg.

Reformed faith, as distinguished from the Catholic and the Lutheran, is unfriendly to this element, that it moves supremely in the sphere of the understanding, and so is ever prone to run into rationalism; and it must be confessed, that there is some show of reason for the serious charge. Zuingli's great fault, as well as his chief strength, lay in the clear intellectuality of his nature. Calvin had a deeper sense of the mystical, but at the same time a still vaster power of logic also, which made it very difficult for such sense to come steadily to its proper rights. His theory of the decrees, for instance, does violence continually to his theory of the sacraments. It is only in its last and best form, as we find this brought out in the German Palatinate, that the Reformed system can be said fairly to have surmounted the force of the objection now noticed. The Heidelberg Catechism has regard throughout, to the lawful claims of the understanding; its author was thoroughly versed in all the dialectic subtleties of the age, and an uncommonly fine logic, in truth, distinguishes its whole composition. But along with this runs, at the same time, a continual appeal to the interior sense of the soul, a sort of solemn undertone, sounding from the depths of the invisible world, which only an unction from the Holy One, can enable any fully to hear and understand. The words are often felt in this way, to mean much more than they logically express. The Catechism is no cold workmanship merely of the rationalizing intellect. It is full of feeling and faith. The joyousness of a fresh, simple, childlike trust, appears beautifully and touchingly interwoven with all its divinity. A rich vein of mysticism runs everywhere through its doctrinal statements. A strain of heavenly music seems to flow around us at all times, while we listen to its voice. It is moderate, gentle, soft, in one word, *Melanchthonian*, in its whole cadence; the fit echo and image thus, we may fairly suppose, of the quiet, though profoundly earnest soul of Ursinus himself.

It carries the palm, very decidedly, in our view, as we have before said, over all other Protestant symbols, whether formed before it or since.

But notwithstanding all that has now been said, the Catechism was received far and wide in Germany itself, at the time of its appearance, as a loud declaration of war; and became at once the signal for an angry, violent onset, in the way of contradiction and reproach, from all parts of the Lutheran Church. The high toned party which was now filling the whole empire with its alarm of heresy, could not be expected of course to tolerate patiently any religious formulary, that might be felt to fall short

at all of its own rigorous measure of orthodoxy. From this quarter, accordingly, the Catechism was assaulted, more fiercely than even from the Church of Rome itself. Its very moderation, indeed, seemed to magnify the front of its offence. Had there been more of the lion or tiger in its mien, and less of the lamb, its presence might have proved possibly less irritating to the polemical humor of the times. As it was, there was felt to be provocation in its very meekness. Its outward carriage was held to be deceitful and treacherous; and its heresy was counted all the worse, for being hard to find, and shy of coming to the light. The winds of strife were let loose upon it accordingly, from all points of the compass.

Not only the unity and quiet of the German Church, but the peace also of the German empire, seemed in the eyes of the high Lutheran party, to be brought into jeopardy, by the new Confession. It was held to be not only heresy in religion, but treason also in politics. Both the Elector and his theologians found their faith severely tried, by the general outcry which was raised at their expense. But they were men of faith, and they stood the trial nobly and well.

The attack was opened by Tilemann Hesshuss and the celebrated Flaccius Illyricus, each of whom came out with an angry publication against the Calvinistic Catechism, as they called it, full of the most intolerant invective and abuse, and grossly misrepresenting at different points, the religious change which had taken place in the Palatinate. Among other calumnies, the new faith was charged with turning the Lord's Supper into a profane meal, with undervaluing the necessity of infant baptism, with iconomachy, and with an attempt to alter the decalogue in departing from the old order of its precepts. Other blasts of warning and alarm were soon heard, in much the same tone, from different quarters. Wirtemberg in particular, issued a solemn censure, drawn up by her two best divines, in which eighteen Questions of the Catechism were taxed with serious heresy, and no effort spared to bring into discredit especially its doctrine of the holy eucharist. It was necessary to meet this multitudinous outcry with a prompt and vigorous answer; and such an answer accordingly soon appeared, with all due solemnity, in the name of the united theological faculty of Heidelberg. The task of preparing it, however, fell on Ursinus, who showed himself at the same time well able to discharge the service in a truly efficient and becoming way. The honor of the Catechism was fully vindicated, and the effect of the whole controversy was only to render its authority in the Palatinate more firm than before.

Meanwhile the Elector was taken solemnly to account, in a more private way, by several of his brother princes, who seemed to think the whole empire scandalized by his unorthodox conduct. This led to the celebrated conference or debate of Maulbronn; in which the leading theologians of Wirtemberg and the Palatinate came together, for the purpose of bringing the whole difficulty, if possible, to a proper resolution and settlement. The Heidelberg divines, were not themselves in favor of the measure; apprehending more evil from it than good. But they allowed their objections to be over-ruled, not caring to show what might be construed in any quarter, into a want of confidence in their own cause. The conference took place in the month of April, 1564, and lasted we are told, a whole week, from the tenth day of the month to the sixteenth. Among the disputants from Heidelberg, were the Professors, Bocquin, Olevianus and Ursinus. On the other side appeared Brentius, two of the Tübingen Professors, and other distinguished divines. The burden of the debate, however, was thrown mainly upon Ursinus in the one case, and wholly upon James Andreae, the great and good chancellor of the University of Tübingen in the other.

The acts of this *colloquy of Maulbronn* are of the highest value for the history of the German Reformed Church, and serve at the same time to throw a most honorable light on the whole character of Ursinus. They furnish throughout a lively image of his keen penetration, his comprehensive science, and his clear doctrinal precision, as well as a brilliant exemplification of the firmness with which he adhered to his own convictions of truth and right. His distinctions and determinations, especially on the question of the *Ubiquity*, may be regarded as carrying with them a sort of truly classical authority for the Reformed theology in all subsequent times.

The colloquy itself, however, only led afterwards to new controversy. It ended with a compact, indeed, to abstain from public strife, but, unhappily, this was soon forgotten and broken. Both sides, as a matter of course, claimed the victory; and it was not long till an effort was made, on the part of the Wirtemberg divines, to establish this claim in their own favor, by publishing what they called an epitome of the debate in a form to suit themselves; placing the whole discussion, with no small ingenuity and address, in a light by no means fair or satisfactory to the other side. To meet this misrepresentation, the divines of the Palatinate published, in the first place, a copy in full of the proceedings of the colloquy from the official record made at the time; and then added a clear and distinct reply to the Wir-

temberg epitome, exposing what they conceived to be its grave offences against truth. This called forth, in the year 1565, the great "*Declaration and Confession of the Theologians of Tübingen on the Majesty of the Man Christ, and the Presence of his Body and Blood in the Holy Supper.*" Then came in reply again from the side of the Palatinate, in 1566, a "*Solid Refutation of the Sophisms and Cavils of the Wirtemberg Divines.*" designed to make clean ground once more of the whole field. The controversy was renewed and continued thus in its full strength; and the author of the Catechism was still required to hold a weapon for its defence in one hand, while he labored on its proper exposition with the other. Both services were well fulfilled.

Among his various apologetic tracts, the chief place is due to the *Exegesis verae doctrinae de Sacramentis et Eucharistia*, published in the name of the Heidelberg Faculty and by order of the Consistory, whose sanction gave it at the same time the force of a public confession. It was translated also into the vernacular tongue, and in a short time went through several editions. It is still a work of great interest and value, as it furnishes the most authentic interpretation, which is anywhere to be found, of the real sacramental doctrine of the Catechism, in the sense which it had in the beginning for Ursinus himself, as well as for the whole theological faculty of Heidelberg.

As just intimated, however, the business of such public apology and defence, by no means exhausted the labors of Ursinus in regard to this truly admirable symbol. The Catechism was fully enthroned in the Palatinate, from the beginning, as the rule and measure of the public faith. It was made the basis of theological instruction in the University. It was introduced into all the churches and schools, under a regulation which required the whole of it to be gone over in course, in the way of familiar repetition and explanation, once every year. A regular system of catechisation was established in the churches, to which the afternoon of every Lord's day was devoted, and which was so conducted, as to include grown persons as well as children. Ursinus, in his capacity of professor, accommodated himself also to the general rule, and made it a point to go over the text of the Catechism once a year with his theological lectures. This custom he is said to have kept up regularly, on to the year 1577. Notes of his lectures were taken down by the students, which were allowed soon after his death, at three different places, to make their appearance in print. As much injustice was done to him, however, by the defective character of these publications,

his particular friend and favorite disciple, David Pareus, who possessed besides all necessary qualifications for the task, was called upon to revise the whole, and to put the work into a form that should be more faithful to the name and spirit of its illustrious author. This service of duty and love could not have fallen into better hands, and no pains were spared now to render the publication complete. Under such properly authentic form, it appeared first in the year 1591, at Heidelberg, in four parts, each furnished with a separate preface by Pareus; since which time, it has gone through numerous editions, in different countries. The Heidelberg Catechism has been honored with an almost countless number of commentaries of later date; but this first one, derived from Ursinus himself through David Pareus, has been generally allowed to be the best that has been written. No other, at all events, can have the same weight as an exposition of its true meaning.

In the midst of other agitations in the year 1564, the plague broke out with great violence in Heidelberg, causing both the court and the university to consult their own safety by withdrawing for a time from the place. During this solemn recess, Ursinus wrote and published a small work on Preparation for Death. It appeared first in German, but was translated afterwards into Latin, in which form it is found in the general collection of his Works, under the title of *Pia Meditatio Mortis*.

In the year 1571, he received an urgent call to Lausanne, which he seems to have been somewhat inclined to accept, in view chiefly of the undue burden of his labors at Heidelberg, which was found to be greater than his physical constitution, naturally weak, could well support. To retain him in his place, the Elector allowed him to transfer a portion of his college service to an assistant.

His marriage with Margaret Trautwein followed the year after, and is represented as having added materially to his comfort and rest. He was at the time nearly forty years of age.

This domestic settlement, however, was not of long duration. With the death of his patron Frederick, in October 1576, the whole religious state of the Palatinate fell once more into disorder. He was succeeded in the electorate by his eldest son, Louis, whose previous connections had inspired him with a strong zeal for Lutheranism, in full opposition to the entire course of his father. Before his death, the old prince had sought an interview with his son, wishing to bring him under an engagement, if possible, to respect his views in regard to the church, as expressed in his last will and testament. Louis, however,

thought proper to decline the interview, and subsequently showed no regard whatever to his father's directions. On the contrary, he made it his business, from the start, to turn all things into an entirely different train. The clergy, together with the mayor and citizens of Heidelberg, addressed a petition to him, praying for liberty of conscience, and offering one of the churches for the particular use of those who belonged to his confession. His brother, *Duke Casimir*, lent his intercession also, to sustain the request. But it answered no purpose; Louis declared that his conscience would not suffer him to receive the petition. The following year, accordingly, he came with his court to Heidelberg, dismissed the preachers, filled all places with Lutheran incumbents, caused a new church service to be introduced, and in one word, changed the public religion into quite another scheme and form. The more prominent theologians were soon compelled to leave their places; among whom of course, were the authors of the Heidelberg Catechism, *Olevianus* and *Ursinus*.

Ursinus found an honorable refuge with *Prince Casimir*, second son of the late Elector, who exercised a small sovereignty of his own at Neustadt, and made it his business to succor and encourage there, as far as he could, the cause now persecuted by his Lutheran brother. The distinguished divine was constituted professor of theology in the Neustadt Gymnasium, which the prince now proposed to raise to the character of something like a substitute, for what the University of Heidelberg had been previously for the Reformed Church. The new institution, under the title of the *Casimirianum*, soon became quite important. It could hardly be otherwise, with such names as *Ursinus*, *Jerome Zanchius*, *Francis Junius*, *Daniel Tossanus*, *John Piscator*, in its theological faculty, and others of the like order in other departments. Here *Ursinus* continued to labor, true to the faith of his own dishonored Catechism, till the day of his death.

His last publication of any importance, was a work of some size, undertaken by order of *Prince Casimir*, and issued in the name of the Neustadt clergy, in 1581, in review and censure of the celebrated Form of Concord. This was executed with his usual ability, and did good service at the time to the cause of the Reformed Church.

The triumph of Lutheranism in the Palatinate, proved in the end to be short. Before the plan could be fully executed, by which it was proposed to extend the revolution of the capital over the entire province, *Prince Louis* died, in the midst of his days; and now at once the whole face of things was brought to

assume again a new aspect. The administration of the government fell into the hands of Duke Casimir, who soon after took measures to restore the Reformed faith to its former power and credit. As far as possible, the old professors were once more brought back to the University. The Casimirianum of Neustadt, saw itself shorn by degrees of its transient glory. The Form of Concord sank into disgrace, while its rival standard, the Heidelberg Catechism, rose gloriously into view again as the ecclesiastical banner of the Palatinate. In due time, the whole order of the church was restored as it had stood at the death of Frederick the Pious.

But there was one among the banished theologians of Neustadt, who did *not* return at this time with his colleagues, to the scene of his former labors. The author of the Catechism himself, the learned and pious Ursinus, was not permitted to have part in the triumph to which it was now advanced. His feeble constitution, which had been for some time sinking more and more, under the untiring labors of his profession, gave way finally altogether; and on the 6th of March, 1583, the very year in which Prince Casimir came into power, he was quietly translated to a higher and better world. The event took place in the 49th year of his age.

He was buried in the choir of the church at Neustadt, where his colleagues erected also a suitable monument to his memory. The inscription describes him as a sincere theologian, distinguished for resisting heresies on the person and supper of Christ, an acute philosopher, a prudent man, and an excellent instructor of youth. A funeral oration was pronounced on the occasion in Latin, by Francis Junius, which is still important for the picture it preserves of his mind and character. Its representations, of course, are somewhat rhetorical, and some allowance must be made for the colorings of friendship and grief; but after all proper abatement on this score, it is such a glowing eulogy, as coming from one so intimately familiar with the man, must be allowed to tell greatly to his praise.

His works were published collectively, some time after his death, in three folio volumes, by his friend and disciple David Pareus.

The leading traits of his character have been already brought into view in some measure, in the sketch now given of his life. An enduring witness of his theological learning, and of his intellectual abilities in general, is found in his works. The best monument of his virtues and moral merits is the influence he exerted while living, and the good name he left behind him

throughout the whole Reformed Church at his death, the odor of which has come down to our own time. He was at once a great and a good man.

He seems to have excelled as an academic lecturer. His friend, Francis Junius, speaks with high commendation also of his talent for preaching; but his own estimate of himself here was probably more sound, which led him to withdraw from the pulpit in a great measure, as not being his proper sphere. His style and manner were too didactic for its use. For the ends of the lecture room, however, they were all that could be desired. At once full, calm, methodical and clear, his mind flowed here without noise or pomp, in a continuously rich stream, both gentle and profound, that was felt to diffuse the most wholesome instruction on all sides. He spared no pains to prepare himself fully for his work, and laid himself out to serve as much as possible the wants of his pupils; throwing his soul with living interest into the task in hand, and encouraging them to do so too by presenting difficulties or asking questions at the close of each exercise; which it was his habit then, however, not to answer on the spot, but to hold in reserve for a well studied judgment on the following day.

His diligence seemed to have no bounds. Of this we have the best evidence in the vast amount of the labors and services he performed, in the course of his public life. His parsimony of time, always as gold to the true student, is illustrated by the inscription which he is said to have had in full view, for the benefit of all impertinent visitors, over the door of his study: "*Amice, quisquis huc venis, aut agito paucis, aut abi, aut me laborantem adjuva.*" That is, "Friend, entering here, be short, or go, or else assist me in my work."

This regard for time was with him a sense of duty, and flowed from the general feeling he had, that his powers and his talents were not his own, but belonged to his faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ, and that he had no right to divert them from his service. Altogether his conscientiousness was of the highest order. His funeral orator says of him, that he had never heard an idle word fall from his lips; so careful was he with the government of his thoughts and the regulation of his tongue. He may be said indeed to have fallen a martyr, in some sense, to his own faithfulness; for it was the hard service to which he put himself in the discharge of his professional engagements, that wore out his strength and brought him down finally to the grave.

The modesty and humility of the man were in full keeping with his general integrity, and contributed much to the pleasing

effect of his other virtues. His manners were perfectly unassuming, as his spirit also was free from everything that savored of pride or pretension. He seemed to court obscurity, rather than notoriety. Such of his works as appeared in his own lifetime, were published anonymously, or in the name of the Heidelberg faculty; while the greater part of them never saw the light at all in any such form, till after his death.

Altogether, as we have before seen, he was of a reserved, retiring nature; formed for meditation and self-communion; averse from all noise and strife; mystical as well as logical, and no less contemplative than intelligent and acute; a true heir in this respect to Melancthon's spirit, as well as a true follower of his faith. For theological controversy, though doomed to live in it all his days, he had just as little taste as his illustrious preceptor himself; and when forced to take part in it, one might say of him that scarce the smell of its usual fire was allowed to pass on his garments; so equal was he still, and calm and mild, in the conduct of his own cause, avoiding as far as possible all offensive personalities, and bending his whole force only to the actual merits of the question in debate. On the other hand, however, no one could be more decided and firm in this calm way, when it was necessary to withstand error or maintain truth. In this respect he was superior to Melancthon, less yielding and more steadily true to the chart and compass of his own creed.

He was charged by some with being sour and morose. But this was nothing more, probably, than the construction, which his reserved and earnest character naturally carried with it for those who were not able to sympathise with such a spirit, or who saw him only as it were from a distance and not near at hand. It is characteristic of such a soft and quiet nature, to be at the same time ardent, and excitable on occasions even to passion; and it is not unlikely, that in the case of Ursinus, this natural tendency may have been strengthened at times by the morbid habit of his body, disturbing and clouding the proper serenity of his mind. Francis Junius describes him as just the reverse of the charges now noticed, and as made up of self-forgetting condescension and kindness towards all who came in his way.

The same witness, than whom we could have no better, bears the most honorable testimony also to his habits of devotion and personal piety. Religion with him was not a theory merely, but a business of life. He walked with God, and showed himself thus a worthy follower of those who through faith and patience have entered into the rewards of his kingdom.

On the whole, we may say, it is a great honor for the German

Reformed Church to be represented in the beginning by so excellent a man; and it is not going too far perhaps to add, that the type of his character has entered powerfully into the true historical spirit of this communion, as distinguished from all other branches of the same faith. Such is the prerogative of genius, and such its high and lofty commission in the world. It stamps its own image, for ages, on what it has power to create.

J. W. N.

↪ **WILLIARD'S URSINUS.**—It is extensively known, that the Rev. George W. Williard, of Columbus, Ohio, has undertaken to bring out a new translation of the celebrated lectures of Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism, as published by David Pareus. The old English translation by Parry is out of date, and at the same time not easy to be obtained. From our general knowledge of Mr. Williard's ability, as well as from a very small specimen we have seen of the forthcoming work itself, we doubt not but his task will be found to be well performed. We are glad to learn, that the work is already nearly through the press and may be expected to make its appearance in the course of a few weeks. The enterprise deserves patronage and favor, and we trust it may not fail to meet in this way its proper reward. All branches of the Reformed Church ought to take an interest in it; but especially may this be expected of the German Reformed Church, whose distinctive glory it is to have produced the Catechism, and to have in it the clearest mirror of its own life. To speak of the value of the Commentary itself would be superfluous. Its merits are universally acknowledged.