

TEMPLE LECTURE.

History of the Protestant Reformation and the Restoration of the Gospel.

[DELIVERED IN THE LOGAN TEMPLE, FEB. 22, 1888; PREPARED BY ELDER JAMES A. LEISHMAN.]

In our lecture of June 4th, 1887, we closed with the establishment of Popery in the year A. D., 606.

It is not our purpose to follow out in detail the intricate growth of Popery, or to expatiate upon the enormities of its development, by elaborate reference to the iniquities which grew out of its administrations, further than will merely serve our purpose in the illustration of the subject in hand.

It is beyond question that the Roman Church at the period above named was destitute of the spirit and form of the church established by Christ. This may be easily ascertained by a comparison of the two churches, as given in their respective histories. Nor does it appear that any renewal of the religion of Jesus Christ, as it was taught by Him and His Apostles, took place at any period intervening between the years 606 and the epoch of the Reformation, nor even at that time; hence, any assertion to the contrary must be rejected by the student of history. The conclusion is inevitable that these apostate fathers went on "heaping upon themselves teachers having itching ears, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof."

The erroneous dogmas that grew up under the patronage of the Roman Church became so interwoven in the social structure of society, that every avenue of social life became affected by them. It now follows, in order to treat upon the leading dogmas and errors of the apostate church, that the reader may note the abuses, the extravagant foolishness, the wrongs and wickedness that obtained under the name of religion, fostered by this dominant and militant church and was imposed with a heavy hand upon a large portion of mankind.

Mosheim informs us of the time of which we now treat that, "nothing can equal the ignorance and darkness that reigned in this (the seventh) century; the most impartial and accurate account of which will appear incredible to those who are unacquainted with the knowledge of this barbarous period." "In this barbarous age, religion lay expiring under a motley and anervous heap of

SUPERSTITIOUS INVENTIONS.

and had neither the courage nor the force to raise her head or to display her native charms to a darkened and deluded world. In the earlier periods of the church, the Christian worship was confined to the one Supreme God, and His Son Jesus Christ; but the Christians of this century multiplied the object of their devotion, and paid homage to the remains of the true cross, to the image of the saints and to bones, whose real owners were extremely dubious."

The religious festivals which had already existed in the church were greatly augmented during this period. Games were passed making the churches places of refuge to all who sought protection and offering an immunity from responsibility for the most unbridled crime, and affording indulgences of the most flagrant character. Churches were embellished, with pompous and magnificent ornaments, and no pains and means were spared to make grand displays of ostentatious beneficence. It must be remembered that notwithstanding that the bishops of Rome had become the sole bishops and pontiffs of the church, they were far from unifying it, and maintaining harmony throughout Christendom; and this, it appears, was due in a large measure to their own doings as each succeeding pontiff perhaps from fastidiousness deeming it his duty to introduce some extravagance or, from some creature of his fancy, bring in such changes in discipline and doctrines as to materially differ from his predecessor, which naturally produced in the minds of those inclined to be staid in their church rituals, a feeling of uneasiness and dissatisfaction. And while the Roman sect was steadfastly gaining power and strength in a religious doctrine, it also exercised its dominion adroitly to gain a temporal ascendancy, which it eventually accomplished notwithstanding the efforts employed against it.

The silly drollery of sprinkling, masses and bells as a religious ceremony in these times with the high estimate placed upon

IMAGE AND RELIC WORSHIP.

show what little appreciation was felt for the true and divine worship that was instituted by the Savior. To the careful student of history the spectacle herewith presented suggests how readily the mind becoming darkened the heart may lose the most precious truths of heaven, and man's worship turn to hero and relic worship.

For at an early date the love and affection which the early Christians entertained for one another induced them to obtain some relic, or memento from the property or remains of their martyred brethren and sisters by which to cherish their memory. In this way grew up an idolatrous worship of images and relics which practice becoming crystallized into Romanish rituals, ultimately became so ex-

cessive as to give disgust to those who possessed the least spark of love for genuine and God-fearing worship.

The whole stream of the history of the church in the eighth century shows a steady growth of the apostate church in power, an increase of error in general, and a marked corruption in the lives of the clergy of the east and west, they abandoning themselves to their passions without moderation or restraint.

ROMISH TEMPORAL POWER.

The See of Rome not content with ecclesiastical dominion aimed at temporal power, and accordingly in the year 756 the Bishop of Rome was raised to the rank of a temporal prince. This extension of power gave rise to an arrogant claim of the See of Rome to regulate and dictate the consciences of its subjects. The religion of this period was a motley round of external rites and ceremonies. Discord ran high in the churches of Spain, France and Germany, and endless controversies existed among the bishops concerning the status and identity of the Savior, a question which the Council of Nice and disposed of many hundred years previous.

Much difficulty existed in regard to the worship of images among the people. Some were desirous of its abolition, while others, specially among the clergy, were in favor of its continuance, and, in fact, of its establishment by law. Charlemagne, the Emperor of the Holy Empire of the west, labored hard against this idolatry, but without success. While he was ardently attached to the Roman See, he may be classed among the early reformers who strove unsuccessfully against a practice which appeared to them to be pernicious and unchristian.

During the reign of this illustrious monarch, under whose auspices Christianity was established among the Huns, Saxons, Frislanders, and other unenlightened nations, notwithstanding his endeavors to raise up his fellow man to a knowledge of Christ and Christianity, his

PITY WAS MIXED WITH VIOLENCE, and his spiritual conquests were made by the force of arms, which detracted much from the prestige of his exploits, and points to the low estimate that was placed upon the precepts of the Savior. It was deemed a justifiable act to convert the heathen and barbarian to Christianity with the sword. Such conversions were but in keeping with the false and perverted character of the system to which they became converts. Christianity was becoming more and more corrupted as the years and centuries rolled on. The aggressive and invidious policy of the Catholic Church to aggrandize itself on the expense of Christendom is apparent upon the pages of history.

The Roman pontiffs through the connivance of the princes, (being himself a temporal prince as well as the head of the Church,) resorted to all the chicanery generally used in these times by rulers to extend his jurisdiction and render the same secure. The obsequiousness of the masses to the influences of the church rendered it an easy matter to build upon their superstitious cupidity. Historians inform us that in the beginning of the tenth century Christianity was in a deplorable condition, as was also the state of letters and philosophy, the arts being totally neglected and the sciences expiring for want of attention and encouragement. It is said that the "philosophy of the Latins extended no further than the single science of logic or dialectics, which they looked upon as the sum and substance of all human wisdom."

As might well be expected in consideration of the general darkness and superstition of this century, the simple and cardinal principles of the gospel were perverted, and completely obscured with a train of false opinions and foolish fancies. Both Greek and Latin replaced the essence and life of religion with the worship of images and departed saluts. It is said that "scarcely did any Christian dare to approach the throne of God without rendering first the saints and images propitiaries by a solemn round of expiatory rites and lustrations."

Bellarmin, an historian, speaking of these times says: "In the west and almost all the world over faith failed, and there was no fear of God among them. Justice was perished from among men, and violence prevailing against equity governed the nations. Fraud, deceit and the arts of cozenage were grown universal. All kinds of virtue gave way as a useless thing, and wickedness supplanted its place. The world seemed to be declining apace towards its evening, and the second coming of the Son of Man to draw near; for the love was grown cold, and faith was not found on the earth. All things were in confusion, and the world looked as if it would return to its old chaos. All sorts of fornication were committed with the same freedom as if they had been lawful actions, for men neither blushed at them, nor were punished for them. Nor did the clergy live better than the people, for the bishops were grown negligent of the duty of their place, etc. In a word, men ran themselves headlong into all vices, and all flesh had corrupted its way."

Citation after citation might be given to show the proportions to which the apostate church had grown in false doctrine and iniquity and abomination in high places, from the Pope to the poor priest who officiated at the confessional, the ascetic monk in his cell, or the bare-footed friar that begged his meal from door to door.

THE DOCTRINE OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

which means that when the eucharist is consecrated by the priest it is turned into the body or real presence of the Savior, was first introduced as a doctrine at the Council of Constantinople A. D. 754, and enshrined upon by the second Council of Nice in the year 787, to mean that after consecration it was properly the body and blood of Christ. This doctrine was solemnly confirmed by Innocent the Third about the year 1199, and was required by the court of Rome to be acknowledged by all men. As might have been expected, this absurd dogma in its introduction met with great opposition from numbers of the clergy and laity, but after a lapse of years it was generally believed. The foolish and extravagant ideas which the popes of Rome entertained respecting the transformation of the eucharist after consecration may be seen from the statement of Pope Urban. "The hands of the pontiff are raised to an eminence granted to none of the angels, of creating God the creator of all things, and of offering Him up for the salvation of the whole world."

"He that created me," says the cardinal, "gave me, if it be lawful to tell, to create myself." Such a doctrine as the foregoing could only emanate from minds enshrouded in darkness and debased to a degree akin to heathenism. Its sacrilegious character surpassed blasphemy and brought the idea of Deity itself into contempt, and yet such a doctrine was held by the reputed head of the Church of Christ, who arrogated to be the vicegerent of God upon earth. The communion service, or the ceremony of the consecration and oblation of the host or eucharist was also known as the service of high or low mass, low mass when the consecration was spoken, high mass when it was sung or chanted. Usually the latter mode was attended with great pomp and solemnity.

THE DOCTRINE OF INDULGENCES

had its origin in the theory of an intermediate state of the soul, in which state, named purgatory, the indulgence of the pope or priest was effectual in the emancipation of all who were granted such forgiveness or indulgence. This was a doctrine of the most pernicious character, and was carried to such lengths as to completely expose the vile inwardness of the Roman See and the corruption of the Roman Church. It may be proper to state that isolated individuals and even organized sects were in existence at and prior to these days of perversity who decried these abuses; but their influence in the midst of such dense ignorance and indifference, scarcely made an impression upon the sweeping tide of corruption.

We are now treading upon the threshold of the Reformation which took a tangible shape in the latter part of the 12th century, in the labors of Peter Waldo, a rich merchant of Lyons, France. Much importance is attached by many Christians to the particular part he performed in his time, many supposing that through the Waldenses was preserved to modern Christianity its pure principles and the true remains of the priesthood left upon the earth by the Savior.

ORIGIN OF THE VAUDOIS CHURCH.

Before the days of Waldo there had existed in the valleys of Piedmont a religious people called the Cathari who, in the eleventh century, came from Bulgaria into Italy. They were the Puritans of that time, and were known by the names of Gazari Paulicans, or Publicans, Petrobrussians, etc. Milner informs us that they were accused of Manichaeism, imbibing the doctrines of the sect of that name. This sect, he says, first arose in Persia early as the year 270 A. D.; and, though opposed to the Catholic Church, it was found upon a critical examination of their tenets of faith, which reflected the Old Testament, to be but another outgrowth and admixture of Paganism and so termed Christianity. Although much persecuted by the Roman Church the sect survived, and about the year 1000 emerged from obscurity from Italy and spread into other countries. It is also certain that the inhabitants of Piedmont were known as the Vaudois or Vallenses. Milner in Chapter 1 (thirteenth century) informs us that "A mistake from similarity of names, and that Peter Waldo was the founder of these churches. For the name Vallenses being easily changed into Waldenses the Romanish improved this very easy and natural mistake into an argument against the antiquity of these churches, and denied that they had any existence till the appearance of Waldo."

In the "Handbook to all Religions" we find the statement, that many disputes and endless questions have been raised about the connection between the Vaudois of Piedmont and the Waldenses of Southern France—about the origin of the name, its meaning also, and about the antiquity of the people to whom it has been applied. Some contend that as a denomination, sect or church, the Waldenses date from the time and originated in the labors of Peter Waldo, of Lyons, about the year 1100. The same author further states that "there can be no doubt, however, that the Waldenses did not derive the views of divine truth which they held from Peter Waldo." The various names, including the Albigenses, which had its origin from a city in France called Albi, it is evident from history, applied to different communities of people, having a somewhat similarity of religious views. It is al-

so evident that the views of Waldo affiliated with those of the peoples we have mentioned; and as his following increased, persecution was raised against them, and many were obliged to seek refuge in the valleys of Piedmont, in common with others who fled from the hands of persecution elsewhere, for differing with the Roman church, eventually all the heretics and unorthodox being known by the general name of "Waldenses."

It matters but little for our purpose whether the name of Waldenses or Voudois was derived from Peter Waldo or from the term "dwellers of the valleys," or otherwise, it being more to our purpose to determine the status of the ancient inhabitants of Piedmont to the days of Waldo with respect to the purity of

THEIR DOCTRINAL VIEWS.

Upon a close examination of the creeds and tenets of the various bodies inhabiting Piedmont and elsewhere called by the different names above given, they are found to contain ideas foreign to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In regard to the example and precept of the Waldenses as also the views which they entertained in the period under consideration, as against the abuses of the Roman Church, there is much to admire. If the antagonism of the Roman See of those times is any part of virtue in those antagonized, there is sufficient evidence in the annals of history to show that they were an excellent people, for it is said that during a period of three hundred years three and a half millions of Waldenses were put to death, besides the untold misery and cruelty heaped upon those who escaped death. But with respect to the claims of this people as being the happy possessors of the religion of Jesus Christ, even if this be conceded, it is morally certain that whatever distinctive features they held they ultimately abandoned; for in the year 1655, the Vaudois identified themselves with other Protestant bodies and accepted the confession of Augsburg. This, however, does not go without saying that much good is to be found in this confession as is doubtless the case with all the others, each possessing a fragmentary portion of the religion of Christ. But it cannot be deduced from all that can be learned of this peculiar people that they had the same church organization and observed the same ordinances, that was in existence and practiced in the days of the Apostles. Though this much can be said to their credit, that they held the fundamental ideas upon which was built the Protestant Reformation. It is said "that this threw off the authority of the Pope and the Romanish bishops generally. They asserted the right of laymen to preach; they refused to pay tithes; they protested against the temporal power of the clergy, and abolished much of the ritual in baptism. They denied that in the eucharist, any transubstantiation took place in the hands of the priests. They opposed all alms, masses, fasts and prayers for the faithful departed, as useless. They opposed the use of the cross, images and ornaments in churches, the ceremonies of Candlemas and Palm Sunday; all benedictions, dedications, etc.; in fact, all traditions and ecclesiastical customs not expressly contained in scripture." It is evident from the history of this singular people, that they were imbued with a reformation spirit, and a well settled opposition to the Catholic Church; and they may properly be ranked

THE FIRST AMONG THE EARLY REFORMERS.

Peter Waldo being a man of wealth and innocence, when he attacked the vices and corruptions of the Roman See and the fallacy of the doctrine of transubstantiation and advanced better and higher conceptions of the Gospel of Christ as drawn from the study of the Holy Scriptures, naturally attracted the attention of the Roman Church, and especially the Archbishop of Lyons who forbade him preaching and teaching any more on pain of excommunication and punishment as a heretic. Waldo replied to him that though he was only a layman, he felt that he could not be silent upon a matter that was of such importance and which concerned the salvation of men. On this reply the Archbishop endeavored to apprehend him. Waldo, however, had such a hold upon the affections of his friends and relations who were men of high rank, while such universal esteem was paid to his piety and purity of life, that he lived concealed among them for the space of three years. Pope Alexander hearing of his strictures of the pope, anathematized him and commanded the Archbishop to proceed against him with the utmost rigor. Waldo was obliged to leave Lyons, and retired into Dauphiny preaching as he went where practicable. From there he went to Picardy. Milner informs us that "success attended his labors; and the doctrines which he preached appearing to harmonize with those of the Vaudois (or Waldenses), with reason they and his people were henceforward considered as the same." He eventually fled to Germany, and at last settled in Bohemia and there doubtless sowed the seeds of Protestantism that afterwards brought forth fruit in the events to which we shall hereafter refer. It is said that there he ended his days in or about the year 1160.

As we have now entered upon

THE PERIOD OF THE REFORMATION,

it may be proper in order fully to comprehend the necessity of a reformation to refer to the religious, social

and political condition of Western Christendom at the time now under consideration.

It is a well known fact that Western Christendom was a vast ecclesiastical empire with Rome as its capital, and the Pope of Rome the head. Europe was divided into ecclesiastical provinces, at the head of which was an archbishop. Each province was divided into dioceses, with bishops over them; each diocese into parishes, each with its parish priest. In addition to the parochial clergy there were also different orders of monks, the two chiefs of which were the rival Dominicans and Augustinian orders. In nearly all the cities and towns there were one, two or half a dozen monasteries and cloisters. So numerous had the monks become that they swarmed everywhere, and became, by the especial favor and attention of the Pope, more potent in many ways than the local clergy.

The following taken from the song of Friar Tuck, in Ivanhoe, will show what great hold this order of friars eventually obtained upon the public mind:

The friar has walked out, and where'er he has gone
The land and its fatness is marked for his own
He can warm where he lists, he can stop when he tires,
For every man's house is the barefooted friar's.

He's expected at noon, and no wight fill he comes
May profane the great chair and the porridge of plums,
For the best of the fare, and the seat, by the fire
Is the undenied right of the barefooted friar.

He's expected at night, and the pastry's made hot;
They broach the brown ale, and they fill the black pot;
And the good wife would wish her good man in the mire
Ere he lacked a soft pillow, the barefooted friar.

Long flourish the sandal, the cord and the cape,
The dread of the devil and trust of the Pope
For to gather life's roses, unscented by the briar,
Is granted alone to the barefooted friar.

Thus as may be seen an ecclesiastical network extended over Europe, all the threads of which were drawn towards Rome and held in the hands of the Pope and his cardinals. The priest and the monk had become to a great extent derelict in their duties; and had grown insolent toward the people, and consequently unpopular. The steady opposition of the Waldenses and the short and decisive career of Peter Waldo, aroused to some degree the vigilance of the See of Rome, who, at the instance of St. Francis, about the year 1210, instituted the order known as the Franciscans or Mendicant Friars, afterwards so numerous throughout Europe.

These seized upon the neglected opportunities of the monks and priests, and so made themselves masters of the situation. In return for their self-denying and laborious services, they asked only such alms as the people had to give; while by the vows of their order they were precluded from holding property in the soil. At the appearance of the Friars with most pretentious solicitations for the spiritual and temporal interests of the people, they were hailed with delight as popular saviors from the extortion and cupidity of the priests and monks. But it required only a short time to prove that they brought with them worse evil than that which they came to alleviate. It is said that the monasteries and even the Vatican had become

THE LAZAR HOUSES OF CHRISTENDOM.

Mr. H. C. Corant, in his history of the translation of the Holy Scriptures, says: "The wealth of the English monks almost passes belief. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries the endowments of monasteries was a mania in Christendom. Lands, buildings, precious stones, gold and silver were lavished upon them with an unsparing prodigality. They understood to perfection all the traditional machinery of the church for extracting money from high and low. The exhibition of relics, the performances of miracles, and above all the sale of indulgences, and of masses for the dead, formed an open sluice through which a steady golden stream poured into the monastic treasury," and when required, into the coffers of the Roman See. The particular and specific duties performed by the mendicant friars were hefting the cause they represented. They were for ever insinuating themselves into every person's business, having an eye to the maintenance and perpetuation of popery and the methods adopted by it to feed and fatten the See of Rome.

The authoress before named mentions in her history, in relation to the mendicant order, that "it was the most successful blow which ever had been struck by the Papacy. Hitherto the relation between the clergy and people had been such as to allow a wholesome dislike of the priesthood. The faults of superiors and oppressors are easily discerned by those on whom they trample; and it might be hoped that in time the common mind would rise above the delusions of a system whose temporal bondage was so hard to bear. But under this new form it wormed itself into the very heart of the people. It fell in with all their prejudices, flattered their vanity, vulgarized religion to their tastes, cheapened it to their means and bound them heart and soul