

A DUEL!

CATHOLICISM VS. PROTESTANTISM.

Rev. R. C. Reed, Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, Replies to Rev. Mark S. Gross, Pastor of St. Peter's Catholic Church, Charlotte.

Last Sunday night the Second Presbyterian Church was crowded to its utmost capacity to hear the sermon of Rev. Mr. Reed in reply to that delivered by the pastor of St. Peter's the Sunday previous. The audience was representative, and listened to the discourse with profound interest. The sermon far surpassed the highest expectations of his audience, being a masterpiece of oratory. The style, diction, and rhetorical finish was superb. The following is the sermon in full:

[PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.]

Mr. Reed, taking his text from Matthew, 23: 9, said: Two weeks ago I preached a sermon the design of which was to emphasize the doctrine of the brotherhood of believers. There were two points only which I tried to illustrate—one was that our Saviour had forbidden any follower of His to exercise lordship over his fellow Christians. This seemed to be taught in the text: "Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Master—Even Christ, and all ye are brethren." I alluded by way of illustration to the supremacy, claimed and exercised by the Pope of Rome. I said at the time that I did not allude to the Pope because I regarded him and his confederates as the only sinners against the Lord's teachings, but because the sin of clerical pride and ambition had reached its highest development in the papacy, and extreme cases best illustrate principles. I had no thought of provoking controversy; and when the notes of the sermon were published I was utterly surprised at the startling headlines. I did not then think, however, that my allusion to the Papacy would be regarded by Bishop Haid as a matter of sufficient importance to demand his notice. It was therefore a second surprise when the pastor of St. Peter's announced that he had received orders to reply to my statements. I read the published report of his discourse, and while I saw much there that I could by no means accept as true, I saw nothing that I thought would do any harm. I at once decided to let the matter rest, and was glad that the end was reached. Another surprise awaited me, and that was to hear that some of the Protestants who heard the discourse were so far influenced by it as to feel that perhaps after all the Catholic Church was more sinned against than sinning. It awakened, in other words, a suspicion that I and other zealous ministers were unduly prejudiced, and were too strong in our condemnation. This, together with the fact that the pastor of St. Peter's himself invites an exposition of Catholic doctrine by insinuating that I had misquoted mutilated and misrepresented it have led me to the conclusion that I could not serve the cause of truth better than by throwing a little light on the matters in dispute.

I shrink from public controversy with intense aversion. Two reasons especially, powerfully restrain me. First, I am almost a stranger in your midst, and I can see how easily I might gain the unenviable reputation of a belligerent preacher. It is not pleasant to reflect that I have been here only a little more than 6 months, and already engaged in public controversy. Let me say by way of palliation that this is my first experience. The second consideration is that I fear it will be impossible for me to state plain unvarnished facts, and draw plain unvarnished inferences from them without incurring the charge of uncharitableness. Many persons put charity above the truth. They will censure a preacher for stating what they admit to be the truth if it is such truth as is likely to give offense. This is not Paul's kind of charity, which "rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth." "The wisdom which cometh from above is first pure and then peaceable." This is an age of charitable speech—the demand for charity between Christians is in everybody's mouth. Even that church whose pathway through the ages is stained with the blood of the saints, and lighted by the fires of their martyrdom has come to talk in soft and honied phrase and to plead for charity in the conduct of controversy. I am afraid that I shall not come up to the full measure of the demand.

And yet I do believe if you will apply the proper standard, I shall not be found less charitable towards the Catholic Church than it is towards us. In order to prepare you for some pretty hard things which I will probably say about that church, I will give you the benefit of what that church has to say about you. The pastor of St. Peter's says truly "the doctrines of the Catholic Church are all printed and circulated in this country with explanations

from official authorities." I shall take pleasure in helping to a knowledge of these published doctrines, and if every Protestant here will buy the books from which I quote and read them, there will never be any necessity for me to notice the sermons preached at St. Peter's.

The following quotations are from a book entitled: "Familiar Explanation of Christian Doctrine. Adapted for the Family and More Advanced Students in Catholic Schools and Colleges. With the Approbation of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. No. III. New York, Cincinnati, and St. Louis: Benziger Brothers, Printers to the Holy Apostolic See. 1877." The author is Rev. M. Muller. The book has also the imprimatur of Archbishop J. R. Bayley:

Page 87. Lesson XII.
Q. Since the Roman Catholic alone is the true Church of Jesus Christ, can anyone who dies outside of the Church be saved?

A. He cannot.

Q. Why not?

A. Because one who does not do the will of God cannot be saved.

Q. Is it then the will of God that all men should be Catholics?

A. Yes: because it is only in the Roman Catholic Church that they can learn the will of God: that is the full doctrine of Jesus Christ, which alone can save them.

Page 88.

Q. What do the Fathers of the Church say about the salvation of those who die out of the Roman Catholic Church?

A. They all, without exception, pronounce them infallibly lost forever.

Page 91.

Q. Are there any other reasons to show that heretics, or Protestants who die out of the Roman Catholic Church are not saved?

A. There are several. They cannot be saved, because: 1st. They have no divine faith. 2nd. They make a liar of Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost, and the Apostles. 3rd. They have no faith in Christ. 4th. They fell away from the true Church of Christ. 5th. They are too proud to submit to the Pope, the vicar of Christ. 6th. They cannot perform any good works whereby they can obtain Heaven. 7th. They do not receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ. 8th. They die in their sins. 9th. They ridicule and blaspheme the Mother of God and His saints. 10th. They slander the spouse of Jesus Christ—the Catholic Church.

I will quote only one more question and answer which occur further on in the book.

Q. Now, do you think the Father will admit into Heaven those who thus make liars of His Son Jesus Christ, of the Holy Ghost and of the Apostles?

A. No. He will let them have their portion with Lucifer in hell, who first rebelled against Christ and who is the "Father of Liars."

How is this for charity? The pastor of St. Peter's concluded his discourse by hoping that he had said nothing uncharitable; or that would wound the feelings of his hearers. How would it have been had he said, "You Protestants make a liar of Jesus Christ, of the Holy Ghost and of the Apostles and shall have your portion with Lucifer in Hell?" This is what his church says, in a book published for use in the schools and convents to which Protestants send their children for cheap education. This is the doctrine of that church which boasts of her unity. They all think alike. The pastor of St. Peter's thinks exactly as Rev. Mr. Muller and Archbishop J. R. Bayley. They all think just as the Pope tells them to think in all matters of faith and morals. Now, I think I can be as truly charitable toward the Catholic Church as it is to us, even though I may not be able to smother my indignation when I come to speak of her corruptions and cruelties. Suppose I were to stand here and say that all Roman Catholics make Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost and the Apostles liars, and shall have their portion with Lucifer in Hell, what would be the consequence? My own people would denounce me, and the community would look on me with detestation. Suppose our Shorter catechism contained such a statement. It would be scouted as a relic of the dark ages. Can you tell me why it is that the Roman Catholics can publish such statements and awaken no indignation? It is because they used to burn us, and we are so thankful that we are safe from the stake and fagots that we are willing for them to vent their impotent rage as much as they please in their empty vaporing. Do you know why Protestants send their children to Catholic schools where such doctrines are taught? Because they will not purchase and read these books of Catholic doctrine. But a word more on the charity of the Catholic church. The Pope and Councils of that church claim to be vested with a spiritual power that enables them to pronounce an anathema, or curse on heretics that shall consign them to hell. They have been very liberal with those anathemas. They con-

stitute a kind of refrain running through the deliverance of her councils. After laying down an article of faith which they pronounce true they are careful to add, if any refuse to believe it, let him be accursed. This doesn't sound very badly to you and me—if just suggestions that it is not altogether kind to be imprecating curses on those who differ from them. But look at it from their standpoint. They regard that anathema as sealing the fate of every one upon whom it falls. They know that when they couple it with the doctrine of the mass of transubstantiation, of penance, &c., as in the deliverance of the council of Trent, that it falls on all Protestants. Yet they pile up one anathema after another on our poor guilty heads because we can't prostrate our reasons at their feet, believing that they are consigning our souls to everlasting death. Suppose I were to stand here and invoke curse after curse upon all Catholics who deny the doctrine of Predestination, believing that in so doing I was putting a fresh bolt in the door of heaven with each curse to bar them out of heaven. You would call that uncharitable. That is the creed with all its direful anathemas to which the pastor of St. Peter's has sworn allegiance. Do you think I shall be less charitable to him and his church than they are to us? Surely I was not less charitable when I said that there were devout and good people in the Romish church, deserving of praise for their labour of self denial.

But I must not linger.

The pastor of St. Peter's quotes me as saying that Christ came to destroy Priestcraft, and then defines Priestcraft as the working of Priesthood. Surely a very inadequate definition. Worcester defines it "The arts and management of priests and ecclesiastical persons to gain power—religious fraud, or artifice." It is hardly possible that he would object to my saying that Christ came to destroy Priestcraft, if it were understood that I was using it in the sense of Worcester. I said nothing about Priesthood. But I am very willing to say a good deal about it, and especially to let you know what the Romanish doctrine of Priesthood is as taught in their books. The Pastor of St. Peter's is represented as saying: "But Holy Scripture says Christ came an Eternal Priest, and he bestows this priestly office on his apostles and disciples." We do not question that Christ came an Eternal Priest; but we demand reference to the S. S., which teach that he bestows this priestly office on His Apostles and Disciples." Here is the point of divergence between the Catholics and Protestants. We believe that the Aaronic Priesthood was typical of Christ's, and that the bloody sacrifices of the old Jewish ritual were typical of Christ's sacrifice. The Aaronic Priests and sacrifices were shadows. Christ and His sacrifice were the substance. We further believe that Jesus Christ, the only real High Priest, made the only real offering for the expiation of sin when He offered Himself on the cross; and that having made this one offering for the expiation of the sins of the world He ascended up on high to continue His priestly office by ever living to intercede for us. On the contrary, the Catholic Church's doctrine, as expounded by Rev. M. Muller, Priest of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, Baltimore, is that Jesus Christ died to establish the Romish Priesthood.

I quote from a book by Michael Muller, bearing the title: "The Catholic Priest," published by Kreuzer Brothers, 30 North street, 1876.

Page 98. "So sublime is the dignity of the priesthood that in order to establish it our Lord had to die. To redeem the world, it was not necessary that the Lord should die. A single drop of His sacred blood, a single tear, a single prayer of His would have sufficed; but in order to establish the priesthood our Lord had to die."

According to the pastor of St. Peter's Christ bestows His "priestly office on His Apostles and Disciples."—why he added disciples, I do not know. He could hardly mean that all the disciples are equally and in the same sense priests. There is a sense in which we teach that all believers are priests—in the sense of I. Peter, ii: 5. But there is no use in turning aside to that. The pastor of St. Peter's soon speaks of the functions of the Romish Priesthood—the offering up of the sacrifice of Christ in the Holy Sacrament. No disciple can discharge this function who has not received the grace of orders. But all who have received this grace are priests—not in any figurative sense, but in a literal sense. They claim to offer a real sacrifice to God, and by that sacrifice to expiate sin. Here is the heart and core of Romanism. It looks like a very small thing in the brief exposition of the pastor of St. Peter's. It will look larger when we give you a full length portrait. But first let me give you a reason for believing that the Protestant view is correct. It is the view taught in God's word, most plainly in the Epistle to the Hebrews. See Heb. 7:23, 9:24, 10:11. It is to me wonderful how the Spirit of God,

through the inspired writers, anticipated all the errors of the Papacy and refuted them in advance. Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that there is no further offering of sacrifice for sin. The Apostles are never once called Priests, they are never charged with any priestly duties. Preaching was their great work and in the last commission, comprehending their whole duty, no word is said about offering sacrifices, saying masses for the living and the dead: "Go ye into all the world." &c. But let us take a good look at the Romish Priesthood. If Priests, they must have something to offer. What shall it be? The nearest approach to a sacrifice is the sacrament of the supper. This is the starting point. They develop the doctrine of transubstantiation. I will give you the doctrine as defined by the Council of Trent:

Q. What is the faith of the Catholic church concerning the Eucharist?

A. That the bread and wine are changed by the consecration into the body and blood of Christ.

Q. Is it then the belief of the church that Jesus Christ Himself, true God, and true man, is truly, really, and substantially, present in the blessed sacrament?

A. It is, for where the body and blood of Christ are, there His soul also and His Divinity must be—and consequently there must be whole Christ, God and man; there's no taking him pieces.

Q. Is that which they receive in this sacrament, the same body as that which was born of the blessed Virgin, and which suffered on the cross?

A. It is the same body, for Christ never had but one body.

I suppose it is known to you that in celebrating the Holy Sacrament, they use very small wafers. They give only the bread to the laity, and they teach that the whole Christ, body, soul and divinity, is in each one of those small wafers, and is actually received and eaten by each worshipper. If there was any danger that this would be called in question, I would fortify it by Catholic authority. But this is too well known to need proof. Pause a moment and think about it. A priest with a box in his hand, not larger than a lady's watch perhaps, passes from communicant to communicant, taking from the box and giving to each a wafer the size of a very small coin, only not so thick. He lays it on the extended tongue. The law of the church is that it must not touch the teeth. It slowly dissolves and is swallowed. Now what are you required to believe? First, that the Priest by the words of institution converted each one of those wafers into flesh and blood. They are no longer what every sense testifies they are, but while still having all the properties of bread they are flesh and blood. Not only that, but he has transformed each wafer into the Lord Jesus Christ, the very Christ that ascended to heaven from Bethany. You are required to believe that he is carrying in that little box two or three hundred real bodies of Christ. Each one being the entire Christ, body, soul and divinity. You are required to believe that the Priest has made two or three hundred Gods each possessing all the attributes of infinite Deity. You are to believe that, on the peril of your soul. According to the pastor of St. Peter's there are 250,000,000 of rational human beings who believe that. I deny that so far as religion is concerned they are rational. They have renounced reason and like poor demented beings lie passively at the feet of the priests and say yes to all that they proposed for belief. This doctrine witnesses to the most remarkable triumph over human nature that has ever been gained. Men not only renounce their reasons, they reject the combined testimony of all their senses. It looks like bread, tastes like it, feels like it, smells like it, digests and nourishes like it. But the Pope and Council have said it is the body and blood, the soul and divinity of Christ, and reason is repudiated, and all the senses ignored and the Catholic receives and eats his God. It is related that James II of England, sent a priest to convert the Earl of Mulgrave to Popery. "Sir," said he, "I have convinced myself by much reflection that God made man, but I cannot believe that man can make God." We might reasonably expect that a Romish Priest would appreciate the greatness of his prerogatives. So he does.

"The Catholic Priest," page 95. The Eternal Omnipotent God in whose presence the pillars of Heaven do tremble. That God, before whom the earth and all that dwells thereon, before whom the boundless universe, with all its countless sons, and planets, before whom all created things are but a drop of water, as a grain of dust, as if they were not: That God of infinite majesty and glory, is subject to the Priest. He instantly descends from Heaven in obedience to the voice of His Priest. Page 96.

"There is a man who opens at will the gates of Heaven, who speaks to the eternal Son of God, and at his voice the God of Heaven descends on earth and subjects Himself to his control." Page 97.

"When we see a weak, sinful man, possessing power over God, himself possessing power to ban Him, to place

Him, to give Him to whom he wills, we cannot help exclaiming in amazement: "O, wonderful Miracle! O, unheard of power!"

When we hear a weak, sinful man, talking in that strain, it is hard not to think that Satan has had something to do with it.

Second. The Priest not only transforms the elements, but he offers the body and blood of Christ in sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead. If we had time to digress, it would not be amiss to suggest the relation of the masses to the finances of Rome. Suffice it to say that while the Priest can offer a true expiation for sin and thus free souls from the awful fires of purgatory, he does not perform this service for nothing. But we must turn to Rev. M. Muller once more and let him explain just what takes place when the priest offers mass for the soul in purgatory.

I quote from "Purgatorian Consoler," page 57: "When he came to the moment of consecration he took the sacred Host in his hands and said: 'O, Holy and Eternal Father, let us make an exchange. Thou hast the soul of my friend, who is in purgatory and I have the body of Thy Son, who is in my hands. Well do thou deliver my friend, and I offer Thee Thy Son with all the merits of His death and passion.'"

Third. Romish Priests hear confessions and pronounce absolutions. It has been said that no portion of the Papal system presents more originality than the confessional. The glory and the infamy of this institution is all its own. The Priests of the old dispensation, Patriarchs and Prophets never dreamed of it. Christ and His apostles were equally silent. It remained for Rome, unless we charitably attribute it to Satanic agency to invent this method of completing the enslavement of the human mind, and giving the priest absolute control over the souls of the deluded victims. The doctrine of the church is "that every Christian is bound, under pain of damnation, to confess to a priest all his mortal sins, which after diligent examination he can possibly remember; yea, even his most secret sins; his very thoughts; yea, and all the circumstances of them which are of any moment." This applies to the people of all ages and conditions, young and old, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, virtuous and profligate. Think of the Priest making his ear a common reservoir into which the wicked secrets of hundreds of souls are pouring like foetid streams of depravity. His bosom is the depository of all the moral filth that can be gleaned from his parish. His system of interrogation, like so many screws pressing on all parts of the heart, draws out all that it can yield. As if to ensure that the largest possible harm should come from it, the church, or the other agent, has superadded the celibacy of the clergy. The man who is to hear all the secrets of families, of wives and daughters, is an unmarried man. I admitted that the doctrines of the Catholic were accessible to the people. I must make an exception. If you would find the subjects on which he is required to question his female penitents you must go to the Latin of their great theologians, Deus and Liguori, these subjects are too loathsome and disgusting to be put into English. It is not long since forty-nine respectable ladies of the city of Montreal signed a declaration to the Lord Bishop, of that city, protesting from personal experience against what they term the "abominations of the confessional." But we must leave the subject of the Priesthood, although we have merely touched on it. Just one word more from M. Muller.

"Since God then had placed the Priest upon the throne of His own adorable sanctity; since he gives to the Priest the title of Savior of the world; since He calls the Priest His co-operator in the divine work of redemption; what wonder he commands all to obey and honor the Priest as they honor and obey Himself; since the Priest has been so honored by God, Himself, what wonder is it that he should be honored by angels and men. Wenceslaus, King of Poland, would not sit down in the presence of a Priest. St. Catherine Sienna, and Mary of Oignis, kissed the ground on which a Priest had walked. St. Francis Assisium said that if he saw an angel from Heaven and a Priest, he would bow first to the Priest and then to the angel; for the angel is the friend of God but the Priest holds His place." (The Catholic Priest, pages 110 and 112.)

We come next to the infallibility of the Pope. I confess that there are so many lines of argument to prove the audacity and absurdity of this doctrine, that I hardly know which to follow. Perhaps we had better begin with the illustration of the Supreme court, as this seems to have impressed some persons. Two very patent differences on the surface. Our Supreme court does not claim to be infallible. Its precedents have much weight, but they are not held to be infallible. In the second place, it does not try to bind the conscience. It does not say, if you dispute our ruling, we will send you right straight to hell. The Supreme court is just exactly what the General Assembly

of our church is, a court of last resort. The claim of the Pope is, as stated by Cardinal Manning: "The supreme judge and director of the consciences of men, of the field and of the throne." Now this high claim, if he stopped there would be certainly equal to the Supreme court if that were the case. But he proceeds: "Moreover, he declares, affirms, defines and prescribes to be necessary to salvation every human being to be subject to the Roman Pontiff." Now ever the Supreme court equal to the Supreme court? The United States one of them. I shall never live under a man government that demands the peril of damnation that it subjects judgment on all questions of morals to it. No man is fit to sit on Mecklenburg soil, where our independence was born and done. But we must have a teacher, either the Bible or the Bible for three simple reasons: 1. It is much more evidence than that by the Holy Ghost; 2. It is self-contradictory, and disposed to teach one a miserable sufferable non-sense.

Exceptions were taken to the excommunication to shut the heaven against whole nations, but the only answer is that the predestination should make a statement. "But what does it make it? The question is true? The answer to that church never interdicts a country is any better than Sodom and Gomorrah." I will just add one more. The Pope never interdicts Catholic countries, and if the bad as Sodom and Gomorrah made them so? and if they are bad as S. and G., who has shut the church by saying they were

But more serious exceptions to be taken to my saying that he grants his dispensation and ceases to be vice, &c. I thought power of granting dispensations and indulgences was undisputed. Much is made out of the fact that the Pope refused to divorce Henry VIII. "Not even to hold would he violate one tittle of the law." What was the ground of his plea? He professed to disavow the validity of his marriage. He married his brother's widow. His marriages were held to be invalid. How came Henry to enter into a marriage? The Pope granted special dispensation. The Pope issued a bull which purported to be right for Henry to do otherwise have been guilty of sin in doing. This exactly what I meant by his granting dispensation and causing vice to be vice. But there were reasons than scruples of conscience that prevented his granting the divorce. Catherine was Charles V, the most powerful monarch of Europe, and next debtor to the Pope. He was more of offending him than Henry. Moreover, he procrastinated and never did pronounce the divorce until after the Pope had passed the act of separation. Much for that. But let us nearer to our own time and see the zealous the Catholic church in sanctity of marriage. Is it a man to marry his niece? The laws, human and divine demand such a marriage as that. Well, did not Pope Leo grant dispensation to the Duke of Anjou, King of Italy's brother to marry his niece? And did not the Duke marry his niece, daughter of his own sister, the Princess Isabella? This was not done in corner. It was done, however, in benighted Italy where he has succeeded in keeping the instincts of the people still the face of such facts, it is my, as is charged, to say the Pope grants his dispensation and ceases to be vice, then I am under the charge.

It is evident that I cannot do justice to all the points raised in this reasonable length for a sermon. I content myself, therefore, in stating certain things, and holding responsible for the proof of the same. I deny that the Bishop of Rome, or that any much as set set foot in the city." All trustworthy evidence against it. I deny that the Pope grants a primacy over the other bishops. I deny that the Catholic Church permits the free, uncontrolled circulation and use of the among her people. I deny that the boasted unity of the Catholic Church. "There is unity of memory, of profession; unity of unintelligible vocation; unity in the preposition of a dead language in the presence of living people," unity in the worship of Mary, in praying to saints and angels, in many other things that have no authority from the Bible, no unity in that which is the glory of a church, in supreme devotion to the Savior, in submission to His