ANGLICAN CATHOLICITY VINDICATED AGAINST ROMAN INNOVATIONS: IN THE ANSWER OF ISAAC CASAUBON TO CARDINAL PERRON

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Anglican Catholicity Vindicated Against Roman Innovations: In The Answer of Isaac Casaubon to Cardinal Perron by W. R. Whittingham & Hall Harrison

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W. R. WHITTINGHAM & HALL HARRISON

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TO CARDINAL PERRON.

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PREPARED BY

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AND

HALL HARRISON.

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INTRODUCTION.

a Born Feb. 18. 1559; died in Lon-don, July 12, 1614. THAT ISAAC CASAUBON, a Huguenot layman, son of a pastor who died in exile for his religion, came to be the penman of the Church of England, happened on this wise.

Living in Geneva, from early years a devout communican't there, and son-in-law of Henry Stephens, the prince of scholarly printers, he established by his published writings and private correspondence such a reputation for universal scholarship and extraordinary critical sagacity, as induced the eminent French lawyer and historian, the President de Thou, with other men of influence in Paris. to bring their countryman back to France, at first as a teacher in Protestant institutions of learning in the Southern provinces, and three years afterward by appointment of Henry IV., first as Professor and then as Royal Librarian, to residence in Paris. There, the royal apostate who "thought the mass not to be refused when a crown was to be had for taking it," used both personal persuasion and the agency of influential and able men, to obtain for his own recreancy the countenance of an imitation by a scholar of so great a reputation as CASAUBON had attained. For ten years he was worried and distraught by an almost unceasing series of assaults upon his religious constancy by one after another with whom by royal command or at the importunity of private friends (some, unhappily, sharers in the royal versatility of faith), he was brought into conference on the points of difference,

His private diary, not many years ago first published by Canon Russell, reveals what painful struggles these proselyting efforts occasioned him, sensible as they made him

the outset when filling, in 1600, the honorable position of

umpire in the famous conference between Du Plessis Mornay and Cardinal Perron. The assailant in that ill-managed and unfair dispute, himself a convert avowedly for a living, from the Huguenot ranks, earned a Cardinal's hat

by discomfiture of his ill-matched adversary. His efforts

to grace his victory still further by the conquest of the

him of many of the weaknesses of the system in which he had been brought up. In part he learned that lesson at

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Paris.

judges on the Huguenot side, succeeded in the case of Canaye de Fresne, Casaubon's friend and patron. They became the more frequent, busied and untiring; until on the murder of his royal master, May 14, 1610, Casaubon, two of whose sons were seduced from his side by the arts of those whose snares were compassing his own soul, sought refuge in England, at the invitation of Bancroft, then Archbishop of Canterbury, and in the company of Edward Wotton, then returning from his temporary embassy to

CASAUBON'S friends in the French Court were strong enough to keep for him his places during a temporary absence, and it was only for such that he took his leave. But both his correspondence and still more fully and clearly his diary, show that from the very outset his visit to England was made in the indefinite hope of relief from the distresses and anxieties of his false position as a Huguenot office-holder under the papistically counselled and controlled French government by the Queen Regent. That he found it to his heart's content, the same sources of information amply prove. His introductions brought him immediately into close and confidential communication with the leading minds of the English Church, who were then well able to appreciate his gifts and attainments, and proportionably disposed to secure his co-operation in

the

sent" urged against him by the wondrous memory and inexorable logic of Du Perron, his sense of insufficient mission and of imperfect provision for his spiritual needs, and the revolt of his large mind from the narrow sectarianism of Charenton and Geneva, were all relieved. He met with scholars able as himself to distinguish genuine claims to

and decent pomp of sacred service kept up in unbroken continuity on the basis of a succession and prescription of a thousand years' duration. He was welcomed in the profession of a faith as broad as the Catholic Creeds, and to a Communion in which the men who sat at Dort, shared counsels, trusts, and honors with Andrewes, Overal and Neale. With Andrewes, particularly, it was the happiness

of CASAUBON to make speedily an intimate acquaintance, and they drew together as kindred souls.

His Diary gives many evidences that while CASAUBON was engaged in preparing this Answer to Perron, he was in almost daily communication with Andrewes, then Bishop

primitive antiquity from the spurious developments of post-Carlovingian hierarchism. He witnessed ministerial work

of Ely; the points in controversy were talked over; the doctrines which Casaubon's wide reading had already gathered out of the early fathers, were confirmed by Andrewes as the ground upon which the Church of England would wish to rest her cause in the contest with Rome, then so hotly waged by such disputants as Baronius, Bellamaine and Du Perron.

Thus

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INTRODUCTION.

Thus it has happened that this short Latin Tract, being composed by the first scholar and one of the most learned theologians of his age, and revised, so to say, by Andrewes, the light and ornament of the English Church, is really a valuable summary of the points of difference between England and Rome. Among Casaubon's more voluminous and important publications it has been to some degree overlooked, and indeed the old English translation is so

rare that there is probably no copy in this country except the one from which this reprint has been made. Under these circumstances, and seeing that the controversy with Rome on the very points that Casaubon

> touches, is waxing warmer and warmer, it seemed worth while to make accessible this admirable treatise, which contains within the compass of a few pages of racy English

> (interesting even from a literary point of view) a statement of England's position as authoritative as any utterance can be, save the ipsissima verba of the Prayer Book and Articles themselves. While the work was in the printer's hands, an elaborate

biography of Casaubon, by the Rev. Mark Pattison, Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, appeared in England. The distinguished author, who possesses a remarkable power of presenting a graphic portraiture of the characteristics of an historical period and its leading men, is more occupied with setting forth Casaubon's eminence as a

he seems scarcely to set a due value upon Casaubon's labors in the field of ecclesiastical controversy. "It is impossible to regret," says Mr. Pattison, "that Casaubon, who

scholar and critic, than his merits as a theologian. Indeed

could have done work that no one else could, should have been kept to writing pamphlets, which scores of others could have written quite as well.* But it must not be *This is hardly consistent with Mr. Pattison's own language a few pages further on, where he tells us that "the early and constant bent of Casatukon's supposed Church of God-the cause of civil society against the common enemy, the bishop of Rome and his emissaries. Coming from France, he knew, better than the anglican bishops, what that ultramentane yoke meant, against which the english Church was struggling." (Page 349.) In view of the pamphlet war which has been raging in England for the last ten years, growing out of the so-called

Ritualistic development, and considering the intense in-

terest in the Roman Catholic controversy, as proved by the unprecedented circulation of Mr. Gladstone's remarkable publications on "Vaticanism," it is certainly singular to find Mr. Pattison writing as follows: "The anti-papal controversy of James' reign is as obsolete for our generation as any other theological squabble, and the books in which it is consigned are equally forgotten; Casaubon's among the rest." (Page 349.) It is at least worth noting, that at the very time when the Rector of Lincoln College was penning or printing these words, this treatise of Casaubon, so far from being forgotten, was turned to by one in a distant American diocese, as worthy of reprint and circulation. The anti-papal controversy is far from obsolete in the United States, and

the lapse of two hundred and sixty years has in nowise detracted from the intrinsic value of a production which so well combines learning with conciseness, and, in short, is so decidedly ad rem. Few things are more satisfactory mind had been towards theology. But what was commonly known by this name, doctrinal or systematic, theology, as taught in the schools, lay entirely outside his walk. His reading had led him at once to the sources ont of which had been constructed that 'web of subtlety and spinosity,' (Bacon: Advancement of Learning) the scholastic theology. He was in possession, as hardly any one clee had been, of the key of ecclesiastical antiquity," (Page 355.)