

We say nothing here of the outlying world of spiritual evil which enters the will and intelligence in their perversion, and nothing of the necessary combat with all this in the process to which we have referred. This belongs to the Epistle for the twenty-first Sunday, where with remarkable sublimity this whole theme is unfolded, and which will have to engage our attention, before the mystery of forgiveness of sin, as wrought out in the bosom of our moral being, can be adequately apprehended.

ART. II.—MARTENSEN ON CATHOLICISM AND
PROTESTANTISM.

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“KATHOLICISMUS und PROTESTANTISMUS, ein evangelisches Zeugniß von Dr. Theol. H. Martensen,” is the name of a pamphlet which appeared last year in both the Danish and German languages. It is written from the stand-point of a Bishop—the office which the author at present holds in Seeland, and differs therefore very widely in style and method from his work on Dogmatics. The latter is a book rich in thought, concise in style, and very suggestive. It is a book such as a German Prof. would prepare for his students and his professional brethren. The pamphlet before us, on the other hand, is intended for the reading public generally. The author calls it a *Gelegenheitschrift*, because it grew out of the struggles occasioned by the decrees of the Vatican council, and is intended to bear witness to the truth of the gospel, over against the errors of Romanism, as these have come to light in our day. The first 106 pages accordingly discuss the defects of the Romish system; the next fifty bring out the reasons why we should stick to the principles of Luther and the Reforma-

tion; and the last 25 take up the modern efforts to remodel the Reformation. Under this last caption the name of NEVIN is mentioned among others.

The author starts out by drawing a distinction between *Sicherheit* and *Gewissheit*. He does this in a concrete way. If we inquire into the history of those, who in this century have gone over to Romanism, we find that in so far as they were actuated by religious motives, it was a felt need of authority which led them to take this step. They were either in quest of an infallible authority in matters of Faith and Doctrine,—an authority from which they might obtain a reliable answer to the question: What is truth? or else they were anxiously looking about for some authority, which might furnish them a certainty of the forgiveness of their sins. If, on the other hand, we examine the conversions from Romanism to the Protestant Church, we find the motive to have been a conviction, that in the Catholic Church there reigns an authority at variance with the gospel, an authority whose teachings and precepts cannot stand before the bar of an enlightened conscience. In both cases therefore the conversion turns on a question of authority, more especially on the relation, which faith and the life of faith sustain to authority. The Romanist maintains that in matters of faith he possesses absolute *Sicherheit*; the Protestant asserts and emphasizes the fact, that this *Sicherheit* must also carry along with it *Glaubensgewissheit*, that is, in the first place, a personal conviction and certainty, that the Christianity which we profess has neither been fabricated nor adulterated by man, but is in harmony and living connection with original Christianity, and in the second place, that this Christianity is the truth unto salvation, or in other words, saving truth for us and for all who believe. The words *Sicherheit* and *Gewissheit* are very often used interchangeably, as if they meant one and the same thing; but a very important shade of difference thus becomes visible, when we apply them to the inner spiritual life of man. *Sicherheit* denotes the state

in which we are free from risk and danger, and points to something objective, to an external authority, to guarantees and assurances, which remove every scruple and every doubt. *Gewissheit*, on the contrary, is that state in which all doubt is precluded or overcome by the thing being at hand in me in a living way, a state therefore in which there is an immediate relation between my personal consciousness and the objective truth. If any one says to me, I assure you that the thing is so and so, it behooves me to accept the thing said upon the authority and credibility of him who says it. But there are cases—especially when any one gives me assurances in reference to the supernatural,—in which I cannot rest satisfied with mere assurances, but must demand the possibility of convincing myself by personal inquiry and personal experience. Catholicism lays stress mainly upon the attribute of *Sicherheit* in faith, a word pointing to that peculiar relation of authority to the life of faith, which the Romish system emphasizes above everything else, whereas Protestantism, however much it may feel the need of an attitude of certainty towards the objective, will always lay more stress upon *Gewissheit*, upon that state of personal freedom in the life of faith in which the soul joins itself to the divine authority of the gospel in such a way as to stand related to this gospel, not as if it were something external and foreign, but as being the saving, emancipating truth itself.

Having drawn this distinction, the author passes on to what he calls *Papistische Sicherheit*, reserving the topic *Evangelische Gewissheit* for the second great division of his work. The train of thought by which the Romanist reaches his peculiar tenets in regard to papal *Sicherheit*, is the following:

If God has given to man a revelation unto salvation, He must at the same time have established the means by which this end can be attained. If Christ designed to bring to man saving truth, He must have willed the church by which this truth is to be preserved and communicated to successive generations. The church must have its organs, viz: Bishops. The Apostles were the first bishops. By means of ordination they made their

authority over to their successors. Apostolic authority is therefore at all times present in the church; hence the church can at any time speak and act in the name of Christ, and is throughout all history to be regarded as the infallible organ of His Holy Spirit. This prerogative cannot be predicated of any and every bishop in his single limited capacity; it belongs to the whole body when assembled in an Ecumenical Council. But this council itself must have an *Einheitspunkt*, a head, viz: the Pope, who by the Council of 1870 was declared infallible in matters of faith and morals. It is impossible, says the papist, to conceive of greater certitude than is furnished by this economy. The pope is the Vicar of Christ. In the name of Christ he figures as the executor of his threefold office. The prophetic office is involved in his infallibility in matters of doctrine. He exercises the priestly office in that he dispenses or withholds all the grace, blessings and powers of redemption. He is likewise bearer of the kingly office, although by reason of the dangerousness of our times he only exercises its functions at present within certain limits.

The value of the *Sicherheit* furnished by the Pope, depends upon its discernibility by each and every man. Just here there is a glaring weakness in the system. The learned are by no means agreed as to when the Pope speaks *ex cathedra* and when he does not. (If I am not mistaken, at least a dozen theories have been advanced.) There have been times when two or three rivals claimed the pontifical throne, each one anathematizing the others. How shall we ascertain who is infallible authority at such times? Again it has happened in the history of the church, that the Pope enjoined silence upon the contending parties, without settling the question between them. Where is the boasted *Sicherheit* under such circumstances?

In the second place, the dogma of infallibility can not stand at the bar of either Scripture or history. The passages cited by the Vatican council will never be referred by any one to infallibility, unless his mind is preoccupied by this thought.

Christ promised that when the Spirit of the truth would come, He would guide His followers into all truth. But how can Pope Pius IX. claim this for himself? For in the same connection Christ says of this Spirit: "For he shall not speak of himself; he shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and show it unto you." Now it is a notorious fact that the Pope is stronger on Mariology than Christology. Instead of glorifying Christ, he has glorified the Virgin Mary, glorified several Japanese martyrs by canonizing them, glorified himself in the proclamation of his own infallibility. Christ further says of this Comforter: "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will him send him unto you,"—a direct intimation that Christ's visible presence should not continue either in his own personality or in that of a vicar. The papal interpretation of the passage in Matthew,—“Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church,” is disproved by other passages. In 1 Cor. i. 11, Paul rebukes those who say, I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas, *i. e.* Peter, and I of Christ. In Gal. ii. 11 we read that Paul withstood Peter to the face. Peter is by no means the only pillar of the church, inasmuch as three other Apostles receive that designation in Gal. ii. 9.

The argument from church history is equally conclusive. In this connection our author reviews the early history of the church, bringing out with great force the fact that there is no sacrament for the elevation of man to the papal throne, no prescribed mode for his election. He traces the gradual development of papal claims and papal authority. The gist of his argument turns upon the Council of Constance and the case of Honorius. Rome is in the predicament of being obliged to recognize this Council because it elected one of the popes, and yet of setting it aside, because it passed a resolution to the effect that every Ecumenical Council has its authority directly from Christ and is in matters of faith superior to the pope. If the pope is to be judged in matters of faith by a council, he is

not infallible. Honorius was condemned for heresy by successive councils and popes. Hence reasoning upon the basis of the councils, which are accepted as infallible by all Catholics, the infallibility of the pope falls to the ground. The case of Honorius is detailed at length by our author; but his account contains nothing new, his facts being taken from Hefele, who is indeed the only historian that has had access to the original documents preserved in the Vatican.

Thus far the author makes common cause with the old Catholics, in that he argues from their premises against the infallibility of the pope. But now he turns his weapons against them. He points out a characteristic, which will always make the papal party more popular with the masses. Ecumenical Councils are a thing for the learned. So far as the multitude is concerned, it makes very little difference whether their faith is decided for them by one man, viz.: the bishop of Rome, or by a council composed of bishops from all parts of the world. In both cases they are in spiritual bondage to their superiors. It can not be denied that the papal system is of a far more practical nature. Councils are sometimes not in session for centuries; the pope can at any time be consulted. His decisions make it easy for us to ascertain the truth. They save us from the tedious process of investigating the subject for ourselves.

The issue of the late Vatican Council has disproved the fundamental position of the old Catholics, viz.: the infallibility of the councils. For no one who examines the number of bishops in attendance, can for a moment doubt the Ecumenical character of the Council of 1870. But this council decreed the infallibility of the pope, which is rejected by the old Catholics; hence the proposition affirming the infallibility of Ecumenical Councils falls to the ground.

Our author likewise shows that the Episcopal theory held by the old Catholics is untenable.

The preceding line of argument shows how devoid of value is the certitude in matters of doctrine, which Catholicism claims

to furnish by means of its infallible organs. Equally unsatisfactory is the certitude which it furnishes so far as the salvation of the individual is concerned. If we ask the question: Where do I find saving truth? and through whom is it communicated unto us? the answer is: Saving truth is found in the Roman Catholic Church, and is communicated by those who have been set apart for this work through the Sacrament of Ordination. The certitude for all this is furnished by the pope or immediately by those who stand in the line of Apostolic succession. The Romish system therefore furnishes us what the author aptly styles *eine Religion aus zweiter Hand, ein äusserlicher Autoritätsglaube*, inasmuch as we can not ourselves dip out of the fountains of truth, but must allow the Pope and the Church to prescribe for us what we are to accept and to believe. Religion thus becomes a matter of blind obedience. The essence of faith is obedience unto the church. Just as the gospel becomes worthy of acceptance by being stamped with the seal of an infallible Pope and an infallible Church, so all Christian religiousness receives its value by being stamped with obedience unto the church. Hofrath Beckedorff says: "Wenn jemand auch alle Lehren der Kirche als wahr annähme, wenn er sich zu diesen Lehren bekennt, aber alles Dieses nicht aus unbedingtem Gehorsam gegen die Kirche thäte, sondern weil er auf andere Weise, durch Nachdenken und Forschen sich überzeugt zu haben meinte, dass seine Lehren und Vorschriften wahr und weise seien; so würde er kein wahrer Katholik sein." Priests in the confessional act upon the same principle. In the case of those who unconditionally obey, the absolution can be granted no matter how grave the offence; but when such obedience is not rendered, the absolution is unmercifully refused. Indeed it seems as if authority and power were considered the highest good by Rome and its adherents.

This externality in the Romish system makes room for numberless surrogates and makeshifts. The personal falls into the background. No one knows all the acts of the councils; hence

the Church is satisfied with the intention to believe all. Since such faith lacks all *Innerlichkeit*, good works come in as a substitute. The Catechism furthermore teaches that one may make satisfaction for another. This is the loop-hole through which a host of abuses have crept into the Catholic Church. In some respects there has been considerable improvement since the days of the Reformation, but many abuses still exist. When a rich man lets his servant fast for him, when a lady of rank hires a peasant woman to say prayers for her at the door of a monastery, or when silent mass, involving according to the Roman theory a repetition of Christ's sacrifice, is offered up for purposes intended by him who pays, sometimes the priest himself being ignorant of the design, it shows to what extremes Romanism will go, in order to accommodate itself to the weaknesses of man.

Protestantism has often been accused of infidelity. During the Vatican council a resolution was brought forward to the effect that the Reformation was the cause of all the infidelity in the world. One of the German bishops protested very strongly; he was called to order. But next morning he found the Executive Committee had withdrawn the resolution. A telegram from Berlin had produced the change. It was Bismark's way of arguing the question. Martensen repels the charge and casts it back into the teeth of the Romanist himself. The demand for an external authority like that of the Pope, is in reality disbelief in the power of the truth to authenticate itself. It goes on the presumption that man must choose between the bottomless abyss of skepticism and a blind belief in the dictates of an outward authority. In such a system as far as it remains true to itself, no one has *Glaubensgewissheit*, not even the Pope, for as Pope, he need stand in no personal relation to the truth; he is simply the instrument through which the truth flows, as water through a pipe. Skepticism is repressed instead of being overcome. It is the highest prerogative of intelligence to be able to examine for one's-self, to think

one's-self through the misty regions of doubt into the clear realms of settled convictions. And so far as certitude in reference to the forgiveness of sins is concerned, the Catholic Church acknowledges her own weakness.

The validity of the absolution depends upon the valid ordination of the priest, and his standing in the line of the Apostolic succession. Since it is impossible in the line of the Apostolic succession. Since it is impossible in any particular case to prove that this condition is met, it follows that the individual can never feel certain of the forgiveness of his sins. The Council of Trent expressly declares that no one can feel certain that he has found favor in the sight of God, the words in the original being *cum nullus scire valeat certitudine fidei, se gratiam dei esse consecutum*, (Sess. viii. Cap. 9). Neither the Pope nor the council give us *Sicherheit* in matters pertaining either to faith, or to the forgiveness of our sins.

In taking up what he calls *Evangelische Gewissheit*, our author gives a very glowing account, such as only a Lutheran can give, of the inward struggles and the final victory of the monk, who, at Worms, exclaimed: "*Hier stehe ich, Ich kann nicht anders, Gott helfe mir. Amen.*" He had previously (at the Leipsic disputation) rejected the infallibility of Popes and Councils; on that memorable occasion he manifested a degree of certainty, which can only result from internal conviction. This *Glaubensgewissheit* did not result primarily from a perusal of the Scriptures, but from that inward change and peace of heart which he had experienced. He had gone through all the penances the Church prescribed; these gave him no peace. He only found peace when he embraced Christ in faith. Just as the sun does not need a heavenly body to diffuse his light and heat, but shows his enlightening and warming power by dispelling cold and darkness immediately, so the gospel showed its power by dispelling the darkness and terror of the monk's soul. He, however, based his salvation and his hope of salvation not upon this experience, but upon Him who was the author of this experience, viz., Christ. This justifying faith, which relies ex-

clusively upon Christ, forms the centre of Luther's life and doctrine. The life of faith was further developed and matured by a diligent study of God's word. The Holy Scriptures were for him the norm of faith, the standard by which matters of faith and worship were to be decided, the inexhaustible source of the knowledge of things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. And here be it observed, that he did not convert the Bible into a paper-pope. He subjected the Canon of the New Testament Scriptures to close scrutiny, going upon the supposition that the Ancient Church was not infallible, and that justifying faith was the touch-stone by which everything was to be tried. Faith and the Word exercise mutual influence upon each other. The classical productions in the realm of fine art can only be understood by one possessed of a sense of the beautiful. On the other hand, these productions of art will exert a reflex, normative influence upon the person's sense of the beautiful. A great moral phenomenon, be it an action or a personality, can only be appreciated by one possessed of an exalted sense of the moral. Just as the student of art must study the whole realm of art to determine the merits of an individual creation, so Luther studied single books by comparing them with the tenor of the whole. And just as a student having a sense of the beautiful in him, will never for a moment doubt the existence of such a thing as beauty, so did Luther, having Christ in his heart, never for a moment doubt the real existence of Christ.

We thus get two principles, which, in German, are denominated by the terms Glaubens- und Schrift-Princip. These are united in the so-called Geistes-Princip, that is, in the recognition of the Holy Spirit as being that one, who brought forth both the Scriptures and the faith that is in us; whose witness renders it sure that the certainty which is claimed by the Evangelical Christian, is not a merely human, subjective certainty, but one produced by the working of God's Spirit. Here lies the great difference between Romish Sicherheit and Evangelical Gewissheit. We do not derive our consciousness of cer-

tainty in matters of faith and salvation from an external authority, but from God Himself, *i. e.*, from the witness of His Spirit in our hearts.

This then makes us safe against the arrows launched by modern infidelity against our faith. If it were necessary to believe in the Bible first before believing in Christ, then, indeed, would we be at the mercy of the modern destructive criticism. For then, as often as a new discovery were made, we would have to hold our faith in suspense until criticism might reach a result favorable to faith. When the Apostles went forth to convert the world, they did not begin by preaching faith in a book. They proclaimed a crucified and risen Saviour. They spoke of sin and grace, of the fall, the regeneration and restoration of humanity. No matter where they preached, and how much they were ridiculed, the foolishness of preaching brought about good results, even as it still does. God works directly upon the hearts of men, when they listen to His word; the efforts of criticism avail nothing over against the quiet progress of Christ's cause. In a word, the Gospel has self-authenticating power.

As a conclusion to his pamphlet our author refers to what he calls, "Unklare Experimente einer Umbildung der Reformation." By these he understands those tendencies, which have sought to complement the Reformation by introducing a movement towards Catholicism in the form of concession, and an attempt at a union of its principles with those of the Reformation. He mentions Irvingianism, which, while rejecting Catholicism, adopts the same fundamental principle in that a new authority, *viz.*: an apostolate with an extensive hierarchy, is introduced into the church. Of the same nature is Puseyism, which emphasized tradition and ordination in such a way as to lead many of its adherents into the bosom of the Catholic Church. Here belong also those attempts at Reformation which have started on the basis of the Apostles' Creed, following herein an impulse given by Lessing in his controversy with

Pastor Götze, which circumstance is the reason why the Papists still cite Lessing's authority, and lead his arguments into the field against Protestantism. To this category belong the views of the church developed by Delbrück, Daniel and Nevin, all views which give us Lessing in a somewhat modernized form. Lastly, he mentions in this connection the movement in the Danish Church, which goes by the name of Grundvigtianism.

He says it is common to all these tendencies that in the conflict with Naturalism and Rationalism, they find the Schrift-Princip entirely untenable, and, despairing of this, have looked around for some other and better certitude. The Irvingites and Puseyites seek certitude in inspired and ordained organs; the others in a more or less extensive tradition in the bosom of the church, as the highest infallible authority in faith and in the interpretation of Scripture. When the Schrift-Princip is thus abandoned, when we admit that the Scriptures are not a sufficient norm in matters of faith, we cannot have any certainty that traditions have been handed down unadulterated through many generations, unless there be men who have been fitted to become bearers of the tradition in some extraordinary manner. An infallible tradition implies a hierarchy like that of the Romish Church. It will not do to say with Lessing, that during the second century, when the Scriptures were not fully discriminated, tradition answered every purpose, and that therefore the church of to-day is not in need of a surer guide than tradition. To this argument of Lessing's Götze replies by pointing out the difference between early Christianity and the Christianity of our day. Lessing, who was never willing to leave an objection unanswered, never replied on this point, which is sufficient evidence that he considered himself worsted on this particular point.

The pamphlet then gives a somewhat lengthy account of Grundvigtianism. Its adherents advocate the strange theory that the Apostles' Creed came directly from the lips of the Saviour, along with the formula of Baptism, and that the means

of grace are to be found exclusively in the Sacraments, but it is stranger still that a scholar like Martensen should put Dr. Nevin into the same category with such a tendency.

Such is the line of argument, as I apprehend it, in the pamphlet. The author, in passing along, takes up the abuses of the Romish system and points out the superior excellencies of the Protestant mode of worship, topics which can be used with telling effect in addressing the multitude; but the power of the book lies in the manner in which *Papistische Sicherheit* and *Evangelische Gewissheit* are compared. The historical portions are a reproduction of what Hase's *Polemik* gives; the style of the latter, however, being far more pungent. That it is a valuable contribution to the science of comparative Symbolics no one can deny; but it falls far below the master-piece of Müblier. A similar book, viewing the subject from the Protestant stand-point, remains yet to be written. The time is perhaps at hand for such a work. Marheineke, Baur, Nitzsch and Hase have fully opened up the subject, and the Vatican Council, besides bringing Romanism to its logical conclusion, became the occasion of throwing new light upon the subject. Because Theiner gave Bishop Hefele access to the original documents pertaining to Honorius, the Pope deprived him of his office as Librarian of the Vatican. Theiner revenged himself by publishing his copy of Masserelli's official minutes on the Council of Trent. Thus, what Rome succeeded in concealing for three centuries, has at last come to the light of day. There is, therefore, no longer a lack of material for a complete work on Symbolics from the Protestant stand-point. To succeed in this sphere it will be necessary for some historical student to live himself fully into the Romish system and explode it from within; for as Hegel somewhere says, *Um ein System zu bekämpfen, muss man sich hineinleben um es dann von innen heraus zu sprengen*. Martensen's pamphlet is merely a skillful attempt from without to repel and subdue Rome, hence a valuable contribution, but not a master-piece in the department of Polemic Theology.