



THE
REFORMERS
ON
THE REFORMATION.
(FOREIGN)

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“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them.”—MATT. vii. 15, 16.

“Where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed.”—JAMES iii. 16.

LUTHER, the prime author of that great revolution in religion miscalled “The Reformation,” after some years’ experience of its results, declared :—“The world grows worse from day to day. Men are now more covetous, malicious, and resentful, more unruly, shameless, and full of vice, than they were in the time of Popery.” (Mundus in dies fit deterior; sunt nunc homines magis vindictæ cupidi, magis avari, magis ab omni misericordia remoti, magis immodesti et indisciplinati, multoque deteriores quam fuerint in Papatu.—*In Postill. super Evang. Domin. primæ Adv., ap. Bellarm. in Append. ad Lib. de Summo Pont., c. 23.*)¹

“Our Germany, after so great light of the Gospel, seems to be all but possessed by the devil. Our youths are impudent and unruly, and will no longer submit to education; the old men are loaded with sins of avarice, usury, and many others that may not be told.” (Nostra Germania quoque post tantam lucem Evangelii tantum non obsessa videtur a diabolo. Juventus indomita et effrenis est, et impatiens disciplinæ, senes avaritia, usuris, et multis sceleribus infandis implicite tenentur.—*Comment. in Gen. xxiii. 9, Op., ed. Wittemb., 1580, tom. vi.*)

CALVIN, the second great patriarch of the Reformation, says :—

¹ With the exception of this and two other extracts, all the quotations contained in these pages have been taken from original sources.—C. F. B. A.

“ But a few years had elapsed since the glorious beginnings of our renascent Church displayed themselves, when straightway we see them reduced to a heap of ruins. But before the Lord inflicted this punishment upon us, there was to be seen everywhere a manifold and horrible profanation of the Gospel, so that this sudden overthrowing of our labours that has occurred is not so much a subject for wonder, as is the long-suffering of God in enduring the monstrous wickedness of our age. When so many thousands of men, having thrown off the Papal authority, eagerly, as it seemed, enrolled themselves under the Gospel, how few, think you, have repented of their vices? Nay, what have *the majority* shown to have been their desire, than that, having shaken off the yoke of superstitions, they might launch out the more freely into every kind of lasciviousness?” (Ut non tam admiranda sit hæc, quæ accidit subita rerum eversio, quam diuturna in sustinendis sæculi nostri prodigiosis sceleribus patientia. Quum tot hominum millia, abnegato Papatu, cupide, ut videbatur, nomen dedissent Evangelio, quam pauci, obsecro, à vitiis suis resipuerunt? Imo, quid præ se major pars tulit, nisi ut excusso superstitionum jugo, solutius in omnem lasciviam difflueret?—*De Scandalis*, Opera, ed. Amstelod., 1677, tom. viii. p. 71.)

Writing to Melancthon, A.D. 1552, he says:—“ You see how many people have their eyes fixed upon us; how, from our dissensions, the wicked take occasion to revile us, and how, by our dark intrigues, the weak brethren are thrown into confusion. It is indeed a matter of great importance that no suspicion of the disunion that has arisen among us should by any means pass down to posterity. For it is above measure absurd that we, who have been obliged to separate from the whole world, should fall asunder from one another, even at the very commencement of the Reformation.” (Nec vero parvi refert ne qua ad posteros exeat ullius inter nos exortæ discordiæ suspicio. Plusquam enim absurdum est, postquam discessionem à toto mundo facere coacti sumus, inter ipsa principia alios ab aliis dissilire.—*Epist. ad Melancth.*, Op., tom. ix. p. 66.)

MARTIN BUCER says:—“ The greater part of them (the Reformed) seem only to have sought from the Gospel of Christ the following advantages, to wit: first, that they might free themselves from the tyranny of the Roman Antichrist and his bishops; next, that they might cast off the yoke of every kind of discipline and penance, and

of all that religion which remained under the Papacy, and might live and do all things according to the dictates of their carnal lusts and appetites; and lastly, it was by no means displeasing to them to hear that we are justified by faith in Christ, and not by good works, for which latter they had no relish. . . . Not a few of them only received the preaching of the Gospel—of whatsoever kind it might be—in order that they might plunder the goods of the Churches.” (Itaque, maxima horum pars visa est ea modò ex Evangelio Christi petisse; primum, ut Antichristi Romani, et pseudo-episcoporum tyrannidem à se depellerent; deinde, ut jugum qualiscunque disciplinæ, pœnitentiæ, et religionis universæ, quæ in Papatu reliqua fuit, abjicerent; proque carnis suæ arbitrio ac libidine instituerent agerentque omnia. Tum, non ingratum eis fuit audire, justificari nos fide in Christum, non bonis operibus, quorum nullo tenebantur studio. . . . Nec pauci eorum qualemcunque Evangelii prædicationem eò tantum receperunt, ut in opes invaderent ecclesiasticas.—*De Regno Christi*, lib. i. c. 4, Op., ed. Basil., 1577, p. 24.)

And again, in a letter to Calvin in 1549, he says:—“Our followers preferred *appearing* to be Christians to being so in truth. . . . What pleased them was their liberation from the superstitions and tyranny of the Pope, and the license to live according to their own will.” (Maluerunt itaque videri quam esse Christi. . . . Placebat liberatio a superstitionibus et tyrannide Papæ, et vivendi pro arbitrio licentia.—*Ap. Calv. Epist.*, Op., tom. ix. p. 232, ed. Amstelod.)

CAPITO, the colleague of Bucer in the administration of the Church of Strasburg, in an epistle to Farel, A.D. 1537, says:—“The Lord grants me to learn what it is to be a pastor, and how great harm has been done by our hasty judgment and inconsiderate vehemence in throwing off the Papal authority. For the multitude, after being accustomed and well-nigh brought up to do as it pleases, has now absolutely thrown off all restraint; as though, by breaking down the authority of the Papists, we made void the power of the Word, of the Sacraments, and of the whole office of the ministry. For they cry out:—‘I know enough of the Gospel; I can read it for myself; what need have I of your assistance?’” (Dominus videre dat quid sit agere pastorem, et quantum præcipiti iudicio vehementiâque inconsulta abjiciendi ita Pontificis nocuerimus. Nam frenum

prorsus excussit multitudo, quæ assueta est et educata propemodum ad licentiam; quasi auctoritatem Pontificiorum frangendo, vim verbi, Sacramentorum et totius ministerii, evacueremus. Nam clamant, Teneo satis Evangelii, ipse scio legere; quorsum mihi tua opera?"—*Epist. ad Farel., inter Calvini Epist., tom. ix. p. 2.*)

DUDITH, writing to Beza, says:—"The Churches themselves are contending with deadly hatred and mutually anathematising one another. The chief theologians differ from themselves day by day, and coin a faith quite different from that which they had just before professed, and from that of all other Christians; then they have a creed that may last for a month. . . . In what single point of religion are these Churches which have declared war against the Roman Pontiff agreed amongst themselves?" (*Ecclesiæ ipsæ pugnant inter se capitalibus odiis et horrendis quibusdam anathematis: ipsi qui summi haberi volunt theologi, a seipsis in dies dissident, fidem cudunt et à sua ipsius quam paulo antè professi fuerant, et ab aliorum omnium fide abhorrentem: denique menstruam fidem habent. . . . In quo tandem religionis capite congruunt inter se Ecclesiæ, quæ Romano Pontifici bellum indixerunt?*—*Ap. Beza Epist. Theol., ep. 1, Genevæ, 1575, p. 5.*)

MELANCTHON, in an epistle to Luther, says:—"Our followers blame me because I restore the jurisdiction to Bishops. The people, accustomed to liberty, and having once cast off the yoke, will not receive it again; and the towns of the Empire are most averse to this authority. They labour nothing for the teaching of religion, being solicitous only for power and liberty." (*De doctrina religionis nihil laborant, tantum de regno et libertate sunt solliciti.*—*Epist., lib. i. ep. 17, ed. Lond. 1642, col. 10.*) "Our associates dispute not for the Gospel, but for their own dominion." (*De suo regno non de Evangelio dimicant socii nostri.*—*Ib., epist. 20, col. 12.*)

"Would to God I could confirm, not the sovereignty of Bishops, but restore their administration; for I see what kind of Church we are likely to have if we subvert the ecclesiastical government. *I see that tyranny will be much more insupportable than ever.*" (*Video postea multò intolerabiliorem futurum tyrannidem, quam antea unquam fuit.*—*Lib. iv. epist. 104, col. 685.*) "Luther himself was

always of this opinion (regarding the restoration of Episcopal administration), whom some, I perceive, only love because by his help they succeeded in casting off the Bishops and gaining a liberty that will be of very little advantage to posterity. For what will be the state of the Church if we abolish all the ancient customs, and there be no more prelates nor certain guides?" (Lib. iv. epist. 106, col. 686). "No race of men were ever in greater danger than ourselves; nor do I find that any faction ever displayed more bitter enmities than those of our party." (*Nec odia acerbiora fuisse unquam ullius factionis, quam nostri nominis, colligo.*—Lib. iv. ep. 113, col. 689.) "You see how wickedly they suffer that the entire discipline of the Church should everywhere go to ruin. When doubts on the most important matters are silently fixing themselves in the minds of men everywhere, why is it that some mode of explaining our doctrines is not adopted? . . . This was what my counsels always had regard to, so long as any hope remained" (Lib. iv. epist. 135, col. 704). "Good God! what tragedies will posterity behold if these questions ever come to be moved, whether or no the Word, whether the Holy Ghost be a person!" (*Ib.*, epist. 140, col. 708).

"You see, my dear friend, that in all these conventions (of the Protestant Churches) nothing is less thought of than religion; fear makes them propose agreements—such as they are—for a time, and with dissimulation; and no wonder if such treaties proceed ill; for how can it be supposed that God could bless such counsels?" (*Vides, in his pacificationibus, non hoc agi, ut religioni consulatur, sed simulari nescio qualia fœdera ad tempus per metum. Itaque nihil mirum est, non procedere has transactiones. Quomodo enim putemus favere Deum talibus consiliis?*—*Ib.*, epist. 137, col. 705.)

In 1548 he writes:—"The Emperor has necessary cause for seeking the pacification of the Churches, so great is the variety in opinions and rites, and the barbarism prevailing everywhere (*cum tanta sit et opinionum et rituum dissimilitudo, et alicubi barbaries*). The worse the disease, the greater the necessity for its proper remedies; but the manners of the teachers of our party are such, to speak very moderately, as to cause many people to hope that any change of condition will prove a golden age in comparison with the state of confusion that we are in" (*Ib.*, epist. 742, col. 889).

In 1555 he writes:—"I doubt not that God has some Church; but mob-collecting demagogues, men unlearned, who neither seek

the founts of doctrine, nor discipline, nor care for the exercise of true piety, bear rule; whose dominion, indeed, I cannot hinder, but whose society I shall certainly avoid. I sit like Daniel among the lions," &c. (*Ib.*, epist. 836, col. 938). "This most sad confusion of the Church causes me so much grief, that I shall willingly depart from this life. . . . I commend ourselves and the Church to God, and desire but little the friendship of those who are the enemies of literature, and discipline, and of the truth." (*Hæc tristissima confusio Ecclesiæ tantum mihi dolorem affert, ut libenter ex hac vita discessurus sim, ac video me non procul a meta abesse. . . . Ego nos et Ecclesiam Deo commendo, et non valde illorum amicitias appeto, qui sunt et literarum, et disciplinæ, et veritatis hostes.*—*Ib.*, epist. 842–844, col. 941–942.)

Nearly all the letters (about 900 in number) in the Fourth Book of Melancthon's Epistles are addressed to his friend Camerarius, and many of them contain lamentations similar to the above.

WILLIBALD PIRCKHEIMER,¹ writing in 1528, says:—"I know, and it is the truth, that even unbelievers were not guilty of such fraud and crime as those are who call themselves 'Evangelicals.' For the fact is evident to be seen, that there is now neither faith nor hope, no fear of God, no love of one's neighbour; but there is a rejection of mercy and goodness, of art and of learning; nor do they now think of aught save the gratification of the body," &c. (Epistle to Tscherte, in *Reliquien von Albrecht Durer*, Nuremburg, 1828, p. 166).

ZWECKIUS, minister at Constance, writes to Calvin, A.D. 1541:—"The discipline of the Church has for the greater part vanished, and cannot, perhaps, be restored without greater evil; at least, let our

¹ The historian HALLAM says:—"Munzer and Knipperdoling, with the whole brood of Anabaptist fanatics, were the legitimate brood of Luther's early doctrine. And even if we set these aside, it is certain that we find no testimonies to any reform of manners in the countries that embraced it. . . . This great practical deficiency in the Lutheran reformation is confessed by their own writers; and it is attested by a remarkable letter of Willibald Pirckheimer, announcing the death of Albert Durer to a correspondent at Vienna in 1528. . . . The witness he bears to the dishonest and dissolute manners which had accompanied the introduction of Lutheranism is not to be slightly regarded, considering the respectability of Pirckheimer, and his known co-operation with the first reform" (*Hist. of Literat. of Europe*, Part I., ch. iv., sect. 60, note, 6th edit.)

princes and magistrates labour strenuously against public vices and scandals, that by this means the Church may be purged and the name of Christ respected by others, which may Christ grant. . . . For things have come to this pass (and I cannot say it without lamentation) that a great part of our people believe that they have escaped from the reign of Antichrist when they can play with the goods of the Church at pleasure and are subject to no discipline. O splendid Christianity!" (*Ecclesiæ disciplina maxima ex parte evanuit. . . . Huc enim ventum videtur (quod tamen non sine gemitu dixerim) ut magna nostrorum pars credat sese tum demum vere regnum Antichristi evasisse, si cum bonis Ecclesiæ ludant pro libito, nec ulli disciplinæ subsint. O egregium Christianismum!—Ap. Calvini Epist., Op., tom. ix. p. 20.*)

SMIDDELLINUS, an eminent Lutheran minister, says:—"To make it plain to all the world that they (the Lutherans) are not Papists, and place no confidence in good works, they take care to practise none; instead of fasting, they pass their time in eating and drinking; when they ought to relieve the poor, they fleece and oppress them; oaths, blasphemies, and imprecations are their usual prayers; so that Jesus Christ is not now so blasphemed amongst the Turks as He is amongst them. In short, instead of humility, nothing reigns amongst them but haughtiness, arrogance, and pride; and all this kind of life is by them called 'Evangelical.'" (*Ut totus mundus agnoscat eos non esse Papistas, nec bonis operibus quidquam fidere, illorum operum nullum exercent penitus; jejunii loco commensationibus et perpotationibus nocte dieque vacant. Ubi pauperibus benigne facere oportebat, eos deglubant et excoriant: preces vertunt in juramenta, blasphemias, et Divini Nominis execrationes; idque tam perditæ, ut Christus ne ab ipsis quidem Turcis tantopere blasphematur. Demum, pro humilitate regnat superbia, fastus, elatio, atque hoc universum vitæ genus ab illis Evangelicum dicitur institutum.—Jac. And. Smiddel., in Concione IV., super Lucæ cap. xxi., ap. Bellarm., in Append. in Lib. de Summo Pont., c. 23.*)

The learned ERASMUS,—who at first seemed to favour the "Reformation," whose authors tried by every means to induce him to join their ranks,—after seeing the evil fruits that followed its progress everywhere, hastened to disclaim all connection and

sympathy therewith; and his epistles to the Reformers and others afford irrefragable testimony regarding the terrible effects of it which constantly came under his own personal observation.

He writes to Melancthon in 1524 :—“ They have always in their mouths ‘ *The Gospel, the Word of God, faith, Christ, and the Spirit* ;’ if you look to their manners, these speak a very different thing. . . . I have known certain very excellent men who through this affair have deteriorated in character. . . . Here (Basle), especially, I see many to be such, that even if I approved all that Luther writes, I should be unwilling to give my name to this faction. . . . And these men actually demand that we, despising all the doctors of the Church, should put faith in their ‘ Spirit,’ and this, too, when they are at continual variance amongst themselves! How can I persuade myself that those men are led by the Spirit of Christ, whose manners are so much at variance with the teaching of Christ? Formerly the Gospel made those that were fierce become gentle; those that were rapacious, benignant; those that were turbulent, peaceful; those that were abusive, affable: but these men are rendered furious; they snatch by fraud what belongs to others; they everywhere excite tumults, and speak evil even of those who deserve well of them. I behold new hypocrites, new tyrants, but not a particle of the true spirit of the Gospel. Were I most favourable to Luther, I should have the more hated those men, for the sake of that Gospel which by their evil manners they render odious, and the learning and scholarship which they extinguish.” (*Habent semper in ore Evangelium, verbum Dei, fidem, Christum et Spiritum: si mores spectes, illi longè aliud loquuntur. . . . Tales video multos præsertim hic, ut si probarem omnia quæ scribit Lutherus, nollem huic factioni dare nomen. . . . Novos hypocritas, novos tyrannos video, ac ne micam quidem Evangelici spiritus.*—*Epist.*, lib. xix. ep. 113, ed. Lond. 1642, col. 950–952.)

To another friend in the same year :—“ Luther’s popularity daily increases. Now certain Frenchmen are more mad than any Germans. All have in their mouths five words—‘ *the Gospel, the Word of God, faith, Christ, and the Spirit* ;’ and yet I see many of them here to be such, that I cannot doubt that they are animated by the spirit of Satan.” (*Jam Galli quidam magis insaniunt quam ulli Germani. Omnes habent in ore quinque*

verba—*Evangelium, verbum Dei, fidem, Christum et Spiritum*. Et tamen hic tales video multos, ut non dubitem quin agantur spiritu Satanæ.—Lib. xviii. epist. 49, col. 811.)

In another epistle to Melancthon he says:—"What could be more pestilent than this dissension! In how many places are horrible tumults excited; and here we expect more horrible ones still. . . . Portentous doctrines also are taught by those whom Luther cherishes as chief teachers of Gospel truth. Formerly the Gospel of Christ produced to the world a new race of men: now what this Lutheran Gospel produces it is not pleasant to relate. . . . Those whom I once knew to be very good, and whom I should have pronounced born for virtue, I see to have deteriorated" (Lib. xix. epist. 3, col. 818). "Here this new Gospel begets for us a new race of men,—haughty, impudent, false, foul-mouthed, untruthful, sycophants, men at discord amongst themselves, obliging to none, disobliging to all, seditious, furious, wrangling brawlers; and so hateful to me are they, that if I had known any town free from their presence, I should there have betaken myself" (*Ib.*, epist. 4, col. 822).

To Pirckheimer in 1527:—"I see a people springing up, from whom my soul turns away in utter abhorrence. Concord, charity, faith, discipline, morals, good order,—all are perishing" (Lib. xx. epist. 3, col. 960).

To Bucer he writes in 1527:—"You offer a thousand conjectures why I did not join your communion. But know that what first and chiefly hindered me was *conscience*; for if this could have been convinced that your work proceeds from God, I would long ago have joined your ranks. In the first place, I see in that flock of yours many who are altogether strangers to the sincerity of the Gospel. I take no account of rumours and suspicions. I speak from experience gained personally, and therefore with injury to myself,—and this not only amongst the common herd, but even amongst those who seem to be something, not to say chief leaders. It is not for me to judge about things not clearly known; the world is very wide. I have, however, known certain persons who were of most excellent character before they joined this sect; what they all now may be I know not; but assuredly I have found some to be made worse, and not one of them better, so far as this can be determined by human judgment. The third thing which deterred

my mind was the great dissension among the leaders of the movement; for, to pass by the fanatics and the Anabaptists, how bitterly do Zuinglius, Luther, and Osiander contend against one another!" (*Ib.*, lib. xix. ep. 72, col. 890).

"I detest these Evangelicals on many grounds, but especially because through them literature everywhere languishes, droops, and perishes.¹ They love good living and a wife, and care not a straw for anything else. These impostors, I think, should be kept at the greatest possible distance from your society. We have long enough heard 'The Gospel, the Gospel, the Gospel:' we desire to see Evangelical manners." (*Per eos ubique languent, frigent, jacent, intereunt bonæ literæ, sine quibus quid est hominum vita? Amant viaticum et uxorem, cætera pili non faciunt. Hos fucos longissime arcendos censeo a vestro contubernio. Satis jam diu audivimus Evangelium, Evangelium, Evangelium; mores Evangelicos desideramus.—Lib. xix. epist. 56, col. 874.*) "Wherever Lutheranism reigns, there is the destruction of literature. . . . They seek two things only—money and a wife. The 'Gospel' supplies them with the rest, viz., the power to live according to their own pleasure." (*Ubicunque regnat Lutheranismus, ibi literarum est interitus. . . . Duo tantum quærent, censum et uxorem. Cætera præstat illis Evangelium, hoc est, potestatem vivendi ut volunt.—Lib. xix. ep. 50, col. 869.*)

In 1527 he writes:—"I behold a race of men springing up, from whom my soul turns away in utter abhorrence. I see no one made any better, but all with whom I was intimately acquainted to have become worse; insomuch that it grieves me greatly that I formerly in my writings declared for 'liberty of the spirit,' though I did so with a good intention, never dreaming that such a race as this was about to spring up. I was desirous that there should be some abatement in human ceremonies, in order that true piety might gain much increase. Now, however, these ceremonies are got rid of in such manner that to liberty of the spirit succeeds an unbridled

¹ In his early epistles, Erasmus speaks with enthusiasm of the great progress that was being made in learning and literature in several of the countries of Europe during the period immediately preceding the revolt of Luther. Regarding our own country he writes:—"Apud Anglos triumphant bonæ literæ. Rex ipse cum sua Regina, Cardinales ambo, Episcopi ferme omnes toto pectore tumentur, favent, alunt, ornantque" (*Lib. vi. epist. 19, col. 364.*)

license of the flesh. Certain cities of Germany are filled with erroneous doctrines, with deserters of monasteries, with married priests, and with multitudes of famished and naked wretches. Nothing else is thought of but dancing, eating, drinking, and intrigue. They teach not, neither do they learn; there is no sobriety of life, no sincerity. Wherever they are, there lie prostrate all excellent discipline and piety." (*Video genus hominum exoriri, a quo meus animus vehementer abhorret. Neminem video fieri meliorem, deteriores omnes quotquot ego sanè noverim. . . . Pro libertate spiritus, succedit effrenis carnis licentia. Civitates aliquot Germaniæ implentur erroribus, . . . nec aliud quàm saltatur, editur, bibitur, ac subagitur; nec docent, nec discunt; nulla vitæ sobrietas, nulla synceritas. Ubicunque sunt, ibi jacent omnes bonæ disciplinæ cum pietate.*—*Lib. xx. ep. 18, col. 984.*)

In an epistle to Vulturius Neocomus he says:—"You declaim bitterly against the luxury of priests, the ambition of bishops, the tyranny of the Roman Pontiff, and the babbling of the sophists; against our prayers, fasts, and masses; and you are not content to retrench the abuses that may be in these things, but must needs abolish them entirely; nothing, in short, that is generally received pleases you, but you must needs pluck up the wheat with the tares, or rather, the wheat instead of the tares. And what in the meantime do you offer us better or more worthy of the Gospel, to make us quit our ancient practices? Look around on this 'Evangelical' generation, and observe whether amongst them less indulgence is given to luxury, lust, or avarice, than amongst those whom you so detest. Show me any one person who by that Gospel has been reclaimed from drunkenness to sobriety, from fury and passion to meekness, from avarice to liberality, from reviling to well-speaking, from wantonness to modesty. I will show you a great many who have become worse through following it. . . . The solemn prayers of the Church are abolished, but now there are very many who never pray at all. . . . I have never entered their conventicles, but I have sometimes seen them returning from their sermons, the countenances of all of them displaying rage, and wonderful ferocity, as though they were animated by the evil spirit. . . . Who ever beheld in their meetings any one of them shedding tears, smiting his breast, or grieving for his sins? . . . Confession to the priest is abolished, but very few now confess to God. . . . They have fled from Judaism that they

may become Epicureans. Ceremonies are proscribed, but there is no increase of spiritual worship ; nay, in my judgment, there has been a great decrease. . . . The yoke of human ordinances has been cast off ; but where are they who have submitted their necks to the mild yoke of the Lord ? . . . I fear rather that instead of the heavy yoke of men, very many of them carry the heavier yoke of the devil. . . . Whilst loving only themselves, whilst obeying neither God, nor bishops, nor princes, nor magistrates, whilst serving Mammon, gluttony, and all their other carnal lusts and inclinations, they demand, forsooth, to be accounted '*Evangelicals.*' . . . Everywhere Luther preaches of 'the Spirit ;' but what are the fruits of the Spirit ? Charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, kindness, longanimity, faith, modesty, continence, chastity. In very many of his followers we see the works of the flesh ; of the Spirit, no evidence whatever. . . . It may be my misfortune ; but never yet has it happened to me to have known one individual who did not appear to be made worse by following this new Gospel." (Circumspice populum istum Evangelicum, et observa num minùs illic indulgeatur luxui, libidini, et pecuniæ, quam faciunt ii quos detestamini. Profer mihi quem istud Evangelium ex commessatore sobrium, ex feroci mansuetum, ex rapaci liberalem, ex maledico benedicum, ex impudico reddiderit verecundum. Ego tibi multos ostendam qui facti sunt seipsis deteriores. . . . In plerisque videmus opera carnis, Spiritus nullum vestigium. . . . Fieri potest ut mea sit infelicitas, mihi adhuc neminem contigit nôsse, qui non videatur seipso factus deterior.— Lib. xxxi. epist. 47, col. 2054-2059.)

Writing to the Brethren of Lower Germany in 1530 he says :— "What I state is most true, and may be proved by many examples, if any suppose that I rely on popular report. Those whom I had formerly known to be pure, upright, and free from guile, I found, after they had joined this sect (the Lutherans), to have become licentious in conversation, gamblers, neglectful of prayer, absorbed in worldly pursuits, most impatient of injury, implacable, slanderers, vain, as spiteful as serpents, and utterly devoid of human feeling. What was commonly reported regarding the extravagant mode of life of some of them I will not record. I have learned by personal experience that in business matters most Evangelicals are harder and less to be trusted than other people. . . . What the manner of life may be at Rome, or amongst those in holy orders, is to me a matter

neither of concern nor of certain knowledge. . . . This I do know, that amongst our (Catholic) Bishops there are those whose moral purity I should prefer to that of a thousand Evangelicals." (Quos antea noveram puros, candidos, et fuci ignaros [eosdem vidi] ubi sectæ se dedidissent, loqui coepissime de puellis, luisse aleam, abjecisse preces, factos ad rem attentissimos, impatientissimos omnis injuriæ, vindices, obtrectatores, vanos, viperinis moribus, ac prorsus hominem exuisse. . . . Quomodo vivatur *Romæ* aut inter canonicos, nec meâ refert, nec admodum novi. . . . Tamen inter Episcopos nostros novi quorum sanctimoniam malim quam mille Evangelicorum. —Lib. xxxi. epist. 59, col. 2118.) "If I had been convinced that you all follow the sincerity of the Gospel, I should before now have joined your camp; but that this is not so, the dissension existing among you sufficiently shows. . . . They pretend to offer us 'the Gospel, Christ, the Spirit of Christ, the Scripture;' we think that none of these is wanting in the Catholic Church" (*Ib.*, col. 2141).

"FORTASSE PLUS VEL INGENIUM, VEL ROBORIS EST ALIIS, EGO NULLA IN RE TUTIUS ACQUIESCO, QUAM IN CERTIS ECCLESIAE JUDICIIS."
—*Erasm. Epist.*, lib. xx. *Epist.* 3, col. 961.

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