

**"LUTHER
VINDICATED"**

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"Luther Vindicated" by Charles Hastings Collette

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"All the rich mines of learning ransack'd are,
To furnish ammunition for this war;
Uncharitable zeal their reason whets,
And double edges on their weapon sets."

DEBHAM.

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LONDON:

BERNARD QUARITCH, 15 PICCADILLY.

1884.

PREFACE.

LUTHER has ever been, at the hands of Roman Priests, the subject of the most virulent abuse and coarse invective as a libertine and blasphemer. LUTHER'S whole life and character, heart, and mind were identified with one great work—the Reformation of the Church from the corruptions by which priestcraft had almost changed Christianity into heathenism. Having emancipated himself from the thralldom of superstition, hosts upon hosts followed him. He denounced the rapacity, vice, ignorance, and licentiousness of the priesthood from the Pope downwards. Hence the invectives and slanders that have been unsparingly heaped upon him by every Romanist who takes pen in hand, and by all those of the Newman, Ward, and Sabine Baring-Gould school, who would fain bring us back to the bondage and superstition of the Middle Ages. The best vindication of Luther is his own works. To distort and misquote these, therefore, has been the study of his opponents, “whose gall coins slander like a miut.” Luther's early writings, when he was first emerging from darkness into light, are ransacked, while his maturer works are avoided or ignored. His rugged, and sometimes what would be now considered coarse, expressions, principally found

in the "Table Talk" and his early writings, and some startling sentiments advanced as a paradox, may offend the delicate ear, and have certainly given occasion for his opponents to turn them to his prejudice; but we must look to the times in which he wrote, and the subjects he had to write upon, and the system he had to expose. On this AURIFABER, in his preface to the first edition of the "Table Talk," remarked: "The reader who reads the matter will not be offended with some obsolete words in Luther's discourses, for even this simplicity in the manner of writing is characteristic of those ancient times in which truth was respected for her inward beauty, not for her dress."

LUTHER is in no way responsible for the statements made in the "Table Talk." This book occupied two folio volumes, first published some twenty-three years after his death, and purports to be a reproduction of conversations at convivial meetings, alleged to have taken place with intimate friends, during several years of his lifetime, and never intended for publication. If, however, LUTHER, in these convivial meetings, used expressions which would, in this more refined age, when outward decency is observed, be toned down, his illustrations of the vices of Popes, Priests, and people generally, were not the less true, nor was the language inconsistent with the custom of the age, some three hundred and fifty years ago. In these reproductions we meet with no unseemly or ribald jokes. But throughout all his more mature works, and even in this very "Table Talk," there breathes forth a fervent piety, a God-fearing, God-loving holiness, a loftiness of conception, which places him far above his puny and narrow-

minded assailants. It was Archdeacon HARE who observed that Luther's intense love of truth revolts those who dally with truth; they play tricks with it until they cease to discern the distinction between truth and falsehood.

The proposed celebration of the Four-hundredth anniversary of Luther's birth has called forth from Romish Pulpits and Press a repetition of the oft-refuted calumnies against the great Reformer of the sixteenth century. This fact has suggested the re-issue, in one volume, of stray Articles on the subject, which I have, from time to time, contributed to various Journals.

In Part I., I have given a critical, and somewhat minute examination of two Lectures delivered by the Rev. SABINE BARING-GOULD, a professed Minister of the (Reformed) Established Church of England, entitled, *Luther and Justification*. In Part II., I have examined, and I trust satisfactorily answered, various other popular charges made against Luther and his writings, which have not come directly within the scope of Mr. BARING-GOULD'S Lectures.

It is hoped that the present volume will be welcome as well at the present moment as for the future, in affording ready replies to the merciless attacks on LUTHER.

I cannot conclude these few observations without reproducing the short but patriotic and heart-stirring address of the IMPERIAL CROWN PRINCE OF GERMANY, on the opening of the LUTHER HALL, on the occasion of the recent LUTHER FESTIVAL at Wittenberg:—
“May this festival serve as a holy exhortation to us to uphold the great benefits of the REFORMATION with the same courage as was displayed in acquiring them for

us. May it, above all, strengthen us in the resolution to be ready at all times to defend the EVANGELICAL CREED, and with it liberty of conscience and religious toleration. The strength and essence of PROTESTANTISM do not rest upon any stiff form of written words, but in the striving after the knowledge of Christian truth. May LUTHER'S anniversary help to strengthen Protestant feeling, preserve the German Evangelical Church from disunion, and lay for her the foundation of lasting peace."

C. H. C.

10th November, 1883.

PREFACE TO PART I.



“ En vérité, mes Pères, voilà le moyen de vous faire croire, jusqu'à ce qu'on vous réponde; mais c'est aussi le moyen de faire qu'on ne vous croye jamais plus, après qu'on vous aura répondu.”—PASCAL.

THE Rev. Dr. Littledale, in his now notorious Lecture against the Anglican Reformers, entitled “Ritualistic Innovations,” fairly puts his hearers on their guard. He said:—“I am not here to-night in a judicial capacity, to sum up impartially for plaintiff and defendant alike, and to leave you, as the jury, to draw your own conclusions. I discharge the functions of Counsel,—bound, indeed, to allege no falsehood for my clients nor against their opponent, *but in no way responsible* for stating the case against myself.” While we admit the candour of the lecturer, we cannot commend the morality of Ritualists, taking the Rev. Doctor as a fair type of the school. In secular matters we,—at least, such of us laymen as have a reputation to maintain,—consider it a duty to tell not only *the truth*, but *the whole truth and nothing but the truth*; more especially when we are dealing with the character of the departed. The Rev. S. Baring-Gould, however, by his Lectures on “Luther and Justification,” if I understand him rightly, professes *to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth*; whereas, truth, as far as I can judge, appears to be the very last object sought

to be conveyed by his Lectures. If, in the products of genius, art is displayed in concealing art, taking these Lectures as a sample of Ritualistic morality, the art displayed by Ritualists is in endeavouring to conceal truth. The affected candour exhibited by the rev. gentleman is somewhat amusing. In answer to one of my letters, requesting explanations of some of his quotations, he writes :—“ I have made a *mistake in one passage I have quoted* on the authority of Möhler, which I intend to correct when I have an opportunity. Far be it from me to wish to do an injustice to Luther or any man, and to misrepresent him ” !!

The simplicity of this passage is truly charming ! A mistake in *one* passage, indeed, when the entire pamphlet is made up of a continuous series of misquotations, mistranslations, misrepresentations, as well of Luther's text as of his doctrinal teaching. I have successively replied to three leading works, which I believe have hitherto been unsurpassed for the mass of misquotations and historical and literary misrepresentations which they contain ; I allude to Dr. Wiseman's lectures on “The Catholic Church,” Dr. Milner's “End of Religious Controversy,” and Cobbett's “History of the Protestant Reformation.” Taking into consideration the relative bulk of these three volumes, compared with the Rev. S. Baring-Gould's pamphlet on “Luther and Justification,” I unhesitatingly give the palm to the latter as far surpassing the three others named in the above specialities.

Alluding to the author of these Lectures, the Romish paper, *The Weekly Register*, in their issue of August 11, 1883, in a series of articles against