

tation of God. It is made of brass.—*If there be any shadow or representation of God it must be in the heart, not in an image.*—*Cheever's Island World.*

## The Presbyterian Witness

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### WYLIE'S PRIZE ESSAY ON POPERY.

For a while after its formation, the Evangelical Alliance seemed to produce no practical results. This, however, can no longer be said of it. The important and interesting communications read and discussed at the last meeting in London, on Infidelity, on Popery, on the Sabbath Day, on Christian Statistics, on Religious Liberty, &c., furnish a sufficient confutation of any such charge. The appearance of the Work which stands at the head of this article, gives still stronger evidence that the Alliance is assuming an importance which will, ere long, bulk into a mighty power, into commanding influence. Three Prizes were some time ago offered for the best three essays on this vastly important subject. The first of these was awarded by the adjudicators, to the Rev. J. A. Wylie, sub-editor of the *Edinburgh Witness* newspaper, and already well known as a successful popular writer. This is, perhaps, one of the most masterly expositions of the whole subject, within the compass of a single volume, that has appeared in modern times. It is entitled, "The Papacy: its History, Dogmas, Genius, and Prospects." It consists of Four Books—the first contains the History of the Papacy; the second, the Dogmas of the Papacy, to which 20 chapters are devoted; the third Book delineates the genius and influence of the Papacy; and the fourth describes its present policy and prospects,—and under each of these a very ample digest is given. We give below a few extracts, and earnestly recommend the Book to the attention of all who wish to see the principles and development of that system most thoroughly handled. Mr. Wylie boldly and unflinchingly denies that Popery is a Church at all, or even a religion at all:

"The Church (so called) of Rome has no right to rank among Christian churches. She is not a church, neither is her religion the Christian religion. We are accustomed to speak of Popery as a corrupt form of Christianity. We concede too much. The Church of Rome bears the same relation to the Church of Christ which the hierarchy of Baal bore to the institute of Moses; and Popery stands related to Christianity only in the same way in which Paganism stood related to primeval Revelation. Popery is not a corruption simply, but a transformation. It may be difficult to fix the time when it passed from the one into the other; but the change is incontestible. Popery is the gospel transubstantiated into the flesh and blood of Paganism, under a few of the accidents of Christianity."—P. 14, note.

"We but perplex ourselves," he says, "when we think or speak of it simply as a religion. It contains the religious element, no doubt; but it is not a religion:—it is a scheme of domination of a mixed character, partly spiritual and partly temporal; and its jurisdiction must be of

the same mixed kind with its constitution. To talk of the popedom wielding a purely spiritual authority only, is to assert what her fundamental principles repudiate. These principles compel her to claim the temporal also. The two authorities grow out of the same fundamental axiom, and are so woven together in the system, and so indissolubly knit the one to the other, that the Papacy must part with both or none. The popedom, then, stands alone. In genius, in constitution, and in prerogative, it is diverse from all other societies. The Church of Rome is a temporal monarchy as really as she is an ecclesiastic body; and in token of her hybrid character, her head, the Pope, displays the emblems of both jurisdictions,—the keys in the one hand, the sword in the other."—P. 97.

Our author then shows the whole system to be a system of incantation:—

"Her system is essentially counterfeit, and all she does is pervaded by a spirit of imposture and juggling. But in some of her rites she lays aside her usual disguise, thin enough at the best, and reveals her art to all as but a piece of naked witchcraft. If those are not spells which she commands her priests to operate with on certain occasions, Hecate herself never used incantation or charm. We open her missals, and find them but books of sorcery; they are filled with recipes or spells for doing all manner of supernatural feats,—exercising demons, working miracles, and infusing new and extraordinary qualities into things animate and inanimate. She has her cabalistic words, which, if uttered by a priest in the appropriate dress, will bind or loose men, send them to paradise, or shut them up in purgatory. What is this but magic? What is the Church of Rome but a company of conjurers? and what is her worship but a system of divination? Has she not an order of exorcists, specially and formally ordained to the somewhat dangerous office of fighting with and overcoming hobgoblins and devils? Has she not her regular formulas, by which she can change the qualities of substances, control the elements of air, earth, and water, and compel spirits and demons to do the biddings of her priests? Can any man of plain understanding take this for religion? What is her grand rite, but an incantation, which combines more than the foulness of ancient sorcery with more than the blasphemy of modern atheism? And yet do not kings, presidents, and statesmen, countenance its celebration? and, while themselves practising this foul sorcery, and leading others by their influence to practise it, they affect to be shocked at the impieties of modern socialism? We excuse not Voltaire and the other high priests of infidelity; but it is indispensible that they treated the human understanding with more respect than do the stoled and mitred sorcerers, who first create, then eat their God."—Pp. 303, 304.

Mr. Wylie thus forcibly portrays the development of the Papacy, as nothing but the ancient idolatries christianized:

"Popery is but the natural development of this great original transgression. It is just the early idolatries ripened and perfected. It is manifestly an enormous expansion of the same intensely malignant and fearfully destructive principle which these idolatries contained. The ancient Chaldean worshipping the sun,—the Greek deifying the powers of nature,—and the Roman exalting the race of primeval men into gods,—are but varied manifestations of the same evil principle; namely, the utter alienation of the heart from God,—its proneness to hide itself amid the darkness of its own corrupt imaginations, and to become a god unto itself. That principle received the

most fearful development which appears possible on earth, in the Mystery of Iniquity which came to be seated on the Seven Hills; for therein man deified himself, became God, nay, arrogated powers which lifted him high above God. Popery is the last, the most matured, the most subtle, the most skillfully contrived, and the most essentially diabolical form of idolatry which the world ever saw, or which, there is reason to believe, it ever will see. It is the *ne plus ultra* of man's wickedness, and the *chef d'œuvre* of Satan's cunning and malignity. It is the greatest calamity, next to the Fall, which ever befel the human family. Farther away from God, the world could not exist at all. The cement that holds society together, already greatly weakened, would be altogether destroyed, and the social fabric would instantly fall in ruins."—Pp. 13, 14.

Self-aggrandizement is described as the real origin of the Popes' temporal supremacy, by turns the buttress and tool of his spiritual usurpations:—

"According to his own claim, the Pope's power is from heaven; but history refuses to let the claim pass current, and points unequivocally to a different quarter as the source of his prerogative. Of the two branches of his power,—the sacerdotal and the regal,—it is hard to determine which is the most disreputable and infamous in its beginnings. His mitre he had from the murderer Phocas; his crown from the usurper Pepin. A spotless and noble lineage forsooth! The pontifical trunk has one stem rooted rankly in blood, and the other foully grafted on rebellion. As a priest, the Pope is qualified to minister in the ensanguined temples of Moloch; as a sovereign, his title is indisputable to act the satrap under the arch-rebel and 'anarch old.' No one can glance a moment at the contour of his character, as seen in history, without feeling that the hideous likeness on which he gazes is that of the Antichrist. Every line of his visage, every passage of his history, is full of antagonism—is the very counterpart, of that of the Saviour. 'All these things will I give thee,' said the tempter to Christ, 'if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' 'Get thee hence, Satan,' was the reply. The fiend returned after three hundred years, and, leading the pontiff to the summit of the Roman hill, showed him 'all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.' 'All these,' said he, 'I will give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' No second denial awaited the tempter: instantly the knee was bent, and the pontiff raised his head crowned with the tiara.—Twice has Christianity been crowned in bitter derision and mockery of her character. Once with a crown of thorns by the blasphemers of Caiphaz's Hall; and now again with the tiara, in the person of the pontiff. Never did she demean herself with such divine dignity as when the thorns girt her brow; but, ah! the burning shame of the tiara."—Pp. 55, 56.

Rome founds her pretensions on what the world knows, and on what Rome herself knows, to be false:—

"No weapon was too base for the use of Rome. Her hand grasped with equal avidity the forged document and the hired dagger. Both were sanctified in her service. In the beginning of the ninth century came the decretals of Isidore.—These professed to be a collection of the decrees and rescripts of the early councils and popes, the object of their infamous author, who is unknown, being to show that the see of Rome possessed from the very beginning all the prerogatives with which the intrigues of eight centuries had invested it. Their style

was so barbarous, and their anachronisms and solecisms were so flagrant, that in no age but the most ignorant could they have escaped detection for a single hour. Rome, nevertheless, infallibly decreed the truth of what is now universally acknowledged to be false. These decretals supported her pretensions, and that with her decided the question of their authenticity or spuriousness. There are few who have earned so well the honours of canonization as this unknown forger. For ages the decretals possessed the authority of precedents, and furnished Rome with appropriate weapons in her contest with bishops and kings."—Pp. 63, 64.

Take an extract of the pollutions that nestled in the palaces of the vicars of Christ:—

"The palaces of the worst emperors," Mr. Wylie says, "the groves of pagan worship, saw nothing so foul as the orgies of the Vatican. Men sat in the chair of Peter, whose consciences were loaded with perjuries and adulteries, and whose hands were stained with murders; and claimed, as the vicars of Christ, a right to govern the church and the world.—The intrigues, the fraud, the violence, that now raged at Rome, may be conceived of from the fact, that from the death of Benedict IV., A.D. 903, to the elevation of John XII., A.D. 956,—an interval of only fifty-three years,—not fewer than thirteen popes held successively the pontificate. The attempt were vain to pursue these fleeting pontifical phantoms. Their brief but flagitious career was ended most commonly by the lingering horrors of the dungeon, or the quick despatch of the poniard. It is enough to mention the names of a John the Twelfth, a Boniface the Seventh, a John the Twenty-third, a Sixtus the Fourth, an Alexander the Sixth (Borgia), a Julius the Second.—These names stand associated with crimes of enormous magnitude. This list by no means exhausts the goodly band of pontifical villians. Simony, the good-will of a prostitute, or the dagger of an assassin, opened their way to the pontifical throne; and the use they made of their power formed a worthy sequel to the infamous means by which they had obtained it.—In the chair of Peter, the pontiffs of this and succeeding eras revelled in impiety, perjury, lewdness, sacrilege, sorcery, robbery, and blood; thus converting the palace of the apostle into an unfathomable sink of abomination and filth. 'A mass of moral impurity,' says Edgar, 'might be collected from the Roman hierarchy, sufficient to crowd the pages of folios, and glut all the demons of pollution and malevolence.'—P. 65.

Rome, drunk with the blood of the Saints, as exemplified by Pope Innocent III:—

"He was the first," Mr. Wylie writes, "to discover the danger to the popedom which lurked in the scriptural faith, and in the mental liberty of the Albigenses and Waldenses. On them, therefore, and not on eastern schismatics or recalcitrating sovereigns, fell the full storm of the pontifical ire. Assembling his vassal kings, he pointed to the peaceful and thriving communities in the provinces of the Rhone, and inflamed the zeal and fury of the soldiers by holding out the promise of immense booty and unbounded indulgence. For a forty day's service a man might earn paradise, not to speak of the worldly spoil with which he was certain to return laden home. The poor Abbigenes were crushed beneath an avalanche of murderous fanaticism and insatiable rapacity. To Innocent, history is indebted for one of her bloodiest pages—the European crusades; and the world owes him thanks for its most infernal institution—the Inquisition. He had for